Sample E-mail Policy

Note: This policy is for informational purposes only. No reliance should be placed on this document without legal counsel. All electronic policies should be developed with the assistance of a corporate attorney and human resources director/manager.

ABC Co. provides employees with electronic communication tools, including an e-mail system. This e-mail policy, which governs employee use of the company's e-mail system, applies to e-mail use at ABC's headquarters and district offices, as well as remote locations, including, but not limited to, employee homes, airports, hotels, and client and supplier offices. The company's e-mail rules and policies apply to full-time employees, part-time employees, independent contractors, interns, consultants, suppliers, clients, and other third parties. Any employee who violates ABC's e-mail rules and policies is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

E-mail Exists for Business Purposes

ABC allows e-mail access primarily for business purposes. Employees may use the company's e-mail system for personal use only in accordance with this policy. Employees are prohibited from using personal e-mail software (e.g., Yahoo!, Hotmail, or AOL.) for business or personal communications at the office.

Authorized Personal E-mail Use

Employees may use e-mail to communicate with spouses, children, domestic partners, and other family members. Employees' personal use of e-mail is limited to lunch breaks and work breaks only. Employees may not use e-mail for personal purposes during otherwise productive business hours. Employees are prohibited from using e-mail to operate a business, conduct an external job search, solicit money for personal gain, campaign for political causes or candidates, or promote or solicit funds for a religious or other personal cause.

Employees Have No Reasonable Expectation of Privacy

E-mail messages created and transmitted on ABC computers are the property of the company. ABC reserves the right to monitor all e-mail transmitted via the company's computer system. Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy when it comes to business and personal use of ABC's e-mail system.

E-mail Monitoring Activities

The company reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any and all employee e-mail use at any time and without prior notice. In addition, ABC may monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any files, information, software, and other content created, sent, received, downloaded, uploaded, accessed, or stored through the company's e-mail system. ABC reserves the right to disclose e-mail information and images to regulators, courts, law enforcement agencies, and other third parties without the employee's consent.

Offensive Content and Harassing or Discriminatory Activities Are Banned

Employees are prohibited from using e-mail to engage in activities or transmit content that is harassing, discriminatory, menacing, threatening, obscene, defamatory, or in any way objectionable or offensive.

Employees Are Prohibited From Using E-mail to:

1. Send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to text, images, or jokes that disparage others based on their race, religion, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, disability, ancestry, or age.

2. Send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to messages that are disparaging or defamatory.

3. Spread gossip, rumors, or innuendos about employees, clients, suppliers, or other outside parties.

4. Send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to sexually oriented messages or images.

5. Send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to messages or images that contain foul, obscene, disrespectful, or adult-oriented language.

6. Send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to messages or images that are intended to alarm others, embarrass ABC, negatively impact employee productivity, or harm employee morale.

Confidential, Proprietary, and Personal Information Must Be Protected

Unless authorized to do so, employees are prohibited from using e-mail to transmit confidential information to outside parties. Employees may not access, send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to confidential or proprietary information about ABC Co., its employees, clients, suppliers, and other business associates. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, client lists, credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, employee performance reviews, salary details, trade secrets, passwords, and information that could embarrass ABC and its employees if the information were disclosed to the public.

Do Not Use E-mail to Communicate With Lawyers

To preserve all communication privileges between lawyers and clients, never use e-mail to seek legal advice or pose a legal question.

Business Record Retention

E-mail messages are written business records and are subject to ABC's rules and policies for retaining and deleting business records. Please refer to the company's business record retention policy for more information.

Violations

These guidelines are intended to provide ABC employees with general examples of acceptable and unacceptable uses of the company's e-mail system. A violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Acknowledgement

If you have questions about the above policies and procedures, address them to the compliance officer or chief information officer before signing the following agreement.

I have read ABC's e-mail policy and agree to abide by it. I understand that a violation of any of the above policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including my termination.

_____
Employee Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Employee Signature Date