POLICY TITLE: General Email Policy

POLICY #: IT – 12

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

This policy gives a general overview of appropriate email use, restrictions, limitations, and appropriate expectations.

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Introduction:

Email is the primary means of communication for the Bluefield College community. The main source of communication between Bluefield College and its students is the Bluefield College Email System.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of the Bluefield College email system and make users aware of what Bluefield College deems to be acceptable and unacceptable use of its email system. Bluefield College reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion. In case of amendments, users will be informed appropriately.

Following are sets of appropriate expectations, appropriate use, restrictions, and limitations of the Bluefield College email system. These are to provide the most reliable and trustworthy email system that Bluefield College is capable of offering.

The intended audience for this policy is all users of the Bluefield College email system, all Faculty, Staff, and Students.

Policy Statement:

    I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

All communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in the Bluefield College email system are the property of Bluefield College. These resources contribute to the work of all individuals on campus and must, therefore, should be used with great care.

The campus email systems are primarily for College business and academic use. In that spirit, any inappropriate or illegal use of the system may be considered an offense that could lead to disciplinary action.

II. EMAIL MONITORING:

Users of the Bluefield College email system should have no expectation of privacy; all email internal, inbound, and outbound may be monitored as needed without prior notification in the daily administration of Email Services, Anti-Virus and Anti-Spam filtering to help ensure appropriate filtering. The Email Administrator must maintain strict confidentiality of all email seen during this monitoring.

While Bluefield College may perform email monitoring, Bluefield College is not obligated in any way to monitor email.

III. INVESTIGATIVE EMAIL MONITORING:

For investigative monitoring of an employee's email, the Director and Email Administrator of the Information Systems and Technology Department must be notified by the appropriate cabinet member, this monitoring must also be approved by the College President or the President's duly appointed representative.

For investigative monitoring of a student's email, the Director and Email Administrator of the Information Systems and Technology Department must be notified by the Dean of Student Services, this monitoring must also be approved by the College President or the President's duly appointed representative.

All monitoring during an investigation will be done without prior notification and will be held completely confidential by the Email Administrator and Director of the Information Systems and Technology Department with the results being discussed with only the appropriate cabinet member, College President, legal counsel, or any law enforcement authorities as needed and in any legal proceedings that would require it.

While Bluefield College may perform email monitoring, Bluefield College is not obligated in any way to monitor email.

IV. EMAIL MESSAGE AND STORAGE LIMITATIONS:

Message and Storage Limitations are determined by the Bluefield College Information Systems and Technology Department based upon the Email Systems Resources, available network bandwidth, and total number of users. These Limitations are outlined in *Email System Mailbox Quota and Send/Receive*

Restrictions. The Information Systems and Technology department will review these limitations, resources, and college email usage to adjust these limits as necessary once every twelve months. These limits may be increased, decreased, or unaltered as seen fit by the Information Systems and Technology Department at the time of review. All Email users will receive a thirty day notice before any change is made to these limits. If any user wishes to appeal for increased Message or Storage size they may do so by sending an email to itdepartment@bluefield.edu. Any request not sent via email will be turned down without review. Appeal's may be approved or denied at the discretion of the Information Systems and Technology Department without any reason given. Both the Information Systems and Technology Department's Director and Email Administrator will review the requests and make the determination on whether or not to approve it. Email messages that exceed the stated size limit will be blocked. Any Email Mailbox Storage that exceeds the size limits will cause the mailbox user from being able to receive or send any email from the Bluefield College Email system until the size has been returned to compliance to this policy.

V. INAPPROPRIATE EMAIL USAGE:

The following is a list of inappropriate usages of the Bluefield College email system, this list is meant to be illustrative, and is not exhaustive.

      a. Accessing another users email account.
      b. Use of email system to run an unauthorized personal business or service.
      c. Use of email system for political campaigning or gain.
      d. Use of email system for unlawful activities.
      e. Sending fraudulent, hoax, chain letters, harassing, annoying, disparaging, vulgar, or obscene messages.
      f. Sending of viruses, ad-ware, spy-ware, root kits, virus hoaxes, chain letters, unsolicited junk email, spam email, or "for-profit" messages.
      g. Forwarding potentially offensive messages that originated outside the campus to employees/students inside the campus.
      h. Intentionally obscuring or forging of the date, time, physical source, logical source, or other header information of an email message.
      i. Other such activities that Bluefield College finds inappropriate.

If a user feels that they have received an email message that would violate this policy, they may report it in accordance to section 16 of this policy.

