

# **Town of Pomfret**

## **Electronic Communications Guidelines**

Adopted May 18, 2022

**Section 1. Introduction.** The Pomfret Selectboard adopts the following guidelines concerning pomfretvt.us email accounts. These guidelines are adopted pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 872, 1121 and 1122.

**Section 2. Purpose.** These guidelines are for appropriate use of electronic communications in performing ones municipal duties. While these guidelines apply generally to email accounts provided by the Town of Pomfret to certain employees, elected officials, appointees, departments and agents thereof, records created via other email accounts for the purpose of performing such duties may also be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act, 1 V.S.A. 315 *et seq.*

**Section 3. Eligibility.** The Town of Pomfret will provide email accounts to employees, elected officials, appointees, departments and agents of the Town whom the Selectboard has determined a Town email account is necessary or convenient for such person to perform their municipal duties. Upon an account holder’s termination as an employee, elected official, appointee or agent of the Town, the holder’s account will be deactivated and archived to facilitate pubic records retention and disclosure as required under the Public Records Act.

**Section 4. Appropriate Use.** Account holders may use their accounts only to conduct their municipal duties. Account holders may not use their accounts for personal business, or to engage in discriminatory, offensive or abusive behavior.

**Section 5. Account Security.** To reduce the risk of security breaches, account holders must:

- Select strong passwords;
- Memorize passwords or write them down in secure locations;
- Not share accounts or passwords; and
- Avoid clicking links or opening attachments from unknown or untrusted sources.

**Section 6. Email Address Format.** The format for individual email addresses will be “firstname.lastname@pomfretvt.us” (e.g., “isaac.dana@pomfretvt.us”). A middle initial or suffix may be added upon request or to distinguish between identical names. When a shared account is deemed appropriate, the format will be “departmentname@pomfretvt.us” (e.g., “highway@pomfretvt.us”).

**Section 7. Email Signature.** Account holders shall create professional email signatures substantially in the following format:

**First-Name Last-Name** | Town of Pomfret  
5218 Pomfret Road | North Pomfret, Vermont 05053  
firstname.lastname@pomfretvt.us | <http://www.pomfretvt.us/>

*Please note that any response to this electronic message may be subject to disclosure as a public record under the Vermont Public Records Act.*

Training is available for account holders needing assistance with creating email signatures.

**Section 8. Records Retention and Disclosure.** Account holders must adhere to the records retention and disclosure requirements of the Public Records Act. Account holders should refrain from deleting (either manually or automatically by mail rule) electronic communications that are public records or public documents under the Act. “Public record” and “public document” are broadly defined to include any written or recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, which is produced or acquired in the course of public agency business subject to limited exemptions.

**Section 9. Open Meeting Law.** The Open Meeting Law, 1 V.S.A. 310 *et seq.*, defines a public meeting as a gathering of a quorum of the members of a public body for the purpose of discussing the business of the public body or for the purpose of taking action. All meetings of a public body are to be open to the public at all times unless otherwise exempted. Members (elected or appointed) of any Town public body must refrain from using email or other means of communication to discuss the business of the public body or taking action by the public body in violation of the Open Meeting Law. Members of public bodies also must refrain from commenting on or responding to inquiries related to quasi-judicial matters within the jurisdiction of their public bodies.

**Section 10. Communications May Become Public.** Account holders should exercise common sense when utilizing email. Most emails sent in the course of performing ones municipal duties are public records and may be disclosed, potentially to large audiences.

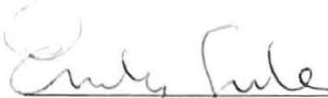
**Section 11. Acknowledgement and Agreement.** Individuals who are provided with Town email accounts must acknowledge their understanding of and agreement with these guidelines. A form of acknowledgement is attached to these guidelines.


**Section 12. Violations.** Upon review by the Selectboard and a reasonable opportunity to be heard, account holders found to be in violation of these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action including loss of email account privileges.

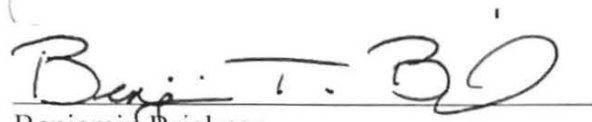
**Section 13. Effective Date.** These guidelines shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Pomfret Selectboard.

Adopted this 18th day of May, 2022

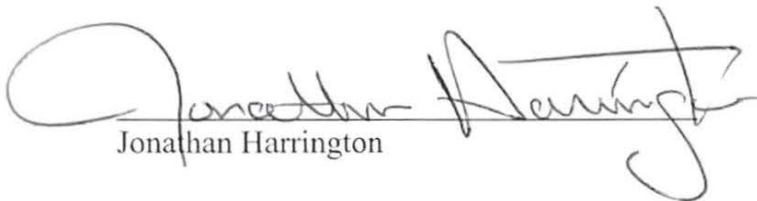
POMFRET SELECTBOARD

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Emily Grube, chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Peters, Jr., vice-chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Benjamin Brickner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve Chamberlin

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jonathan Harrington

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Account Holder Acknowledgement

- A. I have received a copy of Pomfret’s Electronic Communications Guidelines adopted May 18, 2022
- B. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the contents of these guidelines and to ask questions if there is anything I do not understand;
- C. I acknowledge that I understand these guidelines and I agree to comply with them; and
- D. I understand that if I fail to comply with any of these guidelines, I may be subject to loss of email account privileges and other disciplinary action.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_