**West Virginia Executive Branch**
**Privacy Tip**

**WV Executive Branch Privacy Tip**

# Email Etiquette




Have you ever been included in an email that you know you shouldn't have? Or received an email that looked like a teenager's text message (R U coming 2 mtg?)? In the workplace, email communication is becoming more common than a phone call. Here are a few tips to keep your email professional:

1. ALWAYS check your distribution list before you hit "send". Many incidents occur because the wrong people were included. Make sure ONLY the people who need the email will get it.
2. Double-check the email address of your recipient and be very careful using the "autofill" feature. In a large organization, there can be similar names.
3. Use "Reply All" only when everyone in the distribution list needs to see your message.
4. Copy ONLY the people who really need to receive the email.
5. Be sure to notify your Department Privacy Officer if there is any chance that governance, compliance or privacy regulations were violated as a result of something you sent by mistake.
6. Don't forward email invitations or meeting appointments without first asking for the sender's approval.
7. Don't neglect spellchecking and proofreading! A business email should be professional and not look like a personal text – spell all of your words!
8. Use the subject line wisely. It should be detailed enough that the recipient knows the focus of your message. Reminder: Do not put personally identifiable information (PII) in the subject line.
9. If you are replying to a long email stream, delete unnecessary sections, or highlight the important parts to keep others from having to search the entire stream for answers or comments.
10. Use the "High Priority" option only when it actually is high priority. The same goes for "Urgent" and "Important" in the subject line.
11. Remember, an email can't carry your tone of voice – what you think is constructive criticism can be perceived as mean or rude.
12. WORK EMAIL SHOULD ONLY BE USED FOR WORK.

**Note:** Your agency/bureau/department/division may have specific requirements – always check your policies and procedures. If you have questions, contact your Privacy Officer.