

FDA STAFF MANUAL GUIDES, VOLUME III - GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

DISTRIBUTION OF ALL- HANDS ELECTRONIC MAIL

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1. PURPOSE

This guide provides the policies, procedures and responsibilities for the global distribution of electronic mail (email) messages intended for an agency-wide audience in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

2. BACKGROUND

The advent of technology has had a dramatic effect on the sharing of information. It has provided the capability for accurate information to be disseminated to a wide audience in a timely manner - typically, instantaneously. Email messaging has become the most often-used forum for sharing information, and, in many cases, has replaced phone calls and informal correspondence. The use of email has become so institutionalized that people have come to rely on it as an effective and foolproof source for large-scale communication.

3. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Mandatory Email Messages.** Email messages that will be distributed to all FDA employees in a single global distribution. The categories of mandatory email messages are:
 - 1. Email messages signed by the Commissioner, FDA.
 - 2. Email messages signed and/or approved by FDA Senior Staff.
 - 3. Email messages with topics identified as mandatory/recurring on framework (see Attachment A) that typically impact all employees.
- B. **Discretionary Email Messages.** All other email messages that are not identified as mandatory/recurring on framework in Attachment A, but may potentially be distributed to all FDA employees.

4. POLICY

Through the optimal use of technology, email messages that have a potentially wide-ranging impact will be distributed in a timely manner to the appropriate audience.

- A. **Mandatory Email Messages.**
 - 1. The Executive Secretariat provides quality control for all correspondence signed by the Commissioner. To this end, the distribution of email messages signed by the Commissioner addressed to all FDA employees will be reviewed and cleared by the Executive Secretariat before being disseminated to all employees in a single global distribution.
 - 2. Email messages signed and/or approved by FDA Senior Staff will be disseminated to all employees in a single global distribution.
 - 3. Email messages with topics identified as mandatory/recurring on Attachment A will be distributed to all employees in a single global distribution.
- B. **Discretionary Email Messages.** Discretionary email messages will be distributed to each Center/Office contact, who will then determine if further distribution within their respective organization is warranted.
- C. **Intra-Center/Office Email Messages.** Intra-Center/Office email Messages will be processed in accordance with existing Center/Office procedures.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Office of the Commissioner.

1. Chief Information Officer. Establishes and implements email distribution policy and procedures. Provides technical operational support and identifies an email manager in the Office of Information Resources Management (OIRM) for the distribution of email messages.
2. Office of the Executive Secretariat. Clears email messages with the Commissioner's signature prior to global email distribution.
3. FDA Senior Staff.
 - a. Implement Agency policy and procedures.
 - b. Assure all employees are familiar with this policy and procedures.
 - c. Assure proper clearances for email messages intended for all FDA employees.

B. Centers/Offices.

1. Center/Office Directors.
 - a. Assure that internal procedures are in place for the distribution of and intra-Center/Office email messages.
 - b. Identify a point-of-contact to determine whether discretionary email messages require further distribution within the respective Center/Office, and distribute in accordance with internal procedures.
2. Information Resources Managers. Provides technical operational support.

C. FDA Employees. Adhere to FDA and Center/Office policy and procedures when initiating emails for large-scale distribution.

6. PROCEDURES

A. Mandatory Email Messages.

1. Email Messages signed by the Commissioner. Email messages signed by the Commissioner must first be cleared through the Executive Secretariat.
 - a. Submit intended message electronically or on floppy disk with the hardcopy (include a contact name and phone number) to the appropriate contact in the Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES). OES will route the message through the appropriate channels to the Commissioner for signature clearance.
 - b. Following clearance, the email message will be forwarded to the specially designated OIRM mailbox, "ALL_HANDS." The transmittal email should indicate that the email has been cleared for global distribution, and should include a contact name and phone number.

NOTE: Email messages sent directly to ALL_HANDS from the Commissioner or designee are automatically approved for global distribution.

- c. OIRM will check the ALL_HANDS mailbox daily and distribute messages to all FDA employees in a single global distribution between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., unless otherwise requested. In those situations that require immediate distribution of email, contact the OC Helpdesk at (301) 443-4908.
2. Pre-approved Mandatory/Recurring Email Messages (Attachment A). Messages identified as mandatory/recurring on Attachment A have been pre-approved as requiring global distribution and, therefore, require no further approval.
 - a. Submit intended message via email to the ALL_HANDS mailbox. The transmittal email should indicate that the topic is identified as mandatory/recurring on Attachment A, and should include a contact name and phone number.
 - b. OIRM. See 6.a.(1)(c) above.
3. Messages signed and/or approved by FDA Senior Staff. FDA Senior Staff must approve topics that are not identified as mandatory/recurring on Attachment A (e.g., non-recurring), but do require an Agency-wide audience.

