

## MTCA EMAIL PROTOCOLS & ETIQUETTE

The following are Protocols / Rules of Conduct as well as email etiquette tips when participating on the MTCA Google Email Group. Access to the MTCA Google Email Group is a benefit of membership to the MTCA and can be revoked for failure to continue with membership dues or failure to follow the protocols listed in this document.

The information below is intended as a guide for work-related emails. The tips may or may not apply to personal use of email and certainly do not constitute legal advice. The most important thing to keep in mind, which applies regardless of possible legal liability, is to never put anything in an email that you do not want the world to know about. Emails can be saved, forwarded, and most importantly, are a permanent and public record that can be produced at a later date.

### MTCA Protocol / Rules of Conduct:

1. Check past emails / Check the MTCA website - see page 2 for details
2. When asking others for Information please do the following:
  - (1) **Send the email out to the group**
    - In email remind group that:
      - all responses should be sent directly to you
      - **DO NOT REPLY TO ALL**
  - (2) **Collect the responses**
  - (3) **Send out results/summary to all on the group**
3. **Updates & Announcements** (i.e. "Ballots have arrived" or "I've also received the public record request," etc.)

We want to avoid clogging up peoples work emails and suggest the following from the group:

  - Limit to the first 3 emails
  - Use Facebook group to broadcast additional updates and announcements
4. Refrain from asking questions **emotionally driven** or **broad in nature** (ex: "What are we going to do?")
  - Try to be more specific about what information you are looking for.

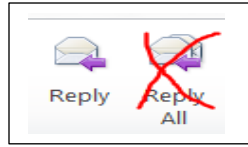
### Top Ten Rules of Email Etiquette:

1. Unless everyone in the group email really needs to see what, you say, reply **only** to the sender.
2. Refrain from discussing confidential information in emails; remember, an email is a public record.
3. Be clear in your subject line. Keep it simple and descriptive.
4. Your email reflects you; all emails that you send either add or detract from your reputation and character. Pay attention to grammar and spelling as careless mistakes may be misunderstood.
5. Never send an email while you are angry. Save it as a draft and revisit it when you are calm.
6. Consider contacting your neighboring City / Town Clerk first. It is always good to develop a relationship with abutting towns.
7. Consider contacting State Agencies; another resource is your Town Counsel.
8. Make your communications positive, constructive, complete, and factual.
9. Be careful when using with humor; it can be misunderstood.
10. Never use all caps in your email – it can be perceived of as "SHOUTING!"

# FAQ's / Helpful Suggestions

Please avoid “replying to all”

First, ask yourself . . . .



- Is there another option that will allow you to connect with others?
- Have you searched through past emails? Or checked the MTCA website?

## Options to connect with Town Clerks other than the Google group:

- **MTCA Facebook Group** is a great tool to connect with other clerks or share in a more personal way! The group setting for this page is “secret” which means a member of the group needs to add you & posts only appear in members news feeds so they are not viewable to the public.
  - **Steps to join the Facebook Page:**
    - Send an email to [adowd@town.northborough.ma.us](mailto:adowd@town.northborough.ma.us) with the email address you use for your Facebook account and you will be sent an invitation to that email.
    - Send Andy Dowd a Friend request: <https://www.facebook.com/andy.dowd.7> and you will be added that way.
- **Finding your people** – Whether it be clerks in your surrounding area, NEMCI friends or Mentor Clerks, have you considered emailing a select group of clerks rather than everyone?

**Searching past emails** – Often times your question has already been posted to the group in the past. Please use key words and search your emails to see if you can find the question/answers this way first. You may search all past emails by going to <https://groups.google.com/g/masstownclerks>

## The following MTCA website links that may provide helpful resources and/or information:

- **MTCA Membership Information**
  - Membership Questions: [membershipMTCA@gmail.com](mailto:membershipMTCA@gmail.com)
  - [New Clerk or Clerk Change Form](#)
  - [Office Staff Change Form](#) – Add or Remove
- **MTCA membership Benefits**
  - Google Group Access – done through membership forms
  - Website Member Only Access - Staff access provided by Clerk sharing their credentials
    - Clerk User Name: 3 letter VRIS acronym & towns 3-digit DOR # EX: EAT288 (Easton)
- **Conferences**
  - Conference Registration Forms: [conferenceMTCA@gmail.com](mailto:conferenceMTCA@gmail.com)
- **Clerks Resource Library** (member access only)
  - Starting in FY23 there is a state wide Staffing and Salary Survey for each Fiscal Year!
- **New Clerk Welcome Packet** (member access only)
- **Mentoring Workshops & Sample Documents** (member access only)
- About the MTCA: [Bylaws](#) / [Committee & Board Policies](#) / [E-Board Directory](#) / [Committee Appointments](#)

## **Frustrated about the Reply to All?** Consider the following options:

- Set a rule and folder in outlook to send all emails from [masstownclerks@googlegroups.com](mailto:masstownclerks@googlegroups.com) to go to that folder and not into your inbox. [Click here for “How to” link](#)
- Change your membership settings in the MTCA google group under "My membership settings" and "Subscription" – select "Digest". As a result, you will get one "digest" e-mail a day. [Click here for “How to” link](#)