

Southern Law Center Law Center
Policy #IT0004

Title: Email Policy

Authority: Department
Effective Date: 7/20/2007
Last Revision: 9/17/2012

Original Adoption: 7/20/2007

1.0 Purpose:

To provide members of the SULC user community with standards of conduct in the appropriate use of SULC email services, and general conditions regarding the use of, access to, and disclosure of electronic mail to assist in ensuring that SULC resources serve those purposes.

This Policy Statement applies to all users of the Southern Law Center Law Center (SULC) electronic mail (e-mail) system regardless of affiliation, and irrespective of whether accessed from on-campus or off-campus locations, whether hosted on-campus or outsourced.

Expressly, this policy applies to any user who has an SULC e-mail address (i.e. any @sulc.edu e-mail address). Specifically, this Policy Statement establishes important guidelines and restrictions regarding any and all use of e-mail at SULC.

2.0 Scope:

This policy applies to all SULC users accessing and utilizing SULC email services.

3.0 Definitions:

User – SULC employees and students, contractors, vendors, and agents working under the auspices of the Law Center.

Computing Resources - All devices (including, but not limited to, personal computers, laptops, PDAs and smart phones) owned by the Law Center, the user or otherwise, which are part of or are used to access (1) the SULC network, peripherals, and related equipment and software; (2) *data* communications infrastructure, peripherals, and related equipment and software; (3) voice communications infrastructure, peripherals, and related equipment and software; (4) and all other associated tools, instruments, facilities, and the services that make use of any technology resources owned, operated, or controlled by SULC. *Computing resources* or components thereof may be individually assigned or shared, single-user or multi-user, stand-alone or networked, and/or mobile or stationary.

Data - Includes all information that is used by or belongs to the Law Center or that is processed, stored, maintained, transmitted, copied on, or copied from Law Center *computing resources*.

Forged Communications - (sometimes referred to as "spoofing") shall be defined as e-mails that are made to appear as if they originated from an organization or individual other than the individual from whom the message was actually sent.

Protected information - *Data* that has been designated as private, protected, or confidential by law or by the Law Center. *Protected information* includes, but is not limited to, employment records, medical records, student records, education records, personal financial records (or other individually identifiable information), research *data*, trade secrets, and classified government information. *Protected information* shall not include public records that by law must be made available to the general public. To the extent there is any uncertainty as to whether any *data* constitutes *protected information*, the *data* in question shall be treated as *protected information* until a determination is made by the Law Center.

4.0 Policy:

The official means of electronic communication by the Law Center to faculty, staff, and students shall be the individual's primary SULC (@sulc.edu) e-mail address. Rerouting of information (i.e. links, attached files, etc.) cannot, and will not be guaranteed beyond the SULC primary e-mail gateway if a user has created a forwarding address to a departmental server, or an off-site Internet Service Provider (ISP) account.

SULC e-mail users are required to comply with federal and state law, Law Center policies, and standards of professional and personal ethics and conduct. All communications sent via e-mail shall be consistent with applicable administrative policies.

Individuals to whom SULC e-mail accounts are assigned are responsible for managing and monitoring their accounts, and for actions taken with their accounts. Accounts and account passwords are not to be sold, rented, transferred, or shared with any other person.

Unless an individual or an organization has explicitly solicited anonymous comments or input, all communications sent using any SULC technology service or facility must clearly identify the actual sender by a valid address in the basic header or in the message text. The deliberate creation or facilitation of misleading or *forged communications* is prohibited under any circumstance.

No one may imply or state in an e-mail that they represent or speak on behalf of SULC, or any organizational element of SULC, unless they are empowered to do so by virtue of their assigned duties or they have been formally authorized by the Law Center.

Protected institutional and personal information shall not be sent via e-mail, unless specific steps are taken to ensure that the transmission or content of the e-mail is secure and encrypted in accordance with Law Center standards, and the personal information therefore provided this additional level of protection.

Backups of e-mails stored, and messages marked as deleted held in retention on central Law Center e-mail servers, whether managed by the Information Technology Department or outsourced shall be retained by the Law Center for ___ days.

All mailing lists supported by Law Center resources shall be owned and sponsored by a unit or individual employed or enrolled as a student by SULC. By agreeing to own or sponsor a Law Center mailing list, the owner/sponsor assumes the responsibility of day-to-day monitoring and operation of the list. Communications to mailings lists shall be in accordance with the stated purpose and policy, and list members who experience inappropriate or unwanted postings may

request to be removed unless membership is required by the Law Center. Requests from individuals to be unsubscribed from non-mandatory lists must be honored.

