

## ANC List Netiquette

Welcome to the e-mail list for the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC). This list was created for and is moderated by ANC. This list is a community news, information, and discussion service with a focus on Austin neighborhood issues. This list is vital to the ANC and serves as an emergency alert system, so the usage policies are designed to avoid losing subscribers due to commercial and spam postings, aggressive or abusive behavior, and high volumes of traffic.

ANC has developed these list netiquette guidelines to keep us all on friendly terms, on topic, and to encourage list membership and participation. They are not intended to stifle nor censor discussion; rather they are designed to foster and encourage intelligent and rational discussion without personal attacks or insult. The latter activity usually results in division within our group and usually results in people leaving the lists.

These lists guidelines shall apply to all email lists operated by ANC. This document shall be made available by ANC to all list members. These guidelines are patterned after many other list guidelines and, more generally, Internet RFC 1855, Netiquette Guidelines, developed in 1995 (<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc1855.txt>).

### List Guidelines

Users of the ANC lists are required to follow these guidelines:

- Messages posted to the ANC lists **shall be pertinent to the ANC mission and purpose** (as outlined in the ANC bylaws). Stay on topic.
- Use appropriate **subject lines**. If your reply changes the subject, edit the subject line appropriately. This makes it easier for list users to delete messages or threads in which they have little to no interest.
- Use of **profanity** is strongly discouraged.
- **Personal attacks and insults** are not allowed. These are also called flames.
- **SPAM and selling** things on the list is not allowed. This includes the "looking for a roommate/housemate/soulmate" type emails. (That's what eBay or CraigsList is for.)
- **Replies to discussion topics**, especially hot and divisive topics, should be kept to once per day per individual. Combine multiple replies together as a single reply. Most topics don't need an immediate reply. This action helps prevent flame wars.
- Brevity is encouraged. List members are strongly encouraged to **edit their email replies or forwards** to delete extraneous copy. Members need to get out of the infamous and lazy habit of simply hitting "reply," adding one or two words at the top, and then hitting "send." Replies in-line to specific content are considered more appropriate.

- Email which involves **events not directly related to the mission of ANC** shall be kept to a minimum. If an ANC member (or the organization to which the member belongs) stands to make money from the event, the sender should note that in the email.
- **Forwarding email** to the list is allowed only on the condition that it is pertinent to current ANC discussions and not disallowed by the author.
- **Quoting personal email** on list without the express written consent of the writer is strictly forbidden. Personal email is defined as email written to a person's address specifically and not copied to the ANC list. This does not include email written to the list which may single out a particular ANC list member (see below for more on emails to the list written for a single person).
- All email should be **signed** by name by the sending individual and include the neighborhood in which they reside (which is not to necessarily construe an endorsement by the neighborhood) and any organizational affiliations relevant to the topic.
- **Messages sent to the list addressing one person** should instead be sent directly to that person off-list and not to the entire list. Edit the TO: and CC: fields appropriately.
- **Attachments** are not available on the main ANC list (due to past problems with virus proliferation). Most attachments can and should be pasted in the message as simple text. If an attachment is desired, it should be posted with a link included in the email.
- **Out-of-Office replies** should be configured to only be sent to the sender (set to reply) and not to the list (set to reply-to-all). These messages only clutter the list.
- Messages should not be in **ALL CAPS**. It's considered SHOUTING and hard to read.
- Posters are encouraged to re-read their replies, correct spelling, and to count to at least 10 before sending a reply to ensure that it's courteous, pertinent, and that everyone will truly desire the benefits of their input.

## Consequences

The above guidelines carry with them some possible consequences if transgressed.

### *Warnings*

The following actions will get a warning from the list moderators or members of the Executive Committee; infractions committed after a warning will result in a list moderator contacting a member of the Executive Committee to request removal of the member from the list:

- Consistent sending or forwarding of irrelevant email.

- Consistent sending of long, unedited replies and forwards.
- Consistent sending of email addressed to a single person to the entire list.
- Consistent infraction of any list guideline above.

### ***Infractions Resulting in Moderation***

These actions will result in a list moderator contacting a member of the Executive Committee asking for a list member to be placed on moderation:

- Personal attacks or insults.
- Attempts to sell items to the list members (which is Spam, isn't it).
- Sending anonymous email.
- Forwarding anonymous email.
- Sending copies of another's personal email without the writer's written consent.
- Repeated infraction of list guidelines above after which warnings were sent to the member.

To be placed on moderation for an ANC list, the list moderator must receive a request from a current Executive Committee member. The Executive Committee member must notify the list member of the action and give them a chance to contest the moderation restriction at the next Executive Committee meeting. Any moderation restriction of members can be appealed to the Executive Committee by the restricted member; the Executive Committee can request the list moderator to remove moderation restrictions on the member with a majority vote.

List members may contact Executive Committee members or the list moderators with grievances about list infractions. Executive Committee members may then contact the list moderators regarding moderation restrictions. The list moderators may then place the member on moderation restrictions.

When a member is placed on moderation restrictions for an ANC list, the list moderator must notify the list members.

### **Legal Disclaimers**

The Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) mailing lists, while associated with the Austin Neighborhoods Council, are made up of ANC members and other interested parties. Therefore, the views expressed on the ANC lists are assumed to be the views of the writer alone, not those of the ANC, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Members of the ANC lists must state their positions (i.e., "President," "ANC List Moderator," "Sector Rep", etc.) in their emails if they expect the weight of the position to be behind their views.

Subscribers to the list agree to hold ANC harmless for any claims that litigious parties may have against emails sent to the list or the senders of the email.

## **List Moderators**

The list moderator(s) (the moniker applied to maintainers of e-mail groups) is one or more person(s) appointed by the Executive Committee to manage the list. The term is unexpired.

Persons who have complaints or problems with a list moderator may take them up (preferably privately) with the list moderator(s) or with the Executive Committee. Candidates for list moderator may petition the Executive Committee for the position. The Executive Committee may add, remove or replace a list moderator by a simple majority vote at any Executive Committee meeting. A removed list moderator reserves the right to appeal any such decision to the Executive Committee and subsequently to the ANC membership.

## **Amendments**

The rules herein can be amended or changed by the Executive Committee by a majority vote at any Executive Committee meeting. Amendments to this document must be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration.

[Note: This set of guidelines was adopted by the ANC Executive Committee on May 10, 2006.]