The purpose of an **Information Technology Standard** is to specify requirements for compliance with Old Dominion University Information Technology policies, other University policies, as well as applicable laws and regulations. Standards may include business principles, best practices, technical standards, migration and implementation strategies, that direct the design, deployment and management of information technology.

**Information Technology Standard:** Email Archive and Retention Standard  
**Reference Number:** 6.2.0  
**Date of Current Revision or Creation:** September 19, 2012

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**A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this standard is to address the general responsibilities of email management and outlines the default archiving, retention and backup schedules.

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**B. DEFINITIONS**

**Archives** are a collection of records stored electronically for long-term preservation.

A **backup** is a process of copying records to a second medium as a precaution in case the original medium fails.

**Electronic mail (email)** is any message, image, form, attachment, data, or other communication sent, received, or stored within an electronic mail system.

**Freedom of Information Act** (FOIA) is the U.S. Freedom of Information Act law ensuring public access to U.S. government records.

**OCCS** is the acronym for the official name of the Office of Computing and Communications Services.

**Privacy Act of 1974, as amended** is the code of fair information practices which governs the conditions of disclosure agencies follow regarding personal records.

**Retention** is defined as the period of time a file or data will be kept before it is destroyed. Records that serve no further purpose are destroyed to manage storage space and to abide by state guidelines.
User includes anyone who accesses and uses the Old Dominion University information technology resources.

C. STANDARDS STATEMENT

All electronic mail (email) held at the University are legally discoverable following a request under the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended or the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be cited as evidence in legal proceedings. All email data must reside on ODU's mail servers. Users should not create local archives in Personal Folders, .pst files, or create other copies of their email.

Every user is responsible for the archiving, retention and deletion of all emails in accounts for which they are responsible. Department heads and unit managers are responsible for providing records retention guidance to staff and faculty within their respective units. In general, users are advised to periodically check the contents of accounts and consider whether to retain or delete each entry; this is particularly important for emails that contain personal data and are therefore subject to the Privacy Act.

The presumption is that unless there are good reasons to retain an email, it should be deleted.

Automatic Archiving

Email systems are configured to automatically archive messages. Once the account approaches the maximum capacity, mail will be archived automatically, starting with oldest messages first until the mailbox is down to two-thirds of the original allocation. Users retain access to messages in their views. An icon will display next to the archived message.

Managed Folders

Managed folders are pre-defined folders with assigned retention periods to aid users with personal email management and institutional compliance. Retention periods vary for each folder and should be used conscientiously. Users are prohibited from storing or establishing rules to store all messages to long-term storage folders. In these cases, supervisors will be alerted to help correct the problem.

Retention Schedule

Default retention periods for data stored within the email system are established on the following schedule:

- Calendars: Entries are retained for 2 years.
- Inbox: Messages are retained for 12 months from the date of the message
- Sent Mail: Messages are retained for 2 years from the date of the message
- Drafts: Messages are retained for one month from the date of the draft
- Junk Mail: Messages are retained for one month from the date of the message.
- Deleted Items: Messages are retained for 3 days and are available for users to recover from the server for 30 days.

- Managed Folders: Marked permanent, 10 years, 5 years, 3 years, and 2 years.

A less aggressive retention period is utilized which applies to the President, past Presidents, Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Presidents, past Vice Presidents, Assistants to the Presidents, Deans, Associate Deans, Assistants to the Deans, Provost, Vice Provost, past Provosts, & Directors whose jobs dictate that their data must be retained for longer periods of time. For this exceptional retention schedule, the data stored within the email system is established on the following schedule:

- Calendars: No automatic deletion.

- Inbox: No automatic deletion.

- Sent Mail: No automatic deletion.

- Drafts: Messages are retained for one month from the date of the draft

- Junk Mail: Messages are retained for one month from the date of the message.

- Deleted Items: Messages are retained for 3 days and are available for users to recover from the server for 30 days.

- Managed Folders: Marked permanent, 10 years, 5 years, 3 years, and 2 years.

- User-created folders: No automatic deletion.

Recovery Tools
The email system will be enabled to allow users to recover deleted messages for up to 30 days.

Backups
These backups are for system restoration and disaster recovery purposes, and are not designed to facilitate retrieval of deleted messages. Two back-up copies of two versions are maintained.

Other Data Stored
Instant messaging correspondence, voice messages, fax transmissions, etc. may be saved with a logging function or copied into a file and saved. All data stored within the email system is subject to this standard.
D. PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES & OTHER RELATED INFORMATION

Code of Virginia Public Records Act
University Policy 3500 – Use of Computing Resources
IT Standard – 07.1.0 Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan

E. HISTORY

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<tr>
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