MS Society email user guide

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If your group handles money and delivers services and activities, we expect you to be available to all people affected by multiple sclerosis (MS) in the area, be easy to contact, regularly communicate with members, and ensure information about MS and MS Society services and activities is available to everyone in your community.

Using MS Society email supports your group to meet this requirement.

Find out more

See Group Handbook A2: Requirements, support, tools and resources for more on our group requirements.

1. Support to use MS Society email

We've developed a set of resources to support your group to use MS Society email.

User guide

This user guide covers who needs to use MS Society email, why and when to use it, data protection, and how to make changes to your group of MS Society email users.

Technical guides

Our technical guides will help you get started with MS Society email, access your inboxes, send and receive emails, work with documents and

use your calendars. Our technical guides are specific to the different types of device you may use to access MS Society email:

- MS Society email technical guide: PCs and laptops
- MS Society email technical guide: Android devices
- MS Society email technical guide: Apple (iOS) devices

You'll find the full set of resources at Using MS Society email on the volunteer website, and our Supporter Care Team is your key source of support. Contact us if you can't find the answer to your question in our MS Society email resources.

Supporter Care Team
supportercare@mssociety.org.uk
Tel: 0300 500 8084

2. What is MS Society email?

MS Society email is one of our six online tools designed to support your group to meet our requirements. It gives your group access to a range of functions that enable you to communicate on our behalf, whilst ensuring that we comply with current data protection legislation.

Email accounts

All MS Society groups have a shared MS Society email address that we want you to promote widely within your local MS community. But that's not all – volunteers with access to your group MS Society email also have an individual MS Society email address. You can view both inboxes and send emails from both addresses, all in one place.

We want you to use MS Society email whenever you need to handle personal data. We also want you to use it when you communicate with an external organisation or person by email on our behalf. This could include local supporters, press and PR contacts, or grant making trusts.

Your Coordinating Team should nominate two volunteers who can delete emails from your group inbox when they are no longer needed.

MS Support

If your group offers MS Support, you also have an MS Support email address that you must use to respond to requests for MS Support.

Only trained Lead/Support Volunteers can access and respond to enquiries sent to your MS Support email address.

Your MS Society email addresses

Your MS Society email addresses follow these formats:

Individual – test.person@groups.mssociety.org.uk
Group – anytown@mssociety.org.uk
MS Support – anytownsupport@mssociety.org.uk

File storage

MS Society email includes a secure storage space where you can keep documents like team meeting notes, service level agreements and risk management paperwork.

All volunteers on your team with access to MS Society email can view and edit shared files.

Group calendar

MS Society email also includes a group calendar that enables you to schedule team meetings and keep track of when your services, activities and events are due to take place. You can add agendas to meetings and set reminders so no-one forgets what's coming up.

Microsoft Office applications

MS Society email is hosted by Microsoft, which means your MS Society email account gives you online access to applications like Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

3. Who needs to use MS Society email?

If you hold one of these roles, we expect you to use MS Society email when you represent us:

- Group Coordinator
- Administration Volunteer
- Lead Support Volunteer
- Finance Volunteer
- Communications Volunteer
- Support Volunteer

Regardless of the volunteer role you hold, you must also use MS Society email whenever you represent us in these ways:

- Handling personal data by email
- Acting as an account signatory on your group's cash pooling account
- Communicating with external organisations or people by email on our behalf

If you are a Coordinating Team member who doesn't meet either of these criteria, you may still request an MS Society email address.

4. Why use MS Society email?

Accessibility

Being easy to contact by email has become an important way to support people affected by MS. It enables people to use screen reader software to access information in a way that suits them. It also makes it possible for us to keep in touch with people who aren't able to attend our meetings or events.

Find out more

See Group Handbook B1: Availability, contact and communication for more on being accessible to all.

We've thought about your access too. Because it's hosted by Microsoft, you can access MS Society email wherever you are, via PC, tablet or mobile device.

Local identity

Using MS Society email when you communicate with members and supporters is a great way to reinforce your place in the community.

