

Email Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Through the North Dakota University System (NDUS), the Minot State University (MSU) provides electronic mail (email) services to faculty, staff, students, and affiliates of MSU.

Recognizing the importance of timely, efficient, and consistent communication with students, employees, affiliates, and external agencies, MSU declares email received and sent from @minotstateu.edu or @ndus.edu as an official means of communication. Each student, employee, and affiliate are responsible for information conveyed via the MSU email assigned to them.

MSU email accounts are the property of Minot State University.

The use of email must be consistent with MSU's mission and goals. Email may not be used for unlawful activities, personal financial gain, or political activities unrelated to the requirements of their position at MSU.

Exceptions to the policy must have the university IT Director documented approval.

REASON FOR POLICY

The purpose of the policy is to define the appropriate use of MSU email. This policy is not meant to supersede the [SBHE 1202.1 Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#) Policy or [SBHE 1202.3 Data Privacy Policy](#) but should be read together with other SBHE and MSU policies.

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure:

- All members of the MSU community understand the expectations and guidelines for the use of email service.
- The University community uses email ethically and respectfully in compliance with applicable laws and policies, including policies established by SBHE and the University.
- The high-risk data classified as private or restricted are transmitted through secure email systems managed by the University.
- Disruptions to University email and other services and activities are minimized.
- Timely deprovisioning of email accounts for students, faculty, staff, and affiliates who are no longer associated with MSU.
- Emails are maintained in accordance with the MSU records retention schedule.

SCOPE OF POLICY

- President
- Vice Presidents
- Chairs, Directors & Department Heads
- Area Managers & Supervisors
- Faculty
- Staff
- Students
- Other - affiliates

CONTACTS

Specific questions should be directed to the following:

Subject	Contact	Office or Department Email / Web Address
Policy Clarification and Use of Employee Email	IT Office (701) 858-4444	https://www.minotstateu.edu/itcentral/help.shtml
Records Management	Registrar Office (701) 858-3345	https://www.minotstateu.edu/records/contact.shtml

DEFINITIONS

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Email Account	An email account is the location where electronic mail is actually delivered. It is a combination of a login username and password and disk space.
Email Delivery Address	The username@minotstateu.edu address is the delivery address. Each e-mail account has its own unique delivery address, which can be given out to correspondents as one's e-mail address, or a person may opt to use the email name address in addition to or instead of the delivery address.
Email Name Address	The first.last@minotstateu.edu address is the typical name address or alias. It is linked to a preferred email account but is, in itself, not an account username but rather a permanent email alias. Using the name

	address ensures that the email address will remain the same the whole time one is at MSU.
Email Username	The actual name of the account is typed in at the Username prompt when logging into the email.
Deprovisioning	The process of removing access to an email account when it is no longer needed or considered necessary.
Confidential	Information that is meant to be kept private and protected from unauthorized access or disclosure. This type of data typically includes sensitive information that could potentially cause harm, loss, or compromise if exposed to unauthorized parties. Examples of confidential data might include personal identification information (like Social Security numbers), financial records, medical records, proprietary business information, or any data that, if disclosed, could violate privacy rights or lead to legal or financial repercussions.

PRINCIPLES

The university recognizes that principles of academic freedom, freedom of speech, privacy, and confidentiality hold important implications for email and email services. This Policy addresses these principles within the context of, and subject to, the limitations imposed by the legal and policy obligations of the university.

OVERVIEW -

Email services are extended for the sole use of MSU faculty, staff, students, and other appropriately authorized users to accomplish tasks related to and consistent with the mission of the university. Users are responsible for the content they send from their university email accounts and must ensure that messages comply with university policies and applicable laws.

MSU email systems and services are university facilities, resources, and property, as those terms are used in university policies and applicable law.

Ownership of Email

- The University holds ownership of all University Email Accounts.
- The University owns email data transmitted or stored via these accounts and is subject to copyright and intellectual property laws.
- Email services are provided for tasks aligned with the University's mission and are considered University property.
- The University may access email accounts as necessary, including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/open records requests.
- The University reserves the right to assign another email account to an individual if necessary.

PROCEDURES

Email Utilization

All faculty and staff are expected to use their minotstateu.edu email account when conducting business

on behalf of the University and in their capacity as MSU employees. MSU email accounts shall not be used as a primary personal account or for personal business an employee may own, operate, or otherwise be involved with.

All employees are expected to read their email regularly, and not doing so does not provide an excuse for not following or complying with university policies and communication.

Students shall not use the MSU email account for personal business a student may own, operate, or otherwise be involved with. Students are responsible for frequently monitoring their e-mail for official campus communication. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communication is time sensitive. Students with a disability who are unable to use e-mail as an official University communication may request an exemption to this policy in the form of an alternate format accommodation. To request the accommodation, students should contact MSU Access Services.

