E-Mail Policy and External Auto-Forward Exception Request Form

Instructions: Please read the policies below. Account owner must write their name, then sign and date the Acknowledgement of Auto-Forward Policy. Department head must sign and date the Request to Auto-Forward.

Town E-Mail Retention Policy:

It is Greenwich Town policy that whenever Town business is conducted over e-mail, it must be recorded by the Town’s e-mail system; and in order to be recorded, at least one valid Town e-mail address must appear in the From, To, or CC field in the header of each e-mail message. This ensures that messages are recorded permanently in the Town’s e-mail archive and can be disclosed by the Town as part of any legal discovery or Freedom of Information Act request. The recommended, and most straightforward method to comply with this policy is to use a Town e-mail account for all Town e-mail correspondence.

Sensitive and Restricted E-Mail Disclosure Policy:

All users of the Town e-mail system must exercise utmost caution when sending email from inside the Town's e-mail system to an outside network. When forwarding e-mail, each employee and public official has a responsibility to ensure that they do not inadvertently disclose to external e-mail systems any sensitive or restricted information that must remain confidential as required by law, policy, or contractual obligations. Sensitive information is typically redacted from open records disclosures, and records with restricted information are typically not open for public inspection. Examples of sensitive information include certain types of personnel records, attorney-client privileged communications, critical infrastructure information, and certain law enforcement/investigative records. Examples of restricted information include social security numbers, credit card data, and protected health information.

Town E-Mail Auto-Forward Policy:

The IT department prohibits use of the External* Auto-Forward feature where every e-mail sent to a Town e-mail account is automatically forwarded to a third-party non-Town account. External Auto-Forward is not typically necessary because the Town’s e-mail system can be installed on most modern mobile devices and is accessible via a web browser. External Auto-Forward can be problematic because it can lead to inadvertent transmission of sensitive or restricted information to external networks, and it can foster conditions where subsequent replies or forwards of Town e-mail from personal e-mail accounts risk bypassing the Town’s e-mail archiving system. Auto-Forward is also problematic because the Town cannot ensure nor verify that the forwarded message was received by an external e-mail system. Consequently, this feature is disabled by default, and can only be enabled through the signed request of a department head and the signed acknowledgement that the e-mail account owner will take additional steps to ensure all Town correspondence sent from their personal e-mail account comply with Town’s e-mail policies related to retention, and sensitive and restricted disclosure.

*Please note that Internal Auto-Forward from one Town e-mail account to another is permissible without a signed request, and the Help Desk is ready to assist in the establishment of these internal forwards.
E-Mail Account Owner Acknowledgement of External Auto-Forward Policy:

I _______________________ understand that by using the External Auto-Forward feature of the Town’s Office365 e-mail system, it is my responsibility to ensure that I comply with the Town’s policies related to e-mail retention, sensitive and restricted e-mail disclosure, and Auto-Forward.

I will not send sensitive or restricted Town information from my personal e-mail account, and I do not anticipate that I will receive sensitive or restricted information as part of the duties of my job. If I do receive sensitive or restricted Town information on my personal e-mail account, I will delete it immediately.

I will also ensure that at least one Town e-mail address is included in either the To or CC field of all e-mails that I send from my personal e-mail account in response to, or as part of, any Town correspondence. In instances where it is not practical to copy a specific person, I will use the e-mail address record@greenwichct.org which will file my e-mail on permanent record with the Town e-mail archive.

I understand that failure to comply with these policies will result in the revocation of External Auto-Forward, possible disciplinary action, and may also result in my entire personal e-mail account becoming subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

I also understand that the Town has no administrative access of third-party personal e-mail accounts, and so it cannot ensure nor verify that forwarded messages are received by these e-mail systems.

_________________________ ______________________
E-mail Account Owner Signature Date

Department Head Request for External Auto-Forward:

As department head, I am requesting External Auto-Forward for the above e-mail account holder because I believe the feature is critical to accomplish the duties of his/her job. I do not expect that the account holder will receive or send e-mails containing sensitive or restricted information as part of the normal duties of his/her job. I confirm that the account owner understands his/her responsibility to comply fully with the Town’s policies related to e-mail retention, sensitive and restricted e-mail disclosure, and Auto-Forward. I understand that if it is brought to my attention that the account owner is violating these policies, I will take immediate action to correct the situation.

_________________________ ______________________ ______________________
Department Head Signature Date Department Head Name

Information Technology Approval to Auto-Forward:

I authorize the activation of auto-forward for the above user.

_________________________ ______________________
CIO or Assistant IT Director Signature Date

cc: Town Attorney, IT Director

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