



**Secure Messaging**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
For email recipients outside OHSU

**If your situation is an emergency, please dial 911 or contact your practice or physician directly via phone. Do not email any urgent medical problem or highly sensitive information, such as:**

- Mental health, drug and alcohol problems
- Work-related injuries and disability correspondence and/or questions

***Please know that email communication is not a substitute for an exam by your doctor.***

**Why did I get this email message?**

You have received this email message because:

- a) You have told Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) that you would like to receive certain information about your care via email, or
- b) Someone at OHSU has emailed you information such as health information, financial data or other sensitive information. Because this information is private, a secure email has been sent.

**What does secure mean?**

The information in the email has been encrypted or scrambled so other people (computer hackers or identity thieves) cannot read or intercept your information while it is traveling over the internet.

**Why is this email secure?**

This email is secure to protect the information the email contains and to make sure it is not viewed or intercepted by people who do not have a right to access it.

**How do I retrieve an encrypted email from OHSU?**

OHSU will email you instructions for how to retrieve an encrypted email. The instructions involve going to a website, registering and selecting a password. Once you have created an account, you'll be able to access encrypted messages.

**What type of password should I choose?**

You must choose a strong password that requires a minimum of 8 character(s), at least 1 digit(s), and at least 1 alphabetical character(s). Your password should not be a word or phrase that is

found in a dictionary. A good way to choose a password is to think of a “pass phrase” that is easy to remember and use letters, numbers and characters to capture it. For example, “Strawberry fields forever” would become “StBF4Ever!” Please do not use this example as your password.

### **Once I’ve retrieved the encrypted email, what should I do with it?**

What you do with the encrypted message depends on what information it contains. This information may be protected by federal or state law, contain terms of a contract between OHSU and the recipient or meet other confidentiality requirements. If you’re not sure why the information you received was encrypted or marked secure, contact the sender for more information. If you want to reply directly to the person at OHSU who sent you the email, your reply is secure. Please note that you are responsible for protecting the information sent once you have retrieved the email.

### **What if I am having trouble retrieving the email or forgot my password?**

Please call the OHSU ITG Service Desk at 503-494-2222. You can expect a resolution or response to your issue within two business days.

### **What happens if my email message expires?**

Secure messages remain active for 60 days. If they are not retrieved within this timeframe, the message is automatically deleted. The notification message that you received will remain visible in your inbox unless you delete it. If you try to retrieve the secure email *after* 60 days, you will receive an error message. If this happens, you will need to contact the sender and ask them to resend the email.

### **Will my account ever expire?**

No. You will only need to create your account once, and it will not expire.

### **What if I need to send a secure email to OHSU?**

OHSU secure mail tools should only be used for OHSU members to send secure mail outside of the organization. If you have a need to send OHSU a secure message, please do so using the security tools your organization offers.

### **Can I send email from within the secure email portal?**

No. The secure email portal can only be used to read secure emails and reply to existing secure emails. New emails cannot be initiated from the portal.