VI. APPROPRIATE EMAIL USAGE:

Bluefield College considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content and timely replies in conveying a professional atmosphere. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication.

    a. Write well-structured emails and use short, descriptive subjects.
    b. Bluefield College's email style is informal. This means that sentences can be short and to the point. The use of Internet abbreviations and characters however, is not encouraged.
    c. For employee's, signatures should include the sender's name, job title, contact information, and college's name.
    d. Users should spell check all mails prior to transmission.
    e. Do not write emails in all capitals. This makes the user look to be shouting.
    f. Only mark emails as important if they really are important.

The Bluefield College email system is intended to facilitate communications of the Bluefield College community. Such usage may include but not be limited to the following.

    g. Messages of academic importance (learning, teaching, research) between, students, faculty, and students and faculty to one another.
    h. Messages of Bluefield College Events to the Bluefield College community.
    i. Messages that are used for the day to day operation of Bluefield College by the College community.
    j. Messages communications concerning official College business with both the College community and external entities.
    k. Other such activities that Bluefield College finds appropriate.

VII.   PERSONAL USE OF EMAIL:

1) EMPLOYEES:

Employees of Bluefield College may use the Email System for incidental personal purposes provided that such does not; burden Bluefield College with noticeable incremental cost, interfere with the Employee's employment or other obligations to Bluefield College, or interfere with normal operations of the Information Systems and Technology Department which will not assist in issues related to personal email. Also personal email is subject to all Policy Statements of this Policy.

2) STUDENTS:

Students of Bluefield College may use the Email System for personal purposes. However this should be done so that personal email does not interfere with the

Learning processes provided by Bluefield College. Also if using the Bluefield College Email System for personal purposes be advised that personal email also is subject to all Policy Statements of this Policy.

VIII.   TRANSMISSION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION VIA EMAIL:

Confidentiality of email may be compromised by the applicability of law or policy, including this Policy. Users should exercise extreme caution in using email to communicate confidential or sensitive information. If a user is in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, they should check this with their supervisor first. Users should never send any information that would be protected by any Federal, State, or Local laws, such as, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This includes the following list, though this list is meant to be illustrative, and is not exhaustive.

   a. Any non Bluefield College Identifications, such as a full or any part of Social Security Numbers.
   b. Usernames
   c. Passwords

Best practices would be for the user to not send any information they would not feel safe sending on an exposed Post Card through a postal service.

IX. EMAIL ATTACHMENTS:

In many cases it is required to send an attachment through email, following is a simple set of guidelines to follow when using attachments:

   a. Only send attachments as necessary.
   b. Compress attachments over 5 Megabytes in size.
   c. Compress multiple attachments into one for more efficient transmission and retrieval.
   d. Notify the recipient of any attachment they may not be expecting.
   e. Send any attachment passwords in a separate email with a brief explanation of the passwords need and use.
   f. If you do not know who the attachment is from or it looks suspicious to you do not open the attachment.

X. EMAIL FORWARDING:

Bluefield College considers email as an official means of communication between Faculty, Staff, and Students. As such official communications may be sent to users email addresses. With this in mind special considerations must be taken when forwarding email to other accounts.

1) **RULES BASED PERMANENT FORWARDING OF EMAIL FROM ONE BLUEFIELD COLLEGE ACCOUNT TO ANOTHER:**

Students should never permanently forward their email to another user account.

Employee's may set a permanent forward on their email to another Bluefield College email user's account. This process must however be approved by the intended recipient of the email.

In the event of Employment termination refer to the Bluefield College Policy "Notification for User Account Termination"

2) **RULES BASED PERMANENT FORWARDING OF EMAIL FROM A BLUEFIELD COLLEGE ACCOUNT TO AN NON BLUEFIELD COLLEGE ACCOUNT:**

As email is an official means of communication users should always check their Bluefield College Email Account. It is prohibited for any Bluefield College Email user, (Faculty, Staff, or Students) to setup a permanent email forward from their Bluefield College Account to a non Bluefield College account. Bluefield College cannot guarantee that a user will receive their email if it is sent to a non Bluefield College account. Once an email has left the Bluefield College email system it may be blocked by the third party account provider, intercepted or rejected.

XI. EMAIL MASS MESSAGING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL:

Email lists have been set up for faculty, staff, and students of Bluefield College. These lists are intended to allow communication of important information that is of interest to the Bluefield College community. Examples of this type of information are registration or graduation information, campus-wide activities announcements, organizations announcements, campus-wide faculty or staff meetings, and safety bulletins. If it is deemed necessary by Bluefield College these list may become moderated to prevent spam and abuse. These lists are subject to all sections of this policy.

If you feel that unimportant, inappropriate, or repetitive information is being posted to the lists, please send you concerns to itdepartment@bluefield.edu The Department of Information Systems and Technology will work with the appropriate cabinet member, supervisor, or Dean of Student Services, for appropriate disciplinary actions for the offender.

