

**Technology Use Policy**  
**Texas Master Naturalist Program<sup>TM</sup>,**  
**Gulf Coast Chapter**

T E X A S



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## ***General***

The Gulf Coast Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist (TXGCMN) provides technology in the form of a chapter domain email address and a SLACK workspace. Members should assume that the contents of any message, document, or other matter sent through this email or posted to SLACK may be seen by TXGCMN management and others with a legitimate need to know.

TXGCMN reserves the right to access and disclose, for legitimate business and/or legal reasons, any message, document, or other matter sent through the chapter email address or posted on the SLACK workspace.

The objectives of this policy are to outline appropriate and inappropriate use of our technology systems and services. This policy applies to all email and SLACK account holders at TXGCMN (both temporary and permanent), past and present.

## ***Use of Email***

Email is a critical mechanism for business communications at TXGCMN. Use of your chapter electronic mail systems and services are a privilege and therefore must be used with respect and in accordance with the goals of TXGCMN.

## ***Use of SLACK Workspace***

SLACK Workspace is an additional mechanism for business communications at TXGCMN. Use of SLACK Workspace systems and services are a privilege and therefore must be used with respect and in accordance with the goals of TXGCMN.

## ***Policy Violation***

Any Gulf Coast chapter member who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have violated this technology policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## ***General Expectations of Users***

Important chapter business communications are always delivered via chapter email. Chapter communications will not be sent to other personal email addresses. Chapter communications may also be duplicated on SLACK workspace. As a result, Members of TXGCMN are expected to check their email in a consistent and timely manner so that they are aware of important announcements and updates, as well as for fulfilling business- and role-oriented tasks.

Email users are responsible for mailbox management, including organization and cleaning. If a user subscribes to a mailing list, he or she must be aware of how to

remove himself or herself from the list and is responsible for doing so in the event that their current email address changes. Email users are also expected to comply with normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct.

Members must not utilize the chapter email or SLACK communications services in any way that may be seen as insulting, disruptive, or offensive to other persons, or harmful to morale. Examples of forbidden transmissions include sexually explicit messages, cartoons, or jokes; ethnic or racial slurs; or any other message that can be construed to be harassment or disparagement of others based on their sex, race, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religious beliefs, or other personal characteristics or circumstances.

### ***Appropriate Use***

Individuals at TXGCMN are encouraged to use email and/or SLACK to further the goals and objectives of TXGCMN. The types of activities that are encouraged include:

- Communicating with fellow Members, donors, business associates of TXGCMN, and organizations within the context of an individual's assigned responsibilities.
- Acquiring or sharing information necessary or related to the performance of an individual's assigned responsibilities.
- Participating in educational or chapter activities.

### ***Inappropriate Use***

TXGCMN email and SLACK systems and services are not to be used for purposes that could be reasonably expected to cause excessive strain on systems. The following activities are deemed inappropriate uses of TXGCMN systems and services and are prohibited:

- Excessive personal use of TXGCMN email resources. The chapter email should not act as your sole personal email address. TXGCMN allows **limited** personal use for communication with family and friends, independent learning, and volunteer service so long as it does not interfere with chapter activities or consume more than a trivial amount of resources. TXGCMN prohibits personal use of its email systems and services for personal banking, promotion or endorsement of a personal business, unsolicited mass solicitations, bulk mailings, political campaigning, dissemination of chain letters, and use by non-chapter members.
- Use of email for illegal or unlawful purposes, including copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment,

intimidation, forgery, impersonation, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g. spreading of computer viruses).

- Opening email attachments from unknown or unsigned sources. Attachments are the primary source of computer viruses and should be treated with utmost caution.
- Use of email or SLACK in any way that violates TXGCMN or Texas Master Naturalist policies or rules.

### ***Termination of Email Services***

TXGCMN reserves the right to delete the email address and contents of email mailbox in the following circumstances:

- Designation of a chapter member as Inactive. By definition in the Chapter Management and Operations Protocols provided by the State office, a chapter member is deemed Inactive when the following conditions are met:
  - Not Participating - Texas Master Naturalist on the membership roll of a chapter of the state program who is not current in dues and has not reported volunteer service hours or advanced training hours within the calendar year (January – December).
  - Requested Inactive (Resigned)- Texas Master Naturalist on the membership roll of a chapter of the state program who has submitted a request to the chapter to become Inactive (Resign).
  - Deceased - The Texas Master Naturalist member has died.
- As a result of disciplinary action removing the member from active status.

### ***Reinstatement of Email Services***

If an Inactive member requests to be reinstated and meets the state requirements to be active, TXGCMN will provide a chapter email address. TXGCMN cannot guarantee availability of the original email address or mailbox contents.

### ***Monitoring and Confidentiality***

The email and SLACK services used at TXGCMN are owned by the chapter, and are therefore its property. This gives TXGCMN the right and responsibility to monitor any and all email and SLACK traffic passing through its systems. While the organization does not actively read end-user email, Boardmembers or email administrators may inadvertently read email messages during the normal course of managing the email system.

In addition, backup copies of email messages may exist, despite end-user deletion, in compliance with TXGCMN records retention policy. The goals of these backup and archiving procedures are to ensure system reliability and prevent business data loss.

If TXGCMN discovers or has good reason to suspect activities that do not comply with this policy, email records may be retrieved and used to document the activity in accordance with due process.

Use extreme caution when communicating confidential or sensitive information via email. Keep in mind that all email messages sent outside of TXGCMN become the property of the receiver. A good rule is to not communicate anything that you wouldn't feel comfortable being made public. Demonstrate particular care when using the "Reply" and "Reply All" commands during email correspondence.

### ***Failure to Comply***

Violations of this policy will be treated like other allegations of wrongdoing at TXGCMN. Inappropriate use of the technology systems and services may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Temporary or permanent revocation of email access;
2. Disciplinary action according to applicable TXGCMN policies;