Campus Wide Announcements

The University works to minimize the number of messages sent to the entire student body. Messages sent to the entire student body are sent through the official student mailing list. This list is moderated by MSU officials, and is reserved for official University communication that impacts all or most students. Students may not unsubscribe from the official list. Other (non-official) notifications may be sent via the Student Announce list managed by the Public Information Office.

Instructional Use of E-mail

Instructors may determine how e-mail or other MSU approved forms of electronic communication (i.e., Blackboard, MS Teams) shall be used to facilitate teaching and learning. Instructors may establish e-mail lists to communicate with students (e.g., regarding class assignments) and may expect that students are accessing their e-mail on a regular basis as specified in this policy. In an effort to protect student privacy and better ensure student authenticity, University personnel may require that e-mails received from students, which request a response, be sent via their official e-mail address.

Email Auto-Forwarding

To ensure security, confidentiality, compliance with records retention requirements, and proper management of university email communications, automatic forwarding of emails received at the University email account to external email addresses is prohibited.

Individuals are strictly prohibited from setting up automatic forwarding rules or mechanisms that forward emails received at the University email accounts to any external email addresses (personal or otherwise). This includes but is not limited to forwarding rules set up within the email client or through third-party applications.

Emails containing confidential or sensitive information should not be forwarded manually to other non-MSU accounts.

The email auto-forwarding procedure does not apply to students not employed by the university. Student employees should not forward work-related messages that contain confidential or sensitive information related to individuals to non-MSU assigned email addresses.

Email Deprovisioning

The university has the right to revoke access to an email account immediately if deemed necessary to safeguard university information and prevent unauthorized use of university resources.

An auto-reply message can be activated for the duration of the deprovisioned time period or 30 days after separation.

Students will retain access to their MSU University email accounts throughout their enrollment and for a period of 18 months after the end of the last enrolled semester. (e.g., graduation, withdrawal, or other cessation of enrollment). After this 18-month period, access to the student email account will be terminated.

It is essential for students to plan accordingly and transition any important emails or data to personal accounts or alternative storage solutions before the end of the 18-month grace period.

Emergency Deprovisioning

MSU email accounts are the property of Minot State University. When an email account is deprovisioned, the university may assign another email account if necessary (e.g., if the former employee is a student and needs to maintain an email account for academic purposes).

Voluntary Employee Separation

Upon separation from the University, whether through resignation, retirement, or other voluntary means, email access will cease effective the day after the employment ends. The departing employee is responsible for ensuring that any critical information is appropriately transferred to their successor or relevant department before departure.

Requests for extended post-separation access to the email account should be directed to the departing employee's supervisor or department head. Such requests will be reviewed case-by-case, considering the university's legitimate ongoing business needs. Approval of extended access will be granted only if deemed necessary for completing outstanding tasks or the continuity of university operations.

An auto-reply message can be activated for 30 days after separation.

Medical Leave of Absence

During a continuous (not intermittent) leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, or other, MSU may disable employee email access until a return to work is approved. Correspondence related to the medical leave of absence between the employee and Human Resources shall take place using the employee's personal email account. If the leave is foreseen, the employee should set an auto-reply message in coordination with their supervisor and backup plans. If the leave is unforeseen, the supervisor is responsible for placing an autoreply on the employees' email by submitting a ticket to Information Technology Central (ITC).

Privacy and Security

Users must protect their university email accounts from unauthorized access. This includes safeguarding passwords and not sharing access credentials.

Email attachments and links should be scrutinized for potential security risks, such as malware, phishing attempts, or other malicious content. Users should report suspicious emails promptly. Emails that contain confidential information, private, and/or restricted data, including research-related intellectual property content, should only be transferred using a secure link.

Records Management

Minot State University (MSU) email messages are subject to the same records retention rules that apply to other, more traditional, paper documents and must be retained in accordance with applicable retention periods listed on the MSU Records Retention Schedule.

Additional information on this topic can be found in the Email: Office of Record policy.

RELATED INFORMATION

NDUS SBHE 1202.1 – Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources	SBHE 1202.1 Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources
NDUS SBHE 1202.3 – Data Privacy Policy	SBHE 1202.3 Data Privacy Policy
MSU Records Retention Schedule	Records Retention Schedule
MSU Email: Office of Record Policy	Email: Office of Record
NDCC 44-04-18	Access to public records – Electronically stored information

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee	- Activate an auto-reply with an Out of Office (OOO) message - Any critical information is appropriately transferred to their successor or relevant department before departure
Student employees	Refrain from forwarding any emails related to work as a MSU student employee
Students	Monitor e-mail for official campus communication
Supervisor	- Request HR to extend individual's access to email - Submit a ticket to IT Central to ask for access to the individual's email - Request an out-of-office message from IT Central for the terminated individual

Information Technology Central (ITC)	Assist with Out Of Office notifications
Human Resources (HR)	- Assign the individual to xxxx (POI?) to indicate needing an extension up to 30 days - Request another email account for employees if necessary
IT Director	Approve/deny exemption requests