- a. Submit intended message via email to the ALL_HANDS mailbox. The transmittal email should include a contact name and phone number, and the originator shall "cc" and identify the FDA senior official that approved the message for global distribution. OIRM will not distribute the message if the required "cc" is not included. Please note: if a senior official originates and/or submits the email, a "cc" is not required.
 - b. OIRM. See 6.a.(1)(c) above.
- B. Discretionary Email Messages. Discretionary messages must have the approval of the message originator's immediate supervisor.
1. Submit intended message to the specially designated OIRM mailbox, "DISCRET_EMS." The transmittal email should identify the name of the immediate supervisor that approved the message for large-scale distribution and should include a contact name and phone number. The originator shall also include a "cc" to the immediate supervisor. OIRM will not distribute the message if a "cc" to the supervisor is not included.
 2. OIRM will check the DISCRET_EMS mailbox daily between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise requested and distribute messages to all to the Center/Office designated points of contacts.
 3. In accordance with Center/Office procedures*, the Center/Office points of contact will determine whether further distribution within their respective organization is warranted and distribute accordingly.

*Unless there are extenuating circumstances, all discretionary messages will be distributed to all OC employees.

NOTE: See Attachment C for process flow diagrams.

C. Intra-Center/Office Email Messages.

1. Office of the Commissioner. Messages initiated by OC employees intended for an OC-wide audience must comply with appropriate approvals (see 6.b above) and be forwarded to the DISCRET_EMS mailbox. The transmittal email should indicate that the message is intended only for OC employees. OIRM will check this mailbox daily between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise requested and distribute the emails accordingly.
2. Centers/Offices. Intra-Center/Office email messages will be processed in accordance with existing Center/Office procedures.

NOTE: Guidelines (see Attachment B) should be considered when developing email messages for wide distribution.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 1999.

Staff Manual Guide 3298.2, Attachment A

Email Message Categories

Mandatory/Recurring Email Messages

- Administrative information that could affect ALL employees
 - Planned network outages/service interruptions
 - Benefits Updates, e.g., Thrift Savings Plan, health plans, life insurance, etc.
 - Major union activities
 - Training opportunities, e.g., FDA Leadership Program
 - Vacancy announcements
 - Detail opportunities
 - Medical emergencies/Voluntary Leave Transfer Program
 - Address/Telephone number changes
 - Worldwide and regional travel advisories
- FDA Events in which ALL employees are invited to participate
 - Events involving Senior FDA Officials
 - Conferences/symposiums
 - FDA Honor Awards Ceremony
 - Walk the Walk Campaign
 - Open Houses, e.g., Medical Library Open House or ORA Open House
- Building Announcements
 - Scheduled power outages
 - Weather closings
 - Building issues and emergencies
 - Increased security practices

Staff Manual Guide 3298.2, Attachment A

- From HHS Sources outside FDA
 - Messages from the Health Unit, e.g., Blood drives, alcohol screening, HIV testing
 - Healthy Beginnings/Child Development
 - Parklawn Classic

NOTE: Mandatory email messages initiated by HHS will continue to be sent directly to all FDA employees by the Department.

Discretionary Email Messages

Examples include:

- FDA employee retirements

Staff Manual Guide 3298.2, Attachment B

Guidelines for Creating All-Hands Email Messages

- When appropriate, clearly indicate TO WHOM responses should be sent and HOW to contact them. List email address(es) and/or phone number(s) as appropriate.
- Clearly indicate WHO the message is FROM.
- To the extent possible, limit the use of graphics that may place undue demand on networks.
- Keep messages as succinct and to-the-point as possible.
- Messages should be checked to ensure they are complete and clear so that the need to send a correction message is minimized. Some things to check:
 - The subject line. Consider wording carefully and put the most important words first. The inbox subject line is truncated to about 32 characters.
 - Proofread the message for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
 - Have several people not familiar with the subject read the note to verify that it is clear and complete.