

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

PERSONNEL POLICY

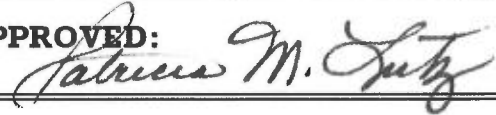
NUMBER 5.01

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DATE 10/01/98

SUBJECT: VOICE MAIL

APPROVED:



OBJECTIVE: To provide the basis for a uniform policy for the use of voice mail systems utilized by employees throughout New Castle County Government. Voice mail, when used properly, enhances customer service.

STATEMENT: Voice mail systems established by New Castle County Government for communication and information sharing are for County business use only. While such a voice mail system provides protection from unauthorized access to messages, this medium is not considered to be "secured" communications and, as such, should not be used to convey sensitive or confidential information. Voice mail is available to only those individuals with a valid business need who are authorized by the County Executive, department general manager or row officer. Voice mail is not intended to take the place of personal contact, and department general managers and row officers shall ensure that there is at least one person designated to answer telephones at all times.

Procedure:

1. The use of voice mail shall be restricted to business related communications only. Greetings shall be professional and composed with the same thought and care as with any written correspondence. Voice mail may be monitored or accessed by management for quality control purposes. Monitoring or access must be approved by the County Executive, department general manager or row officer. Passwords will be given to the department general manager, row officer or his or her designee.

Greetings shall be changed daily and will include: "This is <name> with New Castle County's <department>. Today is <day and date>. I am in the office but unavailable to take your call. If you leave a message at the tone, I will return your call as soon as I can. If you wish to speak with someone immediately, press "0" and you will receive assistance."

If an employee is on vacation or other assignment which takes them away from the office, the message shall include: "This is <name> with New Castle County's <department>. I will be out of the office/or on vacation from <day & date> through <day and date>. If you leave a message at the tone, I will return your call as soon as I return. If you wish to speak with someone immediately, press "0" and you will receive assistance."

2. When calls are received during normal business hours, the call shall be answered by an employee who may, at the caller's request, transfer to the voice mail box of the individual being called so that a detailed message may be left. After normal business hours, employees who have voice mail may forward their telephone calls to be answered directly by the voice mail system. Under no circumstances will calls be forwarded automatically to the voice mail system during normal business hours.

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3. Each department general manager or row officer shall determine the appropriate use of the capability to transfer calls to and/or have phones directly answered by the voice mail system. It is the responsibility of the department general managers or row officers to communicate to their staff how these features are to be used within their areas of responsibility.
4. Messages should be responded to as soon as possible but absolutely no later than the next business day. The only exception is when an employee is not available due to vacation or other absence from the office. Messages should be deleted within 15 days of their receipt. Those messages which need to be retained due to business necessity should be transcribed to a separate file and maintained under normal record retention procedures.
5. General managers and row officers shall ensure that there is at least one person designated to answer telephones at all times.

REQUIRED ACTION: General managers/managers, row officers and all employees will be responsible for the implementation of and compliance with this policy.

Established: 10/01/98

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