

Email, University Communications

Effective: October 1, 2006

Updated/Revised: October 6, 2025

Contact: [Information Technology Services \(ITS\)](#)

Introduction

Electronic mail (email) is a primary means of communication both within Iowa State University and externally. Iowa State University must be able to communicate quickly and efficiently with faculty, staff, and students to conduct university business.

Scope

This policy applies to all email accounts maintained, provided, and offered by the University. This policy applies to all iastate.edu email addresses and sub-domains.

Policy Statement

Iowa State University provides email accounts to faculty and staff to conduct University business. Iowa State University also provides email accounts to all currently enrolled students at the University. In addition, Iowa State University may provide email addresses to sponsored affiliates and visiting scholars. Unless law, contract, or other University policy prohibits email or requires another form of communication, Iowa State University may send communications to faculty, staff, and students by email to their Iowa State University email address as a form of official University communication. Email is expected to be received and read by the recipient in a timely fashion at all times during the year, as email communications may be time-sensitive. These official communications may include content relating to the academic and administrative needs of the University, including business that is critical to the operation and function of the University as well as student enrollment status, financial responsibilities, and compliance with University policies and procedures. Email services are extended for the sole use of University faculty, staff, students, and other appropriately authorized users to accomplish tasks related to and consistent with the mission of the University. University email systems and servers are University facilities, resources and property.

Security & Privacy

1. Email communications must comply with federal and state laws and University policies, including the Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources and Electronic Privacy policies.
2. Email must not be used to communicate highly sensitive information. Highly sensitive information includes personal information that, if exposed, can lead to identity theft, including social security numbers, driver's license numbers, financial account numbers, and credit/debit card numbers. Health and medical information protected by state and federal law is also considered highly sensitive.
3. Faculty, staff, and students are responsible for keeping their account secure and must not share their passwords with others or leave them exposed.

University Email Address

University email addresses are of the form [Net- ID]@iastate.edu and are included in the University directory for employees. Current Iowa State University students are also expected to have a

University email address. Students may request that their University email address not be made public by completing a no information release request in the Office of the Registrar.

University faculty and staff are required to have a University email address. Faculty and staff will choose a University email address as part of the onboarding process.

Students that are employed at the University may be provided a secondary account for their student employment responsibilities.

Authorized Users of University Provided Email Accounts and Termination of Services

Email accounts are provided to University faculty and staff only while the employee is employed by the University. Once an employee's email account is terminated, employees may no longer access the contents of their mailboxes, nor permissive they export their mailbox to a personal account before departure.

Email accounts are available for students to support learning and for communication by and between the University and themselves. Email accounts are provided only while a student is enrolled in the University. Once a student's email account is terminated, students may no longer access the contents of their mailboxes.

Sponsorship of a University email account for an individual after their University affiliation ends is not permitted, with the exception of emeritus faculty.

The following outlines the authorized users of email at the University, as well as termination of account provisions:

Authorized Users	Termination of Iowa State University Email Accounts
Students	Access to University email ends approximately 180 days after separation from the University and may be terminated or suspended immediately for misconduct or in the best interests of the University.
Faculty-Emeritus	Eligible for access to University email dependent on account usage. Account needs to be updated annually, as accounts inactive beyond 365 days may be terminated. Access may be terminated or suspended immediately in the best interests of University.
Faculty - Retired (Non-Emeritus) and Separated	Access to University email ends one day after separation from the University. Access may be terminated or suspended immediately in the case of involuntary separation or in the best interests of the University.
Staff and Postdoctoral Scholars - Retired and Separated	Access to University email ends one day after separation from the University. Access may be terminated or suspended immediately in the case of involuntary separation or in the best interests of the University.
Sponsored Affiliates (e.g., Visiting Scholars)	Access to University email ends on the last day of their designation.

Authorized Service Restrictions

University email users must comply with state and federal laws, University policies, and standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct. Access to University email services is a privilege that may be wholly or partially restricted by the University without prior notice and without the consent of the email user: (a) when required by and consistent with applicable law or policy; (b) when there is a reasonable suspicion that violations of policy or law have occurred or may occur; or (c) when required to meet time-dependent, critical operational needs. Such access restrictions are to follow the process outlined in the electronic privacy policy.

When an individual's affiliation with the University ends for purposes other than becoming Emeritus faculty, the individual's University official email service will be discontinued.

Misuse

Using email for illegal activities is strictly prohibited. Illegal use may include, but is not limited to, obscenity; child pornography; unlawful threats; prohibited harassment; theft; attempting unauthorized access to data or attempting to breach any security measures on any electronic communications system; attempting to intercept any electronic communication transmissions without proper authority; and violation of copyright, trademark, or defamation law.

In addition to illegal activities, the following email practices are expressly prohibited: entry, examination, use, transfer, and tampering with the accounts and files of others, unless appropriately authorized pursuant to this policy; altering email system software or hardware configurations; or interfering with the work of others or with University or other computing facilities.

University Email Forwarding

University email is an official means of communication for Iowa State University. Faculty, staff, and students are required to conduct University business from their University-assigned email address containing the iastate.edu domain.

Automatically forwarding University email poses a security threat that can put students, faculty and staff at risk of fraud and identity theft. To protect sensitive, private, and/or confidential information, automation tools, protocols, or rules to enable auto-forwarding to move email from a University-managed email system to a non-University managed email system is not permitted.

Instructional Use

Faculty will determine how electronic communication, including email, will be used in their classes, and must specify those requirements in the course syllabus.

Resources

Links

- [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#)
- [Electronic Privacy](#)
- [Mass Email and Effective Electronic Communication](#)
- [Net-ID Services - Accounts and Passwords](#)
- [Net-ID Suspension](#)
- [E-mail for Faculty and Staff \(Microsoft Outlook\)](#)
- [E-mail and Calendaring](#)