



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 99- 21
August 4, 1999

TO: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
FROM: Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
RE: cc:Mail - Availability in the Transitional Assistance Office

Introduction

As of August, 1999, cc:Mail will be available to all Transitional Assistance Office staff. By this time all TAO staff will have been trained in the use of this application. cc:Mail is a Lotus Smartsuite application and works like any other Windows application. cc:Mail is the Lotus brand name for what is commonly known as e-mail. E-mail is Electronic mail.

cc:Mail is a communication tool that will greatly enhance daily work activities. TAO staff can send and receive mail through this application.

Accessing cc:Mail

cc:Mail can be accessed by clicking the Start Menu, then the Programs icon and finally, Lotus Applications, where Lotus cc:Mail can be found.

Enter the password at the cursor. Initially, the password will be *12345678*. Once cc:Mail has been accessed for the first time, Transitional Assistance Office staff must change this to a permanent, confidential password.

Ethics and the Use of cc:Mail

There are specific standards and guidelines that must be followed when using cc:Mail. The Department has issued documentation regarding this issue outlined in the attached memo from General Counsel Thomas E. Noonan (see attachment A).

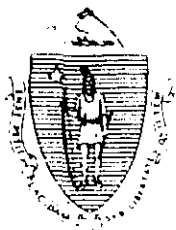
It is essential that all Transitional Assistance Office staff read and adhere to the General Counsel's directives concerning the appropriate use of E-mail. E-mail is a powerful communications tool which, if not appropriately used, can create legal problems for the Department and its staff.

**Ethics and the
Use of cc:Mail
(cont.)**

A cc:Mail document may be considered to be no different than a document printed on Department letterhead stationary. As the General Counsel's memo indicates, inappropriate use of E-mail may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Questions

If you have any system-related questions, call the Customer Service Center at (617) 348-5290.



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TO: All Department Employees

FR: Thomas E. Noonan, General Counsel

DA: August 21, 1997

TEA

Re: Use of Personal Computers, E-Mail, Voice Mail, and the Internet

As the Department increases its use of technology and electronic communication, it is an appropriate time to review our personnel policies in light of these new developments. For the most part, the Department's existing policies, as well as federal and state law, govern employee use of personal computers, e-mail, voice mail, and the Internet. The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the effect of those laws and policies on employee use of these tools and, where necessary, to remind staff of Department policy. This policy applies to all employees, and to any consultants or contractors who are provided use or access with Department funds. The term "employee" when used in this memo refers to all covered individuals. A violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment, and may result in other sanctions under federal or state laws.

Appropriate use

Personal computers, e-mail, voice mail, and access to the Internet are provided to employees for the purpose of increasing an employee's efficiency and productivity in carrying out the business of the Department of Transitional Assistance. Each employee is responsible for ensuring that any usage is for an appropriate purpose and is conducted professionally and courteously.

Inappropriate use

Use of any of these tools, or any other Department equipment, in a manner that interferes with the Department's ability to conduct its business in an efficient, productive, and professional manner is prohibited. Under no circumstance may any of these tools be used for personal gain, or for a purpose, or in a manner, that would violate any federal or state law or regulation or

Department policy. The Commonwealth's conflict-of-interest law prohibits one from using the position of a state employee to secure for oneself or another unwarranted privileges which are of substantial value and which are not properly available to similarly situated individuals.

Department employees are also prohibited from installing software onto a personal computer, unless the Department's MIS unit has authorized the installation. One reason for this restriction is to prevent the introduction of a virus that could harm Department programs. The MIS unit will conduct periodic audits of the Department's computers to detect unauthorized usage.

Department monitoring and employee privacy

Because these tools are provided solely for business purposes, the Department owns the product of any usage. The Department reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files as deemed necessary and appropriate. All communications, including text and images, can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without the prior consent of the sender or the receiver. When an employee uses a personal computer, e-mail, voice mail or the Internet for any purpose, the employee is consenting to these conditions, and is waiving any right to privacy.

Individual employees who are not acting on behalf of the Department shall not access or attempt to access the voice mail or e-mail of another employee without that employee's consent. Interceptions of such communications may violate state and federal law. Employees are prohibited from disclosing their own access codes to anyone else, or from using a code assigned to another employee.

Confidential information

Information that is transmitted through electronic media can be readily forwarded, printed, or copied without the knowledge of the sender. Accordingly, employees must be particularly careful when transmitting confidential information about recipients, other employees, or confidential Department matters to ensure such confidential information is not disclosed improperly.

Messages with illegal content

Existing laws and Department policies prohibit the dissemination of material that is defamatory or discriminatory. Transmission of messages that defame, harass, or intimidate, or discriminate on the basis of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or handicap status are prohibited.

Other forms of expression are prohibited because of one's status as a state employee or an employee paid with federal funds. For example, the restrictions on certain types of political activity exist whether the activity is verbal or transmitted over e-mail, voice mail, or the Internet.

Copyright infringement and licensing agreements

Copyright laws and licensing agreements may prohibit the copying or dissemination of protected products. The Department's use of software, for example, is often subject to a licensing agreement that limits the number of users of the software. Similarly, copyright laws may prohibit the copying or dissemination of material without the approval of the author. Before an employee engages in any activity that may be subject to copyright laws or licensing agreements, the employee is responsible for ensuring that the usage is appropriate.

Additional questions

This memo is intended to address some of the questions that may arise from the use of personal computers, e-mail, voice mail, and the Internet. It has used illustrative examples, but is not intended to cover all areas. If you have any questions regarding appropriate use, you should raise them initially with the head of your unit or your office director, who is then encouraged to relay them to the Legal Division (617/348-8520). The Department reserves the right to change this policy at any time.