

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE (ITOC)

Email Retention Policy

Policy Number: ITOC 1
Effective Date : 12/9/10

Description: Covers the City's policy for Email Retention.

1. Overview

This policy addresses the specific need for the management of and retention periods for Citywide email. It is established to answer retention issues exclusively applicable to the current Los Angeles Google Enterprise Email & Collaboration System (LA GEECS), and the policies applicable to live email, archives, and the final disposal of email from the system.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Citywide email retention policy is to establish:

- 2.1 A consistent, realistic, and manageable email organization for all City email users that meet the enterprise business requirements of the City;
- 2.2 A consistent retention platform that will satisfy the requirements of any request for public records; and
- 2.3 An inbox and archival policy that will afford a consistent and efficient means to meet such public records requests and legal hold requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to retention management for LA GEECS email accounts including:

- 3.1 The email inbox, which encompasses the part of the system housing the inbox, sent, drafted, and archived (inbox archive) emails, as well as email kept in any folder named and managed by the account holder.

3.2 The email trash bin and spam, which houses emails deleted by the end user and identified by the system as spam.

LA GEECS is not a Document Management System. The use of the word “retention” associated with email retained in the user in-box is not to be interpreted as a records retention policy administered under the City records management program, as prescribed by Division 12 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC). This policy does not address any issues concerning the classification, storage, and destruction of the different types of stored records and data that are either non-email-based or internet-based, nor does it address archives from previous email systems that were not moved to LA GEECS. These documents and data stores will be covered by the Data Retention policies of the City of Los Angeles and Internet-Based (IB) Record Classification & Retention Policy (currently under development).

4. Policy

Email retention and capacity will be governed by the following:

4.1 Retention Period

The email retention policy for the live mail inbox is as follows:

- 4.1.1—**LIVE IN BOX (without KEEP Label):** Three years from the date that the email arrived in the inbox. The email retention policy directs that email will be automatically removed from the active inbox on the third anniversary of arrival;
- 4.1.2 **LIVE IN BOX (with KEEP Label):** End users may mark specific emails with the “Keep” Label. This label will mark the item for long-time retention and will disable the automatic deletion discussed above in 4.1.1.
- 4.1.3 **SPAM or TRASH Folders:** Items will be permanently deleted 30 days after placing items in either the Spam or Trash Folders.

NOTE: The KEEP Label (4.1.2) will not disable the automated deletion of KEEP labeled items placed within the SPAM or TRASH folders.

4.2 Email Storage Capacity. Each email account has approximately 25 gigabytes (GB) of storage. This storage is used for email messages as well as any attachments made thereto. Once a user exceeds this storage allocation, that person will not be able to send or receive emails until that time when available storage is reduced to a level below the maximum space permitted.

4.3 Permanent and Accessible Individual Account Email Archival. Permanent and accessible individual account email archival is not available for any email message. LA GEECS should not be considered nor treated as a document management system.

4.4 Legal Holds. Due to litigation, public records requests, and other such requests, certain emails shall be excluded from retention period expiration. The legal holds shall be applied by each individual end user upon request or approval of the City Attorney or designated departmental representative, following existing policies and guidelines for such requests. Individual end users must maintain records per directions of the City Attorney or designated departmental representative.

4.5 Purging and Recovery of Deleted Emails (Trash and Spam). All email and attachments deleted by the user are automatically placed into the user's "Trash". All trash or items identified as Spam by the system, and which are older than 30 days, will be automatically deleted (purged) by the system. Any items in Trash and Spam can be manually deleted by the user at any time. Once an item has been deleted from the Trash or Spam folders it is not retrievable by the end user, the department, or ITA and is gone forever.

5. Management of Individual Email Accounts

ITA will establish the retention and other applicable settings consistent with the retention period through the enterprise administrative console.

With the time and space limitations placed on the email account holder, it is essential that end users learn to manage their email accounts in a timely and organized manner.

A three-year retention period will be applied as a technical default. Users must also be aware of the 25 GB storage space limitation, as all email attachments are also stored in the allocated space. Once this limit is reached, users will not be able to send or receive emails. Therefore it is critical for the efficient use of the email system, that a mindful and judicious use be put into practice. As such, the email account should not be used as a permanent and long term filing or record management system.

A real time display of the individual account percentage (%) usage of the 25 GB available space is listed at the bottom of the Inbox. When the user hits the 25 GB quota, the user interface tells the user that he or she will need to delete messages before any more messages can be sent or received. All users should check this readout on a regular basis.

The Information Technology Agency will be available to assist City staff in meeting the requirements of this Policy.

6. Policy Enforcement, Review, & Update

Overall, compliance with this policy, all noted exceptions and any disciplinary action is the responsibility of the head of each department.

Each individual user of LA GEECS email must take all appropriate actions to keep all emails and files in accordance with all applicable requirements.