

FAQ's Regarding Outlook Emails

1. How do I access my Outlook account from home?

From the City of Olympia home page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click "Online Services." Under Employee Services, click "Employee Email (OWA)." Type your username and password (case sensitive.)

2. How do I send an email to the PBI staff liaison in Outlook?

Click "New" in the top/center bar. When the blank message box comes up, click "To ..." In the Search bar, type "Amy" and hit the magnifying glass icon. Select "Amy Buckler" from the list and click "To" at the bottom then "ok." Compose your message and hit send. The message will go to me. Email addresses for all City staff and advisory board members can be found this way.

3. How do I send an email to the PBI advisory board members in Outlook?

The best way to send an email to the entire PBI Board is to forward the message to the staff liaison with a request to send on to the entire board. Going through the liaison helps to reduce "reply-all" situations that can accidentally lead to discussions that should occur in an open public meeting.

3. How do I create a signature?

Click on the "File" tab in the top left. Click options near the bottom of the drop down list on the left. Click "Mail" from the drop down list on the left. Under Compose Messages, select "Signatures ..." Type the signature you want in the box and hit "ok."

4. I am sending this note to you on the Outlook Web Application. Who has access to this message?

Just like in Yahoo Mail or Gmail, the only people who have immediate access to these emails are you and the people you send them to. However, all the emails are captured on the City's server. If someone does a public records request, the email can be drummed up. All the emails to send and receive from the Outlook address are subject to public disclosure.

5. If you were respond to me on the Outlook Web Application, who would have access to your response?

Same as above

6. Since all e-mails that are sent by members of the PBI advisory board are subject to disclosure, what added transparency is achieved by the Outlook Web Application?

The added transparency is the certainty that the emails have been saved and can be disclosed by the City. When you use your own email accounts, the same certainty does not exist. Regardless, under the law, all emails you write with your PBIA hat on are subject to public disclosure, but the City's ability to access them from your private account is obviously less than if they are saved on the City server from the get-go. However, if you are using your private account for PBIA related emails there is a risk that a judge could order a review of your private email account or computer in order to respond to a public disclosure request – another reason why it is best for you to conduct PBIA business only through your Outlook email account.

7. I received a message on the Outlook Web Application from a citizen. Again, who else has access to this message? How does the fact the message was on the Outlook Web Application differ from a message that might have been sent by the same citizen to my private e-mail account?

You, the citizen and whomever else they sent it to have immediate access to the email. But again, all emails that pass through the City's Outlook are captured on the City server and can be drummed up. See question 3 for the difference.

8. Absent a claim under the Open Meetings Act, who has access to postings on the Outlook Web Application site?

In theory, I suppose the City Records staff has access to all the emails that run through Outlook. However, it is not the City's practice to randomly review emails. A request for information under the Public Records Act can be made by anyone, in which case anyone has access to your PBIA emails upon request. The only other reason I can think of that the City would spend the time to access an Outlook account is if there was a major employment or criminal investigation or something like that.

9. At the top of this message is posted the statement: "Draft autosaved at 8:52 AM". What does this mean? Does it mean that anything we type on the Outlook Web Application site is recorded, whether or not it is sent?

Outlook will periodically save unfinished drafts. For example, if you start to draft an email and get pulled away, after a period of 15 or 30 minutes (or whatever time it's set to), Outlook will save the text in the "Draft" folder – which is located in the left column where "Inbox" and "Sent" folders are located. To continue and complete the message, open the Draft Folder, double-click on message, type and send.

10. How do I create folders to organize my emails?

Click "Move" in the top/center bar. From the list, select where you want to place the folder and then Click "Create New Folder." Name the folder and hit return. Now you can drag and drop emails from the Inbox into your folder.