715 Electronic Monitoring Policy FAQs

Q: Why is the University implementing an Electronic Monitoring Policy?

A: In 2022, the Ontario government passed Bill 88 – the "Working for Workers Act" – that requires organizations with 25 or more employees to have a written policy about electronic monitoring of employees. Learn more about requirements under the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA) [1] covering the electronic monitoring of employees.

Q: What is "electronic monitoring"?

A: For the purpose of the University's policy, electronic monitoring is a broad term that generally refers to a system or tool's ability to report on its usage or user interaction.

Q: What is the purpose of the Electronic Monitoring Policy?

A: The University's Electronic Monitoring Policy ensures transparency and identifies existing types of University tools and systems that have an electronic monitoring feature, even if electronic monitoring is not a primary use of the tool.

Q: What electronic monitoring is the University doing?

A: Several University systems have the capacity for electronic monitoring, although the data from these functions are seldom used. The specific tools and systems with electronic monitoring features, and the primary purpose of each, are listed in the Electronic Monitoring Policy.

Q: What does this policy change for me as an employee of the University?

A: The policy does not change the University's approach to electronic monitoring but rather explains how electronic monitoring could be used at U of G. The policy does not introduce new methods of employee monitoring. Several University systems have the capacity for electronic monitoring, although the data from these functions are seldom used. The specific tools and systems with electronic monitoring features, and the primary purpose of each, are listed in the Electronic Monitoring Policy.

Q: Can the University look at my work emails and documents?

A: While the University does not actively monitor employees using electronic means, the University may use these tools for the purposes of specific monitoring, evaluating or investigating when a concern has been identified about an employee or IT security or when legally required. Such access to monitoring is rare and not part of the University's standard, day-to-day activities. The University values employee privacy. Its use of any electronic monitoring is limited and conducted in accordance with its relevant policies and collective agreements and legal requirements. The University adheres to its Privacy and Access to Information Guidelines and Confidentiality of Personal Information Policy to ensure confidentiality is maintained and to ensure that access for monitoring purposes is relevant to the issue at hand. Additional information on the acceptable use of information technology resources at the University can be found in the Acceptable Use Policy.

Q: Can I use my personal email account for U of G-related business/research/teaching communications?

A: The University provides required safeguards for any information stored on or shared through its systems, including email. Using your personal account for University-related business can unintentionally jeopardize the safety of that information and put you and the University at risk (including third-party legal claims and fines) if that information is compromised. Using personal accounts for U of G business violates Appendix A – Secure Office

Data Protection of the University's Acceptable Use Policy [2].

Q: Can the University access research files without my permission?

A: The only case in which an authorized user or system administrator can access research files is under concerns about ethical conduct or operational/security issues. The University manages access to research data in compliance with applicable legislation, University policies, and regulatory and research funder guidelines.

Q: Does this policy violate Tri-Agency requirements for human-participant research?

A: No. The University manages access to research data in compliance with applicable legislation, University policies, and regulatory and research funder guidelines. The Electronic Monitoring Policy does not introduce new methods of electronic monitoring but rather explains how electronic monitoring could be used at U of G.

Q: Will video conference meetings be monitored?

A: The University does not actively monitor or record video conference meetings. Facilitators of sessions may record meetings – whose recording could be accessed and reviewed – to support learning and sharing of information. Most video conferencing systems indicate when a meeting is being recorded.

Q: Can the University access my personal emails or information if I use my University-provided device for personal activities?

A: No. The University does not have the ability to access employees' personal email accounts (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, etc.) nor does it have access to any personal passwords, log-ins or applications. Anyone using a University-issued device must ensure acceptable use of technology as per the Acceptable Use Policy.

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Links
[1] https://www.ontario.ca/document/your-guide-employment-standards-act-0/written-policy-electronic-monitoring-employees [2] https://ithelp.uoguelph.ca/policy/acceptable-use-policy