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# SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY PLAN

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## **Personnel Security – *Electronic Communications Standard***

### **PURPOSE**

The Virginia Community College System is committed to using available technology to communicate among members of the campus communities and recognizes an expanding reliance on electronic communication among all VCCS constituencies. This document will define the proper use of electronic communications, and ensure that:

1. The VCCS uses electronic communication systems in an ethical manner in compliance with all applicable laws and with rules for acceptable use established by VCCS.
2. Computer users are alerted to concepts of privacy and security as they apply to email.
3. The risks of disruptions to VCCS electronic communication system and other services and business activities are minimized.

### **SCOPE**

This standard applies to all electronic communication services directly or indirectly supported on VCCS IT resources or transmitted or received by VCCS for informational purposes.

### **APPLICABILITY**

The Electronic Communication Standard is applicable to the System Office and all VCCS colleges.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Account** - *Any ID and password combination issued by the colleges or System Office for access to electronic communication systems or computer resources.*

**Electronic communications systems** – *Computer/network systems used in communicating or posting information or material by way of electronic mail, bulletin boards, web pages or other such electronic resources. Also includes, but is not limited to, remote internet access services and direct connections to the campus network.*

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**Personal Email** – *Sending and receiving email that is not job related. In general, incidental and occasional use of VCCS email services are permitted but are limited by the Department of Human Resources Policy Number 1.75 “Use of Internet and Electronic Communication Systems”. Please refer to the policy found at: [http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/poll\\_75.html](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/poll_75.html) for restrictions*

**User** - *Any person who uses a VCCS electronic communication system or computer resources.*

**System Administrator** - *A person responsible for managing and operating an electronic communication system for the use of others.*

### **STANDARD**

The VCCS encourages the creative and innovative use of electronic communication systems to enhance its teaching, research, and public service mission.

The confidentiality of electronic communication systems cannot be assured. They can easily be modified, saved, copied, forwarded to other recipients or illegally intercepted by those who would use the information for unlawful purposes. Official VCCS communications sent by electronic systems are subject to the same public information, privacy and records retention requirements and policies as other official communications.

All VCCS employees and other authorized users should exercise extreme caution when using electronic communication services and should not assume their service providers can guarantee that private, sensitive, or confidential messages will be automatically afforded the appropriate protection. No user of electronic communication services should have any expectation of privacy in any message, file, image or data created, sent, retrieved or received by the System Office or College services.

The System Office and Colleges retain the right to monitor any and all aspects of their electronic communication systems including email sent or received by VCCS users or stored on any System Office or College owned equipment (for example; servers, notebooks or desktop computers). Such monitoring may occur at any time, without notice, and without the user’s permission.

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Users who elect to redirect/forward messages from their official college email address to another address (such as AOL, Yahoo, or Hotmail) do so at their own risk. The System Office recommends that all employees do not forward email to external accounts. Having email lost or delayed as a result of redirection or mislabeled as spam or junk mail does not absolve users from the responsibilities associated with information sent to their official email address. The VCCS is not responsible for the handling of email by outside vendors or unofficial servers.

### **Requirement - Sensitive/Confidential Information**

Email must not be used to distribute or deliberately obtain copies of information designated as **Sensitive or Confidential** without prior authorization from the appropriate supervisor and encrypted, as defined in the IT Information Security Standard (SEC501-01 r4 dated July 24, 2008).

The SVCC IT network administrator and the System Office are responsible for identifying and implementing procedures and supporting software, where applicable, for encrypting email content.

VCCS electronic communications systems users are obligated to respect the rights of others, the intellectual rights and the intellectual property rights of others when using these resources.

### **Requirement - Use of Electronic Systems**

The following describes prohibited and acceptable use of VCCS email:

#### **Prohibited Use:**

- VCCS electronic communications systems shall not be used for the creation or distribution of any messages that could be construed as disruptive or malicious.
- VCCS electronic communications systems shall not be used for fund raising, political campaign activities, or public relations activities not specifically related to college activities;

