



Corporate Policy Manual

Sub Topic: e-Mail Service Standards

Policy No. CI.1-02

Topic: Corporate Standards

Employees Covered: All Employees

Section: Continuous Improvement

Council Adoption Date: September 11, 2006

Effective Date: September 11, 2006

Revision No: Date:

Policy Statement & Strategic Plan Linkages

The Town of Newmarket supports policies that reflect sound governance and accountability through a focus on service excellence. E-mail use, in general, is quickly replacing traditional postal mail because of its speed and convenience. When e-mail response standards are high, satisfaction levels are high.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly defined standards that staff should adhere to when dealing with e-mails.

Procedures

STANDARD 1:

All e-mails are to be acknowledged within 2 business days. Staff should strive to acknowledge e-mail correspondence within 2 business days. Senior management staff may employ administrative assistants to monitor and acknowledge e-mails on their behalf in order to meet this standard. A full response should be provided within 5 business days or some other period of time as appropriate. This timeframe should be communicated to the customer so they are aware as to when to expect a full response. If a shorter timeframe for response is required by law or for other reasons, staff should meet that shorter timeframe. While written and e-mail correspondence is similar, there is an expectation that e-mail correspondence will be responded to within a shorter period of time.

STANDARD 2:

If an employee expects to be out of the office for 2 or more business days, the “out of office” notification is to be set up on his or her individual e-mail system. This service is only available for internal e-mail messages. The notification should advise the sender of the e-mail message of the employee’s anticipated return date as well as identify who to contact in his or her absence. For external e-mail messages, staff should proactively advise those they deal with on a regular basis that they expect to be out of the office for an extended period of time.

By setting up an “out of office” notification, internal customers will be made aware that the employee they are dealing with is not available, and provided with the option of contacting someone else for assistance. By sending an e-mail notification to the appropriate outside contacts before an anticipated absence, staff will reduce dissatisfaction when a response is delayed. Alternatively, allowing another employee to either access your e-mail account or to receive any incoming e-mails during your absence, will also avoid dissatisfaction when a response is delayed. It is recognized that there may be times when staff are unable to activate their “out of office” notification, such as when they are away unexpectedly.

STANDARD 3:

Staff should include signature lines on e-mail correspondence according to the following format. The signature should include the Town’s vision statement (and not that of the department or commission), the direct access telephone number and extension as well as the legal disclaimer pertaining to privacy.

Sample signature line: *Ms. Jane Doe*
Customer Service Associate
Town of Newmarket
905-953-5300, press 2, ext. XXXX
www.newmarket.ca

Newmarket’s vision: A community *well* beyond the ordinary

Legal Disclaimer: "The information contained in this message is directed in confidence solely to the person(s) named above and may not be otherwise distributed, copied or disclosed. The message may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you have received this message in error, please notify the

sender immediately advising of the error and delete the message without making a copy. Thank you."

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

Employees are responsible to:

- Avail themselves of training opportunities that support corporate e-mail service standards;
- Adhere to the standards set out in this policy;
- Discuss with their supervisor any difficulties or barriers encountered in meeting corporate e-mail service standards.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYER

Supervisors/Manager/Directors/Commissioners are responsible to:

- Ensure that staff are aware of corporate e-mail service standards, and other corporate standards in general;
- Provide training and coaching to help staff understand and meet the standards;
- Enforce e-mail service standards through the performance evaluation process.

Cross References

[Internet & e-Mail Acceptable Use Policy IT.1-01](#)