Eligibility

The use of a Law Center e-mail account is a privilege granted by the Law Center, in its sole discretion, to facilitate the Law Center's mission. No student, employee or other person or entity has a right to a Law Center e-mail account. Law Center e-mail accounts (@*.sulc.edu) may be provided to active faculty, staff, and students in support of Law Center operations and initiatives. When an individual's affiliation with the Law Center ends, eligibility to use a Law Center provided e-mail account also ends. The Law Center may elect to continue the account for use by the individual as necessary to further Law Center missions. However, the eligibility of these individuals requires initial and periodic verification of need by a Dean, Director, or Department Head. Requests must be submitted in writing to the SULC Information Technology Department, and accompanied by the reason, name, and contact information of the sponsoring Dean, Director, or Department Head and the length of time for which the access will be required.

Naming Convention

As with any and all official communication that carries the SULC name, it is important that users be cognizant that the Law Center image is always under scrutiny and that an identified, regulated standard for assigning e-mail accounts is necessary. Employees and affiliated individuals who are granted an SULC e-mail account will receive an address in a format determined by the Law Center that is distinguishable, as well as unique. The use of obscenities, vulgarities, or offensive words or phrases, both explicit and implied, as determined in the discretion of the Law Center shall not be allowed.

Retraction

Messages sent via Law Center e-mail shall not be retracted by the information technology organization without an official request from a Dean, Director, or Department Head. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the SULC Information Technology Department. However, such retractions do not guarantee that an unintended message will not be read, as once such messages are routed to the Internet beyond the boundaries of the Law Center network, the feasibility of effecting a retraction is nil. Retractions are only effective in those limited cases where the sender and receiver are on the SULC-maintained e-mail system, and such messages have not been opened by the recipient.

Account Retention

Procedures for e-mail accounts managed by ITS:

Students: E-mail accounts shall be purged after non-enrollment for ____ consecutive semesters.

Faculty/Staff who have resigned: E-mail account shall be terminated within 30 days of date of departure from the Law Center.

Faculty/Staff who have retired: Primary E-mail account shall be retained until

Mail Storage and Retention

Each e-mail account on central Law Center e-mail servers, whether managed locally or outsourced, has a designated and limited amount of server side storage. A warning

message will be sent to the user when ____% of the mailbox storage limit is reached. If the user reaches the designated amount of server side storage for e-mail, he/she will no longer be able to send new messages. Once a user exceeds the designated amount of server side storage for e-mail, the user will no longer be able to send or receive e-mail, and any messages sent to the user's mailbox will be rejected. Users that require additional storage space can utilize Personal Folders to archive the additional e-mail to files on desktops or laptops. **Law Center employees should archive all e-mails which constitute public records and retain them for three (3) years from creation. Duplicates need not be retained. Public records relating to purchases under the Procurement Code are required to be retained for six (6) years.**

Privacy and Applicability of Laws and Policies

This policy clarifies the applicability of law and certain other Law Center policies to e-mail. Users are reminded that usage of SULC's *computing resources*, including e-mail, is subject to all Law Center policies. The Law Center encourages the use of e-mail, respects the privacy of users, and does not wish to inspect or monitor e-mail routinely, or to be the arbiter of its contents. Nonetheless, e-mail and data stored on the Law Center's network of computers is the property of the Law Center and is accessed by the Law Center for the following purposes:

- Routine backups
- Troubleshooting hardware and software problems
- Preventing unauthorized access and system misuse
- Retrieving business related information*
- Investigating potential violation of Law Center policy or local, state or federal law*
- Complying with legal requests for information*
- Rerouting or disposing of undeliverable mail
- Conducting Law Center business
- Other purposes deemed necessary by the Law Center Information Technology Department, with the Law Center Chancellor's approval.

*Approval required by one or more of the following Law Center parties: Law Center Counsel, Law Center Chancellor, Law Enforcement, and the Southern University System Internal Auditor. The extent of the access will be limited to what is reasonably necessary to acquire the information.

Individual users should have no expectation of personal privacy or confidentiality for documents and messages stored on Law Center-owned equipment or systems. Users of e-mail services must be aware that even if the sender and recipient have discarded their copies of an e-mail record, there might be back-up copies of such e-mail that can be retrieved.

E-mail may constitute a public record like other documents subject to disclosure as such or as a result of litigation. However, prior to any such disclosure, the Law Center must evaluate all requests for information for compliance with applicable federal and state law. Any public records requests or subpoenas or other court orders which could include a user's e-mail should be sent to the Law Center's Chancellor's Office for evaluation. At any time you may be directed by the Law Center to hold, preserve, and/or copy electronic mail as such may pertain to existing or potential litigation. If such a directive is received the user shall not alter or delete any covered electronic mail or files.

Acceptable Use of SULC Email Services

The acceptable use of SULCS email services shall be governed by the provisions defined within the SULC Acceptable Use Policy (Policy #IT0001)

INCIDENT HANDLING

All security incidents or concerns regarding email or other technology policies must be reported immediately to the SULC Information Technology Department. After verification is complete using system or other logs, and in accordance with other applicable policies and procedures, the incident will be reported to the appropriate Dean, Director, or Department Head for review and possible action.