

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TONI PRECKWINKLE
PRESIDENT

RICHARD R. BOYKIN	1 st Dist.	PETER N. SILVESTRI	9 th Dist.
ROBERT B. STEELE	2 nd Dist.	BRIDGET GAINER	10 th Dist.
JERRY BUTLER	3 rd Dist.	JOHN P. DALEY	11 th Dist.
STANLEY MOORE	4 th Dist.	JOHN A. FRITCHEY	12 th Dist.
DEBORAH SIMS	5 th Dist.	LARRY SUFFREDIN	13 th Dist.
JOAN PATRICIA MURPHY	6 th Dist.	GREGG GOSLIN	14 th Dist.
JESÚS G. GARCÍA	7 th Dist.	TIMOTHY O. SCHNEIDER	15 th Dist.
LUIS ARROYO JR.	8 th Dist.	JEFFREY R. TOBOLSKI	16 th Dist.
		SEAN M. MORRISON	17 th Dist.



OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT INSPECTOR GENERAL

PATRICK M. BLANCHARD
INSPECTOR GENERAL

69 West Washington Street
Suite 1160
Chicago, Illinois 60602
PHONE (312) 603-0350
FAX (312) 603-9948

October 6, 2015

Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
and Members of the Board of Commissioners
of Cook County, Illinois
118 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: Electronic Mail Policy for Communicating Official Government Business

Dear President Preckwinkle and Members of the Board of Commissioners:

In an effort to promote transparency in government operations, we recommend that the County's Ethics Ordinance be amended by adding the following new section:

Sec. 2-575. Electronic Communication Regarding Official Government Business

All electronic communication by officials, board or commission appointees and employees regarding official government business shall be by and through official government email accounts. Use of personal email, texts or social media to communicate official government business is prohibited. Use of social media to broadcast information to the general public is permitted.

In addition to enhancing good government and promoting transparency, this amendment would make records of government business more accessible and support the County's obligations to comply with Freedom of Information Act requests and subpoenas for records. This amendment would also help the County avoid some of the problems encountered by federal, state, and city officials who have used personal email accounts to conduct government business as recently reported in the news media.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding this proposed amendment or would like to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your consideration to this important issue.

Very truly yours,

Patrick M. Blanchard
Inspector General

Hon. Toni Preckwinkle and Members of the
Board of Commissioners of Cook County
October 6, 2015
Page | 2

cc: Ms. Tasha Cruzat, Deputy Chief of Staff
Ms. Laura Lechowicz Felicione, Special Legal Counsel
Dr. John Jay Shannon, Chief Executive Officer, Health and Hospitals System
Ms. Elizabeth Reidy, General Counsel, Health and Hospitals System
Mr. Arnold Randall, General Superintendent, Forest Preserve District
Ms. Eileen Figel, Deputy General Superintendent, Forest Preserve District
Mr. Ranjit Hakim, Executive Director, Board of Ethics