Your shared MS Society email address includes the name of your group, which lets people know we have a local presence.

Security

MS Society email benefits from all the security measures our IT services put in place.

We can't verify the security of non-MS Society email accounts, which we're legally required to do. If something goes wrong with a non-MS Society email account, for example if someone gains unauthorised access, or uses the account fraudulently, our IT Support and Data Governance Teams can't easily access or place restrictions on the account to minimise the damage.

Keeping your personal information safe

We strongly recommend that you do not share your personal information – including home addresses, email addresses and phone numbers – anywhere in print, online, or in email communications.

Using MS Society email means you never have to publicise your personal email address. This protects your safety and security, both during and after your time volunteering with us.

See Group Handbook A5: Health, safety and wellbeing for more on staying safe when you represent us.

Representing us

We never get a second chance to make a first impression.

Whether you're responding to an information enquiry from a person living with MS, or applying for funding from a grant making trust, our reputation as a forward thinking and personable organisation is in your hands.

Your auto signature

Every MS Society email you send has an auto signature that includes your MS Society group name and contact details. And of course, it features our distinctive MS Society branding, reinforcing that we are all part of one MS Society with shared values and goals.

See Group Handbook B2: Using our brand for more on representing our brand values.

Effective communication

We want you to enjoy communication that is consistent, easy to manage, and works in both directions.

All volunteers who need to communicate by email on our behalf can access your group MS Society email, meaning your contacts will continue to enjoy great support when one of your team needs to take a break, steps down or changes role.

And MS Society email enables us to keep in touch with you, with regular news and updates.

See Group Handbook A7: Keeping in touch for more on contact with your Local Networks Officer and other staff teams.

5. MS Society email and data protection

We are all responsible for protecting the privacy of individuals and their right to control the ways we use their personal information. Using MS Society email helps protect you from personal liability, provided that you follow our guidance.

Our data handling rules are the same whatever services and activities your group provides. This section covers how they specifically apply to MS Society email.

See Group Handbook A6: Handling data for our rules when handling personal information.

Data Protection for GDPR eLearning

Our organisation and individuals within it – including volunteers – can be fined if we fail to keep people's information safe.

Data Protection for GDPR eLearning aims to build your confidence and helps you to avoid inadvertently making a mistake. You can check your learning and ensure your training record is updated by completing the multiple choice test at the end.

We will ask you to complete Data Protection for GDPR eLearning before using MS Society email, even if you have completed previous data protection training.

See Data protection for GDPR eLearning on the volunteer website or contact our Supporter Care Team for more information.

Reporting a data breach

A 'data breach' is any situation where personal data is made insecure.

You must speak to our Data Governance Team to report any potential data breach immediately. We are required to inform the Information Commissioner's Office of a breach within 72 hours of any volunteer or member of staff becoming aware of it.

Data Governance Team
datagovernance@mssociety.org.uk
Tel: 0203 872 8735

Protecting your account

Your MS Society email password

Your MS Society email password is specific to you and you must not share it with anyone. We recommend that you register for Microsoft self-service password reset, so you can reset your own password without involving us. Otherwise, you'll need to contact the Supporter Care Team to request a new password.

Protecting your PC, tablet or mobile device

When you sign in to MS Society email for the first time on a new computer, you will be asked if you want to stay logged in. If you are using a shared computer, (for example, in a library or one you share in your household), you must click 'No'. If all users have a separate log in account, or you are the only user, then you can click 'Yes'.

Before you access MS Society email on a mobile device, we will ask you to install an app that requires you to verify your identity by entering a six digit PIN each time you wish to sign in. This app also enables us to remove MS Society data from your device if it is lost or stolen.

Never share your password or PIN with anyone. When it's time to replace your computer or device, or you wish to pass it on to someone else, you should reformat the disks to ensure that all content is deleted.

Sending, receiving and sharing emails

If your role meets our criteria (see page three - 'Who needs to use MS Society email?'), we expect you to use MS Society email whenever you handle data or communicate with external organisations or people by email on our behalf.