The Bluefield College Email System may not be used for mass messaging of external or non Bluefield College email addresses for any reason. Such actions will cause the Bluefield College Email System to be Black Listed with other Email Providers. If an employee does perform Mass Messaging from the College email system their department will be fully responsible for all resources, including financial, for the removal from such Black Lists, a process that can take up to five years, depending on the Black List. If a Student performs a Mass Messaging of

external email addresses from the College Email system the student will be solely responsible for all resources expended for the removal of Bluefield College from the Black List.

XII. EMAIL ARCHIVING AND RETENTION:

Bluefield College does not maintain central archives of all email sent or received. Email is normally backed up only to ensure system integrity and reliability, not to provide for future retrieval, although backups may at times serve the later purpose incidentally. The Department of Information Systems and Technology are not required by this Policy to retrieve email from such backups upon the Holder's request, although on occasion they may do so as a courtesy.

Email users are to be responsible for Archiving their own email. This can be done by exporting a backup copy of the email from the local email client and saving the backup to a CD, DVD, or Printouts. Retaining such backups should be done in accordance with Bluefield College policies on retention of other paper documents.

Email should not be left in the email system for more than two years, unless it is of absolute necessity, it should instead be saved on an Archived backup as described above. The Department of Information Systems and Technology will monitor mailbox sizes and users with exceedingly large mailboxes will also be required to remove messages from the email systems. This is to maintain size limits as described in the standard *Email System Mailbox Quota and Send/Receive Restrictions*.

XIII. EMAIL BACKUP:

The Department of Information Systems and Technology will perform weekly backups of the email system. This backup will be run and overwritten on the same backup media each week, no backup will be over a week old. This backup is intended for system integrity and disaster recovery should the system be destroyed. It is not intended to recover a single user's email, but instead the full system. Individual users are to archive their own email messages.

XIV. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AND SPECIAL BACKUPS:

In the event of Legal Proceedings Bluefield College will perform special backups of the email system to retain all messages for said Legal Proceedings for the purpose of Federal Electronic Discovery Laws. These backups will only begin once the Department of Information Systems and Technology of Bluefield College has been formally notified by Bluefield College Legal Counsel that Legal Proceedings have begun and records are to be retained. All such actions will be done with the advice of Bluefield College Legal Counsel. Bluefield College will perform all actions in full compliance with the law.

XV. EMAIL ACCOUNTS; CREATION AND TERMINATION:

1) EMPLOYEE EMAIL ACCOUNTS:

For all Bluefield College employees the email account is the same as their BCLAN ID, and is created at the same time, as stated in the standard *College Login ID Standard (BCLAN)*. Employee email accounts will be disabled at the end of employment at Bluefield College and then deleted within one month of the end of employment. Email account passwords are the same as the BCLAN Password as described in the policy *BCLAN Password Policy*. If an employee is terminated then the process for removal of the email account is overseen by the policy *Notification for User Account Termination* and the processes it follows.

2) STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNTS:

For all Bluefield College students the email account is the same as their BCLAN ID, and is created at the same time, as stated in the standard *College Login ID Standard (BCLAN)*. Student email accounts will be deleted normally six weeks into the next full semester following their graduation. For students that withdraw, their accounts will be deleted at time of withdrawal. All student account terminations are overseen by the policy *Student Account Policies*.

It is the responsibility of the student to print off important emails before the account it terminated following the graduation or withdrawal of the student.

XVI. REPORT OF POLICY VIOLATION:

1) REPORT BY EMPLOYEE:

If an employee feels this policy has been violated by another user, they may report this to either the Director or Email Administrator of the Information Systems and Technology Department. For confidentiality they may request an in person meeting, however the request should be sent via email to either the Director or Email Administrator of the Information Systems and Technology Department. If it is found that a violation has taken place the Information Systems and Technology Department will notify the appropriate Cabinet member, and determine the appropriate course of action.

2) REPORT BY STUDENT:

If a Student feels this policy has been violated by another user, they may report this to either the Director or Email Administrator of the Information Systems and Technology Department, the Dean of Student Services should also be notified. For confidentiality they may request an in person meeting, however the request should be sent via email to either the Director or Email Administrator of the

Information Systems and Technology Department or Dean of Students. If it is found that a violation has taken place, the Information Systems and Technology Department will consult with either the Dean of Students or appropriate Cabinet member, and determine the appropriate course of action.

XVII. EMAIL POLICY REVISION AND UPDATE GUIDELINE:

The Bluefield College General Email Policy will be periodically reviewed by the Department of Information Systems and Technology and amended as the Department sees fit. Any amendment will undergo the approval process. Once the amendment has been approved a notice will be sent out to the entire Bluefield College community thirty days prior to the amendment taking effect.

Related Policies, References and Attachments:

This collection of Bluefield College Information Systems and Technology policies and procedures contain acceptable use, security, networking, administrative, and academic policies that have been developed to supplement and clarify Bluefield College policy.