

USM.

## **I. Policy Statement**

University System of Maryland Office (USMO) electronic mail users must abide by the guidelines in this policy and protect e-mail documents according to USM policies and Maryland State laws.

## **II. Reason for Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines relating to the permissible use of the USMO's electronic mail system ("e-mail"); to delineate the USMO's right of access to e-mail; and to clarify policies relating to the retention and destruction of e-mail.

## **III. Definitions**

1. Electronic communication – Any means of transmitting and receiving messages over electronic media such as telephone, fax or computer.
2. USMO e-mail system – E-mail services provided by the USM Office through the Office of Information Technology.
3. Unsolicited e-

## **V. Entities Affected by this Policy:**

This policy applies to all USM staff (full-time, part-time, or contractual) who have USM Office e-mail accounts.

## **VI. Procedures:**

### **A. Acceptable Use**

1. The USM Office provides the USMO e-mail system

of employees; information about the evaluation, performance or discipline of USMO employees; information relating to the investigation, defense, or prosecution of any pending judicial action or administrative charge in which the USM Office or any employee thereof are parties; information relating to the investigation, resolution or disposition of any complaint or charge involving faculty, staff or students of USM institutions, including, but not limited to, complaints and/or charges involving fair practices, grievances or alleged discrimination; and information relating to the request for or delivery of legal advice or employer/employee relations assistance) via unencrypted e-mail, and should limit any such communications (or further disclosure of any such communications) to those with a legitimate need to know.

### **C. Prohibited Uses**

1. The e-mail system may not be used for unlawful activities or for commercial purposes that are not directly related to the mission of the USM Office or otherwise authorized. Other prohibited uses of the e-mail system include, but are not limited to:
  1. Sending copies of documents or inclusion of the work of others into e-mail in violation of copyright laws.
  2. Sending junk mail or spam messages.
  3. Using e-mail to harass, intimidate, defame or discriminate against others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct business.

14. Using e-

### **E. Intellectual Property**

1. A staff member does not lose any ownership interest he/she has in intellectual property pursuant to USM policies on intellectual property, simply because the work is communicated through e-mail. However, if there is a dispute regarding ownership of the work, the USM Office has the right, upon written notification to the faculty or staff member, to obtain access to the work (and to any e-mails in which the work is communicated) for the purpose of determining whether the USM Office has an interest in it.

### **F. Access and Disclosure**

1. Access to the USM Office's information technology resources, including the e-mail system, is a privilege. The USM Office reserves the right to limit, restrict or remove access to its resources when policies or laws are violated and to use appropriate means to safeguard its resources, preserve network/system integrity, and ensure continued service delivery at all times.
2. E-mail may constitute USM Office "correspondence" or "computerized records" and therefore may be considered public records subject to disclosure under Maryland's Public Information Act or other laws, or as evidence in a legal action.
3. The USM Office does not routinely inspect, monitor, or disclose e-mail without the holder's consent. The USM Office, however, shall have the right, in its discretion, to access, retrieve, inspect and disclose the contents of e-mail for USM Office-related purposes, which may include, but are not limited to:
  1. maintaining system integrity;
  2. protecting health and safety;
  3. preventing interference with the academic or administrative mission of any USM institution;
  4. performing required internal investigations;
  5. complying with legal requests and demands.

### **G.**