Sending emails

You must only send emails to people who have given us permission to contact them in this way. If a person emails your group, this does not mean you can use their email address to contact them about other matters.

Your MS Society email account does not enable you to store lists of contacts. We expect you to download contact data from the Portal each time you need it. If a person does not appear on a current contact list you download from the Portal, you must not contact them for any reason, unless you're replying to an enquiry they sent you.

Data on the Portal

Your group must use the Portal to access contact data. This will ensure that we only use up to date information about people who have agreed to be contacted by us.

Each time you use the Portal to download contact data as an Excel spreadsheet or PDF, you will be asked to confirm the reason for the download. You must not use this downloaded data for any other purpose.

You will be prompted to protect the file with a password. You must not share this file password with anyone who is not in an authorised volunteer role.

Find out more

To set up your Portal account, log in or get support, see Using the Portal on our volunteer website, or ask the Supporter Care Team for help.

Opting out

People have a right to change their minds about receiving emails from us at any time. If a person contacts you to opt out of receiving emails from us, to you must let our Supporter Care Team know as soon as possible, to enable us to update our contact database within the required 28 day notification period.

Non-member contacts

Your Portal contact list includes all MS Society members in the area who have agreed to be contacted by us, but your group may also wish to email people who are not members. They must also give their permission before you contact them, and may opt out at any time.
We strongly recommend that you store their contact data within the Portal too, to ensure it is handled correctly. If you have a good reason to store it elsewhere, you must contact our Data Governance Team to agree an exception.

Sending emails to a list of contacts

You must copy and paste email addresses into the 'Bcc' line to send an email to a list of contacts. Any email address on the 'Bcc' line is not visible to others on the email.

Sending an email to a list of contacts using the 'To' line is a data breach. It shares everyone's email addresses with everyone else, which they may not have consented to, or be happy with. Further unauthorised sharing can happen if that email is then forwarded.

Receiving emails

A data breach may also occur if you click on an unsafe link in an email that breaches the security of your computer. This can enable hackers to access, corrupt or damage the data you have stored.

How to spot an unsafe link

1. Stop and think before clicking on a link, or opening an attachment. Am I expecting something from this person? Does it make sense for them to be sending this type of thing? If you have any doubts, contact the person (not by email - if the account has been accessed, the hacker might reply) to check before opening the attachment or clicking on the link. Don't forward the email to other people as they may accidentally follow it.

2. When you receive a link, hover over it with your cursor before clicking on it. This shows the site the link is taking you to, rather than the text they want you to read. For example, if you hover on this link http://www.bbc.co.uk you can see it will in fact take you to ITV. If the link looks odd, don't click on it.

3. If you accidentally follow a link to a website which then asks for your username and password, DO NOT enter it. Be especially wary of fake versions of major systems like Office 365 where the page *looks* like it's the legitimate site, but there will be a slight error in the web address, designed so that you give up your username and password.

Sharing emails

You can only share an email with another MS Society volunteer who has access to MS Society email if you need their help to reply to it. Both parties must use MS Society email whilst dealing with the enquiry.

You must never share emails with a third party, including your own personal, non-MS Society email address. This is because we can't vouch for the security of external email accounts.

Responding to emails sent to personal email addresses

In the past, you may have shared your personal email address with people wishing to contact your group. You must not do this in future.

If a person contacts you via your personal, non-MS Society email address about an MS Society matter, forward the email to your MS Society email inbox and reply from there.

Storing information securely

We always want you to use your MS Society email secure file storage space to keep documents like team meeting notes, service level agreements and risk management paperwork safe. This is because we can't vouch for the security of other types of cloud based storage.

How long should we keep data?

The GDPR requires us to keep data for no longer than is necessary. You must follow our rules for different types of data and delete shared documents when the time is up.

Find out more

See Group Handbook A6: Handling data for our rules on how long to keep different types of personal data.

5. When to use MS Society email

Responding to information enquiries

You may receive requests for information about MS by email. To meet our information giving requirement, your group must have a named volunteer responsible for monitoring your MS Society email inbox and responding to enquiries.

