

## 20.1 Email Usage

- (a) E-mail accounts for all Spectrum employees and caregivers will be set up by Human Resources upon hiring, and disabled upon termination of employment.
- (b) Spectrum will communicate with its employees via the Society's email system only and not with any external e-mail address. Employees must use the Society's e-mail system for work-related e-mail.
- (c) Employees may use their Spectrum e-mail account for their own personal use, provided this usage complies with the guidelines set forth in this policy, and keeping in mind that the system and its contents are the sole property of Spectrum.
- (d) Spectrum Society will endeavour at all times to maintain the privacy of employees' e-mail. However, there may be extraordinary situations where it is necessary to access an employee's e-mail due to, for example, an unforeseen leave of absence or illness that prevents the employee from accessing their e-mail, or in order to comply with civil or criminal investigations (eg. alleged distributing of pornography, making defamatory remarks about an individual or organization). The Society's Privacy Officer will review and approve any requests to access an employee's e-mail.
- (e) Certain authorised members of the Society's technical support services may necessarily have access to the e-mail system for upgrades or administration.

### **Guidelines for appropriate e-mail use**

- (a) Users should adhere to the following guidelines for appropriate use:
  - i. Usernames and passwords shall not be disclosed to others;
  - ii. Avoid sending sensitive information via e-mail, for example employee performance matters. In-person meetings or telephone conversations are generally preferable for discussing sensitive matters;
  - iii. Once a message is sent, there is no way to retrieve it. Check carefully that messages are addressed to the correct recipient(s) before sending;
  - iv. Be polite. Messages sent by e-mail can often seem abrupt, even when this is not the intention. Use professional courtesy and discretion. The use of all upper-case text in either the subject or the body of an e-mail should be avoided as this is considered to be the e-mail equivalent of shouting;
  - v. Do not say anything in an e-mail that you would not be prepared to say to someone face to face;
  - vi. Use 'reply all' and distribution lists with caution in order to keep the number of messages to a minimum and reduce the risk of sending messages to the wrong people;
  - vii. Set the Out-of-Office option when you are away for an extended period of time, stating an alternative e-mail contact for work-related matters;

- viii. Messages should be addressed to those from whom an action or response is expected; “cc” or “bcc” should be used for other recipients for whom the message is for information only;
- ix. Respect people’s privacy and consider this aspect before forwarding messages;
- x. Unsolicited e-mail, especially with an attachment, may contain a virus or other harmful software. If in doubt, delete the e-mail or contact the sender to check before opening;
- xi. Enter a meaningful title in the ‘subject’ field at the top of the e-mail to help the reader anticipate the content correctly. Try to keep to one subject per message to avoid unnecessary confusion;
- xii. Do not forward e-mail “chain letters.” These are e-mails which either ask you to forward them on to all your friends (or to everyone you know) or which state that something bad will happen if you do not forward them;
- xiii. Messages sent via Spectrum e-mail shall include a signature line with the employee’s contact information and a disclaimer, as follows:

Joe Smith  
Program Manager  
Spectrum Society for Community Living  
(604) 323-1433 ext. 000  
[www.spectrumsociety.org](http://www.spectrumsociety.org)

*“This transmission is confidential and should not be forwarded without consent by the sender. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender by return e-mail and delete the message from your system.”*