

### **3.3.21 KCTCS E-Mail Policy**

Electronic mail or "e-mail" is considered an official method for communication at KCTCS because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective, and environmentally aware manner. KCTCS takes reasonable security precautions to ensure the privacy of this correspondence, both when it is in transit between electronic mailboxes and when it is stored in an individual's electronic mailbox. All members of the KCTCS community should be advised, however, that electronic media are not entirely private, and confidential information should be sent by other means.

#### **3.3.21.1 Purpose**

This policy ensures that students, faculty, staff, and administrators have access to this important form of communication. It ensures KCTCS groups can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of KCTCS colleges as needed.

Specifically, the purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish policy on privacy, confidentiality, and security in electronic communications;
- Ensure that KCTCS electronic communications resources are used for purposes appropriate to the KCTCS mission;
- Inform the KCTCS community about the applicability of laws and KCTCS policies to electronic communications;
- Ensure that electronic communications resources are used in compliance with those laws and KCTCS policies; and
- Prevent disruptions to and misuse of KCTCS electronic communications resources, services, and activities.

#### **3.3.21.2 Contacts**

Questions or comments about this policy should be directed to the KCTCS Chief Information Officer or designee.

#### **3.3.21.3 Definitions**

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| <b>A. Forwarded e-mail</b>        | E-Mail sent to an address that is automatically sent via computer code to another e-mail account.              |
| <b>B. Official e-mail account</b> | An e-mail account, issued by KCTCS, which is based on a person's name and ends in the domain name "KCTCS.edu". |

<b>C. Emergency or necessity</b>	Circumstances under which notification of the college or KCTCS community will reduce the risk of personal harm, property damage, or severe negative impact on KCTCS operations.
<b>D. Large routine, periodic, targeted mailings</b>	Mailings sent to all or most of a broad constituency such as students, faculty, or staff. Examples of such mailings would be those containing news and announcements collected and sent on a regular basis, in lieu of distinct separate mailings; notification from the Office of the Registrar of the availability of final grade information sent to all students; reminders concerning financial aid deadlines sent to relevant student populations by the Office of Student Financial Aid.
<b>E. Commercial mailings</b>	Mailings promoting the products or services of an entity not directly affiliated with KCTCS.
<b>F. KCTCS Community</b>	All KCTCS administrators, faculty, staff, and students from all KCTCS colleges and System Office.
<b>G. College Community</b>	A KCTCS college group of administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

### **3.3.21.4 E-Mail Provisions That Apply to the Entire KCTCS Community**

#### **3.3.21.4.1 Responsibilities**

- KCTCS students and employees have an obligation to use their access to the Internet and e-mail in a responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs, courtesies, and any or all applicable laws or regulation.
- As with other forms of publications, copyright restrictions/regulations shall be observed.
- KCTCS students and employees shall be aware that their conduct or information they publish could reflect on the reputation of KCTCS. Therefore, professionalism in all communications is of the utmost importance.
- KCTCS students and employees shall represent themselves and KCTCS accurately and honestly through electronic information or service content.
- E-Mail should be used for “appropriate business use” only. Those who choose to use e-mail to transmit highly sensitive or confidential information should be aware of the potential risks of sending unsecured transmissions. E-Mails of this nature should, at a minimum, contain a confidentiality statement.

### **3.3.21.4.2 Unacceptable Uses**

Since e-mail provides for peer-to-peer communications between participants, it also has great potential for misuse.

