



Council Policy

Policy Name	Email Communication for OAA Business and Etiquette Guidelines
Issue Date	November 12, 2020
Revision Dates	N/A

Overview

Generally, email is the primary means of communication between members of Council, individually and as a group, as well as between Council and OAA staff. This policy has been established in order to set out the expectations around email and to avoid miscommunication.

While email is fast and efficient, it does not necessarily allow for a clear understanding of the tone or expression being implied within a message. It is important to be clear and concise within an email so the intent can be best understood.

Policy Expectations

The following outlines expectations of Council members regarding email use for OAA business.

1. Emails should be written in a professional manner and with language that respects the OAA's goals and objectives regarding equity, diversity, and inclusivity.
2. Council members should refrain from detailed discussions regarding confidential and/or in-camera Council business via email.
3. Emails should be written with an understanding that they could be inadvertently or purposely shared in an open and public forum, including media channels. As a basic guideline, one should assume others will see what they write. Don't write anything that would be ruinous to you or hurtful to others.
4. When receiving an email that is addressed to the whole of Council or a group of individuals, consider whether it is necessary to 'reply all' or cc others on your response. As a general rule, it is not necessary to 'reply all'—it only clogs up others' email.
5. If it is appropriate to 'reply all,' it is important to check the email addresses to which you are replying. On occasion, others may have been added to a string of emails and gone unnoticed. This can lead to an embarrassing situation for both the individual Council member and/or the OAA.
6. Be mindful of using humour or colloquialisms as they can be interpreted differently across cultures.

7. Be mindful of tone and intent. It is easy to misconstrue a message without the context one might get from vocal cues and facial expressions.