See Group Handbook B3: Giving information for more about the information resources available to you when dealing with enquiries.

Top tip: We recommend that you respond to information enquiries using your group MS Society email address. This makes it easy to share the task if someone needs a break.

Responding to requests for MS Support

If your group offers MS Support, your Lead/Support Volunteers also have access to your MS Support email address.

Only Lead/Support Volunteers who hold a current disclosure check and have completed Support Volunteer Training must be allowed to respond to requests for MS Support.

This will ensure that people who contact your group for MS Support are dealt with by a Lead/Support Volunteer trained to provide emotional support.

Must do: You must respond to all requests for MS Support using your shared MS Support email address.

See D1: Offering MS Support for our priorities, ways of working and how we help our groups to offer a local MS Support service.

Communicating with MS Society members and others

Your group can download contact data from the Portal to write to members and others within the area who have agreed for their details to be shared with you. You can write to them using MS Society email, to give them news about your group, and invite them to events and activities.

What should we tell people about?

- How to contact your group by post, phone, email and online
- The services, activities and events you offer
- How you fundraise

- Your volunteering opportunities
- News about MS and the MS Society
- Information about local MS and community services

> Top tip: Your group MS Society email address includes your group name. When you send news and information about your group to members and others using your group MS Society email address, you reinforce your place in your local MS community.

Managing team meetings

Discussion between meetings

MS Society email enables your Coordinating Team to enjoy secure, GDPR compliant discussion between team meetings. You can circulate meeting agendas, share documents for comment, and make decisions.

> Top tip: Start a team discussion by sending an email to your group MS Society email address. This way, all volunteers with access to MS Society email will be able to view and comment on it.

Making decisions

It is important that you involve all members of your Coordinating Team in key discussions and reach decisions by consensus.

Any decision made by your Coordinating Team via MS Society email must be agreed by all Coordinating Team members (including those who have decided not to request an MS Society email account at this time). You must record this agreement in meeting notes before the decision can be actioned.

> Top tip: Don't forget to keep a record of your team meetings and decisions in your shared MS Society email file storage.

Find out more

See Group Handbook C3: Your Coordinating Team for guidance on how your group should operate.

Meeting administration

You can use your MS Society email group calendar to schedule your team meetings, add agendas to them and set reminders so no-one forgets what's coming up.

Planning and delivering services and activities

Planning and budgeting

Each year, we expect your Coordinating Team to put together a plan of what your group will do, and a budget detailing how it will be paid for. We recommend that you hold an annual planning meeting and review your progress against budget at each team meeting throughout the year.

> Top tip: Why not keep your planning documents in your shared file storage and use your group calendar to schedule your annual planning meeting and regular reviews?

Find out more

See Group Handbook B6: Planning and delivering quality services and activities for more on understanding what's needed locally.

Collecting personal data

We only deliver services and activities that are safe, effective and have a positive impact on those using them. Each service and activity your group provides must have a named contact. If you need to collect personal data by email to deliver it, you must use MS Society email to do so.

> Top tip: If you need to collect personal data by email, make sure you ask service users and event delegates to send it to your MS Society email address and include an appropriate Privacy Statement. Follow our rules on how long to keep this data.

Find out more

See our guide to GDPR Privacy Statements for when a Privacy Statement is needed and what it needs to include.

Individual correspondence

Building relationships with local decision makers is a great way to boost your group's fundraising, campaigning and awareness raising potential.

Top tip: Using MS Society email when you write to external organisations or people ensures your communication meets our brand standards and looks professional.

See Fundraising and campaigning on our volunteer website for tips on influencing decision makers, involving local press and mobilising your MS community.

6. Making changes

Contact our Supporter Care Team for support if you need to make changes to your MS Society email group. This could happen:

- When someone joins your team
- When a volunteer leaves
- When someone needs a break

Tell us what you think

We hope you find this MS Society email user guide useful and we're keen to hear your feedback and suggestions. Please click here to complete our short evaluation survey.

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