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- VCCS electronic communications systems shall not be used to conduct any activity which adversely affects the availability, confidentiality or integrity of VCCS's technology;
- VCCS electronic communications systems may not be used for commercial enterprises.
- VCCS electronic communication systems users are prohibited from accessing, downloading, printing or storing information with sexually explicit content as prohibited by law (see Code of Virginia §2.1-804-805; §2.2-2827 as of October 1, 2001).
- VCCS electronic communication systems users shall not download or transmit fraudulent, threatening, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, harassing, discriminating, or otherwise unlawful messages or images.
- VCCS electronic communication systems users shall not send messages using another user's identity, an assumed name, or anonymously.
- VCCS electronic communication systems users are prohibited from knowingly sending or forwarding chain letters, illegal contests, pyramid schemes, or any other types of email spam from or to a VCCS account.
- The VCCS electronic communication systems shall not be used for any activity that violates any provision of this standard, any supplemental standard adopted by VCCS, or any other policy, regulation, law or guideline as set forth by local, State, or Federal law.
- The use of VCCS email distribution or mailing lists for commercial and personal purposes is prohibited.

#### **Acceptable Use:**

- VCCS electronic communications systems may be used for personal communication, but this may not take priority over intended business and academic uses. Priority for using these systems will always be given to members of the college communities.
- The System Office and colleges may develop internal guidelines and procedures to support personal use of the electronic communications services for non-work related purposes. All personal communications must be created in such a way that it is clear to the recipients that the communication is personal and does not represent a communication from the agency or the Commonwealth.

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- Electronic communication messages that are designated as personal should be maintained, filed, or stored separately from those that are directly related to the work activities. Maintaining personal messages in a unique and identifiable folder structure is recommended. Employees are highly encouraged to use personal accounts for receiving or sending non-work related email or other communications, such as: subscriptions, personal financial information, and personal health information.

### **Requirement - Security**

Infrastructure Security: The SVCC IT network administrator will be responsible for satisfying the following requirements:

- All VCCS electronic communications servers and desktop/notebook computers supporting or accessing electronic communication services must deploy software to provide for malicious code detection and virus detection. System Office and Colleges should use the VCCS recommended software products.
- All locations providing email services must also provide for anti-spam email filtering.

### **Optional – Email Disclaimer**

The Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) recommends that all agencies consider adopting an email disclaimer to be appended to every email originating from a COV owned system. Emails sent from Commonwealth systems are public records of the Commonwealth of Virginia and must be managed as such. They may contain information that is private and for use in accordance with VCCS business only. Appending an email disclaimer may provide some protection from liability in a court of law or prevention of a lawsuit being filed.

An email disclaimer is a set of statements that are either pre-pended or appended to emails in whole or by providing a link to the disclaimer. These statements are frequently used to create awareness of how to treat the data in the email. An email disclaimer is not a substitute for judgment on what content to put into an email.

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A review of other state agencies and external organization indicate that those who elect to use an email disclaimer do so by appending the full text to each email. However, there is no COV or legal requirement that the full text must be displayed or that by doing so will limit our liability. Therefore, it is possible to use abbreviated language with a “hot link” to the full text.

VCCS Governance has adopted and approved the following language for use should a college or the System Office elect to use an email disclaimer:

*“CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information or otherwise be protected by law. Any access, use, disclosure or distribution of this email message by anyone other than the intended recipient(s) is unauthorized and prohibited. If you are not an intended recipient (or an agent acting on an intended recipient’s behalf), please contact the sender by reply email and immediately destroy all copies of the original message. Virus scanning is recommended on all email attachments.”*

No other language should be used without an official review by the System Office Legal Services Office and Information Technology Services.

### **Reporting Violations**

Users who believe that a violation of this standard, or a criminal act has occurred, should immediately contact an appropriate campus official, who will take action in accordance with established procedures. Violations could result in penalties imposed upon the user, including disabling of the user’s account, or termination of access to the electronic communication system.

### **Official Communications with Students**

VCCS has established email as a primary vehicle for official communication with students. An official VCCS Gmail email address has been established and assigned by the VCCS and the colleges for each registered student, and current faculty and staff member.

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All communications sent via email will be sent to this address. Faculty members will use the official VCCS Gmail email address to communicate with a student registered in their classes and administrative units will correspond with students via this address.

The VCCS expects that students will receive and read email in a timely manner. Students are expected to maintain their accounts and check their email periodically so that new mail will be properly received and read. A student's failure to receive and read official college communications delivered to their Google email address in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.

While students are allowed to redirect email from their official VCCS email address to another address (e.g. @hotmail.com, @aol.com), they do so at their own risk. The VCCS is not responsible for the handling of email by other service providers. Having email redirected does not absolve students from knowing and complying with the content of the communication sent to their official College email address.