

Information Management Directive:**Subject:** Email and Electronic Communications

Issued: April 22, 2021

Effective: April 22, 2021

Last Review: April 22, 2021

1 DIRECTIVE OVERVIEW

- 1.01 Email and other electronic communications created or received as part of government business are public records. When using electronic communications for government business, government bodies and employees must meet the requirements set out in this directive.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.01 The purpose of this directive is to support the GNB Policy on Information Management (“Information Management Policy”) by setting out requirements when using email and other electronic communications to conduct government business.

3 SCOPE

- 3.01 This directive applies to government bodies and employees in Parts I-1V listed in the First Schedule of the of [Public Service Labour Relations Act](#).

4 DIRECTIVES

- 4.01 For email and other electronic communications created or received as part of government business, hereafter referred to as “electronic communications”, unless the *Archives Act*, regulations under this Act or other applicable legislation state otherwise government bodies and employees:
- (a) Must manage electronic communications in accordance with the Information Management Policy ([AD-7114](#)).
 - (b) Must only delete electronic communications in accordance with approved records retention and disposition schedules.
 - (c) May dispose of electronic communications when they no longer serve a useful purpose if they contain information that is temporary, redundant, obsolete, or of little value for long-term use (e.g. electronic communications received for information or reference purposes only). See [Identifying and Handling Records and non-Records](#).
 - (d) Must use GNB-approved safeguards when using electronic communications to send confidential or sensitive government information to a person or an organization not connected to the GNB server.
 - (e) Must capture, store, and manage electronic communications in an electronic file system or content management software, where:
 - i) they are the originator of the electronic communication; or
 - ii) they receive an electronic communication from a source outside government.

5 RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.01 Heads of government bodies or their delegates are responsible for:
- (a) Ensuring their organization has established policies, procedures and training to ensure employee awareness and compliance with the requirements of this directive.

- (b) Develop and provide to every employee a package of documents, business rules, and tools on managing email and electronic communications.

5.02 Employees are responsible for:

- (a) Complying with this directive and with any related policies and procedures established by their organization.
- (b) Abiding by all operating standards for electronic communications developed by the service and/or infrastructure provider, as well as any information security or protection of privacy policies and directives.
- (c) Ensuring that all electronic communications relating to government business and activities are incorporated into their organization's information management program in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

5.03 The Corporate Information Management Unit, Department of Finance and Treasury Board, is responsible for:

- (a) Advising government bodies on the requirements of this directive and their implementation.
- (b) Monitoring and reporting compliance with this directive in a manner to be determined by the Unit with input from government bodies.

6 DEFINITIONS

6.01 **Electronic Communication** refers to any communication via computer or other digital means in which individuals exchange messages and information with others, either individually or in groups.

6.02 **Email** refers to communications sent and received using the Government of New Brunswick's electronic mail system and includes but is not limited to written messages, attachments, illustrations, graphics and charts.

6.03 **Employee** means a person retained under any form of employment or personal services agreement for a government body, including members of agencies, boards, commissions or tribunals, students and interns, contractors and service providers.

6.04 **Government body** means a public body in Parts I to IV listed in the First Schedule of the [Public Service Labour Relations Act](#).

6.05 **Instant message** refers to a communication sent using electronic instant messaging tools adopted by the Government of New Brunswick.

6.06 **Records/Government Records/Public Records** means recorded information that provides evidence of business activities, decisions, and/or transactions related to the functions and operations of the Government of New Brunswick, regardless of format or media. Examples of email and electronic communications considered to meet this definition are email and electronic communications:

- sent or received during government work

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- related to a project, and
- providing a decision, direction, or advice.

6.07 **Records management** means the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions.

6.08 **Records retention and disposition schedules** are legal documents that specify the length of time records must be kept in an office, and how long they must be stored off-site at the Provincial Archives Records Centre, if required. It also states what happens to the records once they reach the end of their lifecycle. Records retention and disposition schedules are issued by the Provincial Archivist, but are agreed to jointly by the records-creating government body, and the Archivist.

6.09 **Text message** is an electronic communication sent and received by a mobile device.

7 **RELATED LEGISLATION, POLICY AND DIRECTIVES** ¹

[Right to Information and Protection of Personal Information Act R-10.6](#)

[Information Management Policy AD-7114](#)

[Information Systems Policy and Guidelines AD-7101](#)

[Information Technology Standards AD-7104](#)

[Government Information Technology Systems - Security Policy AD-7107](#)

¹ We should discuss which of these are applicable. The Directive on Privacy Practices only references related Directive (Cybersecurity Directives)