



STATE OF NEW YORK
UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM

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ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY

The New York State Unified Court System Electronic Mail System (e-mail) is designed to facilitate communication. E-mail provides many advantages to the Court System, including reducing telephone tag, speeding up decision making and shortening the communication cycle.

These are factors that improve productivity and provide the ability to communicate with others at virtually anytime and at any location. The disadvantage is that many assume messages are private, but privacy is not guaranteed. E-mail files are like other court files and can even be used in the discovery process linked to litigation. Additionally, because e-mail allows an immediate response, many users do so without a second thought. The potential risk is increased due to the ability to respond so quickly that a person may later regret what was written or said.

All electronic communication systems and all communication and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of the New York State Unified Court System, and as such, are to be used for job-related communications only. The Unified Court System reserves the right to review the contents of employees' e-mail communications when necessary for business purposes. Use of UCS e-mail facilities for communications that are inconsistent with non-discrimination policies will not be tolerated.

E-mail shall not be used to transmit vulgar, profane, insulting or offensive messages. Prohibited uses of e-mail include, but are not limited to, soliciting outside business ventures, advertising for personal enterprises or soliciting for non-organization related purposes. This policy does not prohibit personal messages of a social nature which do not contain otherwise prohibited content, but UCS e-mail facilities should be used for personal business sparingly and never in a way that will interfere with UCS services.

Users should set a confidential password on their e-mail for security reasons, but this does not suggest that the system is for personal confidential communication, nor does it suggest that e-mail is the property right of the user. Passwords should be periodically changed to ensure security of the e-mail system, and users should not share their password with anyone else. Users are not permitted to access other users' mail or retrieve any stored communication unless authorized to do so, or unless they have received prior clearance from an administrator.