Use of KCTCS e-mail resources is a privilege that may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct. Any abuse of acceptable use policies is considered gross misconduct and may result in revocation of access, notification of KCTCS management, and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Accessing another individual's personal e-mail or files without their specific permission is considered gross misconduct. No one has authority to read another person's e-mail unless explicitly given authority to do so by the owner of that e-mail.
- Using e-mail for personal gain or personal business activities in a commercial connotation such as buying or selling of commodities or services with a profit motive.
- Using e-mail for any illegal purposes, including initiating or receiving communications that violate any laws and regulations, including KRS 434.840-434.860 (Unlawful Access to a Computer) and KRS 512.020 (Criminal Damage to Property Law). This includes malicious use, spreading of viruses, and hacking. Hacking means gaining or attempting to gain the unauthorized access to any computers, computer networks, databases, data or electronically stored information.
- Using e-mail for transmitting statements, language, images or other materials that are reasonably likely to be perceived as offensive or disparaging of others based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious or political beliefs.
- Using abusive or objectionable language in either public or private messages.
- Using e-mail for disseminating, soliciting or storing sexually oriented messages or images.
- Misrepresenting, obscuring, suppressing, or replacing a user's identity in e-mail. This includes the use of false or misleading subject headers and presentation of information in the distribution of e-mail.
- Using e-mail for sending or forwarding chain letters.
- Distributing or forwarding unsolicited commercial e-mail.
- Using e-mail for soliciting money for religious or political causes, or advocating religious or political opinions.

- Using e-mail to distribute personal information to include any information that constitutes an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy as defined in the Kentucky Open Records Act, KRS 61.870 or other state and Federal laws.
- Using e-mail for copying, disseminating or printing copyrighted materials (including articles, images, games, or other software) in violation of copyright laws.
- Using e-mail for other non-business related activities that will cause congestion, disruption of networks or systems including e-mail attachments.

**Reference link:**

Policy 4.2.5 Information and Information Technology Responsible Use Policy -

<http://www.kctcs.edu/employee/policies/volumeII/section4.cfm>

### **3.3.21.5 Student E-Mail Policy**

#### **3.3.21.5.1 KCTCS Colleges Use of E-Mail**

E-Mail is an official method for communication at KCTCS colleges. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, KCTCS college-related communications sent to their official KCTCS student e-mail account.

#### **3.3.21.5.2 Application for Student E-Mail Accounts**

Students will receive access to a KCTCS student e-mail account within 24 hours of initial enrollments. Students must access their account over the Web at <https://webmail.kctcs.edu/>. A student e-mail account created on the KCTCS Web is the official e-mail address to which KCTCS colleges will send e-mail communications. This official address will be recorded in the KCTCS colleges' electronic directories and records for that student. The official address will end in the domain name "kctcs.edu".

#### **3.3.21.5.3 Expectations Regarding Student Use of E-Mail**

Students are expected to check their official KCTCS e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of KCTCS college-related communications.

KCTCS offices cannot validate that a communication coming by e-mail is from a student unless it comes from a valid KCTCS address. If students make queries to KCTCS administrative offices or faculty from "nickname" e-mail accounts (Hotmail, AOL, etc.), they may be asked to resubmit their query using an official KCTCS account.

**3.3.21.5.4 Faculty Expectations and Educational Uses of E-Mail**

Faculty members may require e-mail for course content delivery, class discussion, and instructor conferencing and may specify course-related e-mail policies in their syllabi. Faculty may also require students to confirm their subscription to a KCTCS college-provided mailing list.

**3.3.21.5.5 Appropriate Use of Student E-Mail**

All use of e-mail will be consistent with other KCTCS policies and local, state, and federal law, including the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#).

**3.3.21.5.6 Forwarding E-Mail**

Students should not forward their KCTCS e-mail to another e-mail account. Having e-mail lost because of forwarding does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with communication sent to his or her official e-mail address. The KCTCS colleges are not responsible for the handling of e-mail by outside vendors or unofficial servers.

**3.3.21.6 Responsibilities**

1. This policy is issued by the President of KCTCS. The KCTCS Chief Information Officer is responsible for maintenance of this policy.
2. Office of Technology Solutions shall provide users of KCTCS electronic communications resources with instructional material based on this policy.
3. Colleges are responsible for creating guidelines on usage of this policy.

<u>4-30-99</u> Date Approved by President, KCTCS	<u>8-26-03; 5-10-07; 11-2-10</u> Date(s) of Last Review	<u>8-26-03; 5-10-07; 11-2-10</u> Date(s) of Last Revision <i>(Include all dates in chronological order)</i>	
<u>(SIGNED)</u> Recommended by	<u>11-2-10</u> Date	<u>(SIGNED)</u> President, KCTCS	<u>11-2-10</u> Date