The Department of Education <u>requires</u> all post-secondary institutions that gather information electronically, to inform students of their requirements to secure data sent electronically. All Personal Identifiable Information (PII) received from students must be sent with a minimum of **AES 256-bit encryption or higher**.

This encryption helps to ensure that PII is not sent to Ameritech insecurely. There are many programs that have the ability to encrypt attachments. One option available to students is Outlook within Office 365 that is offered to all Ameritech students.

Before sending PII through email, you must encrypt your attachments with any program that allows for AES 256-bit encryption or higher. WinZip™ is one example of a program that can be used to send encrypted attachments to Ameritech College.

If you have access to Microsoft Outlook within Office 365 follow the below steps to send an encrypted email.

1. Select ⊕ New to start a new message.
2. Enter the appropriate email address in the **To** field. For example:

   FinancialAid@ameritech.edu or StudentAccounts@ameritech.edu
3. In the Subject line, type SECURE EMAIL in all capital letters and then proceed to include a subject of the email message.
   a. Outlook will automatically encrypt your message, and send your email securely to the recipient **only if** the words SECURE EMAIL is in the subject line.
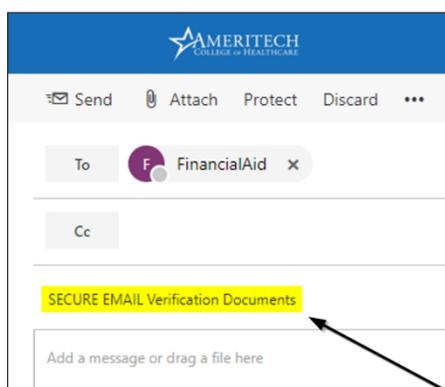
4. Place the cursor in the body of the email message, and then start typing.
   a. To add an attachment, select 🔗 Attach and then choose 🖥 Computer
5. Locate the file on your computer and then click **Open**.
6. Office 365 will then ask how you want to share the file, select
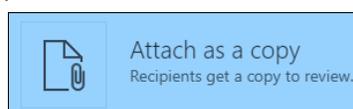
7. After typing out your message, select **Send**.

If you do not have access to Microsoft Outlook, ensure that your encryption program allows for AES 256-bit encryption or higher. Attach the encrypted document to the email, and send to the appropriate recipient.

The below steps are how to encrypt an attachment with a free program called WinZip. WinZip is an example but not the only program that can encrypt documents. Explore your options before downloading any programs.

WinZip instructions for file/folder encryption and password protection	
1	-Download WinZip from www.winzip.com/win/en/downwz.html -Install WinZip to your computer by following the prompts. -Once the program is installed proceed to step 2.
2	Locate the file on your computer that you wish to encrypt. If you want to select more than one file, you must press the "Ctrl" key on the keyboard while selecting them.
3	Right-click over one of the selected items.
4	Select WinZip. From the submenu that appears, select "Add to Zip File."
5	In the "Add Files" dialog box, specify a 'File name' and 'Destination' (location) for the finished Zip file.
6	Select ".Zip" as the Compression Type.
7	Under Encryption, check the "Encrypt files" box.
8	Click the "Add" button.
9	A pop-up window may appear saying "You should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the various encryption methods before using this feature. Please press the F1 key for more information, particularly if this is the first time you are using encryption." Select the "OK" button to continue.
10	In the "Enter Password" field, enter an appropriate password. Passwords must be at least eight characters and must contain at least one of each the following: a lowercase character (a-z), an uppercase character (AZ), a number character (0-9), and a symbol character (!, @, #, $, %, ^, &, *, etc.).
11	In the "Re-enter Password" field, enter the same password from Step #10, and remember the password for future reference.
12	Click the "OK" button.
13	A pop-up window may appear saying "Add Complete. Your files have been added. The files will be compressed and encrypted when saved." Click the "OK" button to continue.
14	The encrypted WinZip file should be in the location identified in Step #5 above.
15	The password must not be included in the same message and should either be included in a separate email or verbally provided to the intended user.

Office of Financial Aid

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