



NEBRASKA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Blocking E-mail Attachments

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| Category | Groupware Architecture |
| Title | Blocking E-Mail Attachments |
| Number | XX-XXX |

Applicability

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|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Government Agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All..... Not Applicable |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excluding: Higher Education Guideline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Funded Entities - All entities receiving state funding for matters covered by this document..... Not Applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Not Applicable |
| Definitions: |
| Standard - Adherence is required. Certain exceptions and conditions may appear in this document, all other deviations from the standard require prior approval of _____. |
| Guideline - Adherence is voluntary. |

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| Status | <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draft <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| Dates | Date: October 8, 2003 Date Adopted by NITC: Other: |

1.0 Guideline

Agencies may prohibit certain attachments from being transmitted through e-mail. There are two common ways to accomplish this. The first is to block any message that contains specific attachments from being delivered. The second is to remove any prohibited attachments before allowing the e-mail to be delivered.

1.1 Blocking E-Mail with Prohibited Attachments

E-mails that include attachments with certain extensions may be blocked at the SMTP gateway. Setting up the blocking criteria at the SMTP gateway will stop incoming Internet mail with those attachments from being delivered. The blocking will also stop outgoing Internet mail with those attachments from being sent. If any of the blocked extensions are detected, the e-mail will be deleted and a standard non-delivery report (NDR) will be returned to the sender stating that the e-mail was not delivered.

1.2 Removing Prohibited Attachments Before Delivery

An agency may also remove any prohibited attachments before allowing the e-mail to be delivered.

1.3 List of Extensions - Attachments which may be blocked

See Addendum.

1.4 Alternative Methods for Sending or Receiving Files

If an individual needs to send or receive a file with one of the blocked extensions, other alternatives for transmitting files should be considered, including: FTP; Web-based document retrieval; renaming the file; or “zipping” the file.

2.0 Purpose and Objectives

It is important to take steps to protect the state’s computing environment against the threat of viruses. Attachments with certain extensions are often used in virus attacks because of their execution access and the amount of damage they can cause.

3.0 Applicability

State Government Agencies – Agencies running a State SMTP Gateway should consider following this guideline.

4.0 Related Documents

[\(http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/\)](http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/)

Security Policies – Information Security Management

[NOTE: A prior version of this document was posted for comment. After reviewing the comments received, the State Government Council adopted several changes, including making this document a “guideline.” Staff made revisions to the document to reflect the intent of these changes and to clarify language in the document.]

Addendum

List of Extensions - Attachments which may be blocked

ade – Microsoft access project extension
adp – Microsoft access project
asp – active server pages
bas – basic
bat – batch
chm – compiled HTML help file
cmd – command
com – command, executable
cpl – control panel applet
crt – security certificate
exe – executable program
hlp – windows help file
hta – HTML application
inf – set up
ins – internet communications settings
isp – internet communications settings
js – JScript
jse – JScript encoded file
lnk – shortcut
mdb – Microsoft access application
mde – Microsoft access MDE database
msc – Microsoft common console document
msi – install control file
msp – probably a windows installer patch
mst – windows installer transform
pcd – photo CD image
pif – windows program information file
reg – Microsoft registry
scr – screensaver
sct – Windows script component
shb – document short cut
shs – shell script object
url – Internet shortcut
vb – VBScript
vbe – VBScript encoded file
vbs – visual basic
vsd – visio drawing
vss – Visual sourcesafe file
vst – targa bitmap file
vsw – visio workspace file
ws – wordstar file
wsc – windows script component
wsf – windows script file
wsh – windows scripting host settings