



**PONCE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

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**Policy M-1**

**Internet and E-mail Usage Policy & Guidelines**

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Effective Date: April 15, 2003

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Approved by: Dr. Manuel Martínez Maldonado, President and Dean

**I. Purpose**

Establish guidelines that should be followed to ensure proper usage of e-mail and Internet access at Ponce School of Medicine. Any improper usage of these services jeopardizes the PSM's legal standing and, therefore, cannot be tolerated.

**II. Specific Policy Statements**

**A. Acceptable Uses of Institution e-mail and Internet Access**

The Institution provides Internet and e-mail access for business usage. Every staff member has the responsibility to maintain and enhance the Institution's public image and to use its e-mail and access to the Internet in a responsible and productive manner that reflects well on the Institution.

**B. Employee Agreement**

All employees will receive a copy of this policy, and a signed copy of the agreement will be filed in the employee's record at the Human Resources Office. The Human Resources Director will give copy of this policy to hired employees and ensure the agreement is signed.

**C. Unacceptable uses of Institution e-mail and Internet access**

The Institution's e-mail and Internet access may not be used for transmitting, retrieving, or storage of any communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene or "X-rated." Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or

sexual preference shall be transmitted. Abusive, profane, or offensive language is not to be transmitted.

Electronic media cannot be used for any other purpose that is illegal or against institution policy or contrary to the institution's best interests. Solicitation of non-institutional business, or any use of the institution e-mail or Internet for religious and political purposes as personal gain, is strictly prohibited.

### **C. Communications**

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images that he or she place or sends over the PSM's e-mail and Internet system. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent that hides the identity of the sender or represents the sender as someone else or someone from another institution. All messages communicated on the PSM's e-mail and Internet system should contain the employee's name. Any messages or information sent by an employee to another individual outside the Institution via an electronic network (e.g., bulletin board, online service of Internet) are statements that reflect on the Institution. While some users include personal "disclaimers" in electronic messages, there is still a connection to the Institution, and the statement may legally be tied to the Institution. Therefore, the Institution requires that all communications sent by employees via the PSM's e-mail and Internet system complies with institutional policies and do not disclose any confidential or proprietary institutional information.

### **D. Software**

To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the PSM's e-mail and Internet system, downloading of unauthorized software is strictly prohibited and may be cause for dismissal. Employees should contact MIS if they have any questions. Employees should request authorization to MIS previous to download any software.

### **E. Security**

The Institution routinely monitors usage patters in its e-mail and Internet communications. The reasons for this monitoring include cost analysis, security, bandwidth allocation, and the general management of the institution's gateway to the Internet. All messages created, sent, or retrieved over the PSM's e-mail and Internet are the property of the Institution and should be considered public information. Notwithstanding previous comments regarding the Institution's current intention not to monitor content, must reserve the right to access and monitor the content of all messages and files on the PSM's e-mail and Internet system at any time in the future with or without notice. Employees should not assume electronic communications are totally private and should transmit highly confidential data in other ways. E-mail messages regarding sensitive matters

should warn that such communications are not intended to be secure or confidential. This is just good business sense.

Improper use detected by MIS Department will be informed in writing to the immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Director.

### **III. Penalties**

Any employee who abuses the privilege of Institution-facilitated access to e-mail or Internet will be subject to disciplinary action as explained in the employee's manual. The institution also reserves the right to advise appropriate officials, including local and federal agencies, of any illegal violations, if necessary.

### **IV. Best Practices**

PSM considers e-mail an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper e-mail content and speedy replies in conveying a professional image. Users should take the same care in drafting e-mail as they would any other written communication. Therefore, Ponce School of Medicine wishes users to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Writing e-mails:**
  - Write well-structured e-mails and use short, descriptive subjects.
  - PSM's e-mail style is informal. This means that sentences should be short and to the point. You can start your e-mail with 'Hi', or 'Dear', and the name of the person. Messages can be ended with 'Best Regards'.
  - Signatures must include your name, job title and company name. A disclaimer could be added underneath your signature.
  - Users must spell check all mails prior to transmission.
  - Do not send unnecessary attachments. Compress attachments larger than 500K before sending them.
  - Do not write e-mails in capitals.
  - Do not use cc: or bcc: fields unless the cc: or bcc: recipient is aware that you will be copying a mail to him/her and knows what action, if any, to take.
  - If you forward mails, state clearly what action you expect the recipient to take.
  - Only mark e-mails as important if they really are important.
  
- **Maintenance:**
  - Delete any e-mail messages that you do not need to have a copy of, and set your e-mail client to automatically empty your 'deleted items' on closing.



## E-MAIL/INTERNET USER AGREEMENT

### Employee Agreement:

I have received a copy of **Ponce School of Medicine's E-Mail and Internet Acceptable Use Policy #\_M1\_**, dated 4/15/03. I recognize and understand that the Ponce School of Medicine's e-mail and Internet systems are to be used for conducting the institution's matters only.

I understand that use of this equipment for private purposes is strictly prohibited. As part of the Ponce School of Medicine organization and use of Ponce School of Medicine's gateway to the Internet and e-mail system, I understand that this Acceptable Use Policy applies to me. I have read the aforementioned document and agree to follow all policies and procedures that are set forth herein. I further agree to abide by the standards set in the document for the duration of my employment with Ponce School of Medicine. I understand that the institution to ensure compliance with the Acceptable Use Policy may monitor E-mail and Internet usage.

I am aware that violations of this Acceptable Use Policy may subject me to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment. I further understand that my communications on the Internet and e-mail reflect Ponce School of Medicine's worldwide to other institutions, students, and suppliers. Furthermore, I understand that this document can be amended at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manager's Signature