

Standard handling instructions for ELA documents marked SENSITIVE

These handling instructions apply to all ELA documents or information marked as SENSITIVE.

The following are the minimum required protection measures.

Creation (applicable to ELA staff only)

- Documents containing sensitive non-classified information must be marked using the standard security marking “SENSITIVE”. Do not use any other markings than the security marking SENSITIVE.
- Documents containing sensitive non-classified information must only be accessible to recipients with a need-to-know for official purposes, bearing in mind the principle of professional secrecy and the obligations under the Staff Regulations (Article 17).
- All persons handling sensitive non-classified information must be made aware of the handling instructions. Ensure that sensitive documents or information include a copy of or a link to these handling instructions.

Handling (i.e. printing, copying, scanning, storing, reading and editing documents)

- Documents containing sensitive non-classified information must only be handled and stored on equipment or applications that are appropriately secured corporate (i.e. non-personal) devices (such as: corporate end user devices and secure printers)
- The access to sensitive non-classified information handled or stored on ELA equipment is forbidden to unauthorised persons, including ELA staff’s relatives.
- Sensitive non-classified information must be protected from eavesdropping and observation during teleworking and missions outside the office and must not be handled or stored in public.
- Documents marked as SENSITIVE should not be left unattended and should be secured when not in use (screens locked and physical documents stored in a locked office or a locked cupboard).
- Handling of physical copies of sensitive non-classified documents outside the office is in principle avoided, unless necessary due to the particularities of an activity, e.g. during an inspection.
- Electronic documents marked as SENSITIVE should be stored in a way that prevents automatic sharing with people that do not have a need-to-know. Where appropriate, SENSITIVE electronic documents should be stored in encrypted file shares or systems.
- Printing, copying and scanning of documents marked as SENSITIVE must be performed on appropriately secured devices. Documents should be removed from printers, photocopiers, faxes, shared scanning folders or other shared devices immediately, while scanned copies of documents, including both electronic and hard copies, shall be removed from any insufficiently secured locations as soon as possible, including shared drives, unencrypted e-mails, scanner device memory and printers in unsecured office areas.
- Sensitive documents/information cannot be used/shared for the submission to AI tools.

Distribution (i.e. defining authorised recipients and determining methods of transmitting information)

- SENSITIVE documents/information may only be distributed on a need-to-know basis with these handling instructions included and bearing in mind the principle of professional

secrecy under any relevant legislation (Staff Regulations or national legislation). SENSITIVE information must not be distributed outside of the audience indicated.

- Do not release SENSITIVE documents outside the relevant services of your organisation without authorisation from the originator.
- Any person receiving SENSITIVE information who is not the intended recipient must inform the sender and destroy the information by appropriate secure procedures.
- Where SENSITIVE documents or information are transmitted physically, e.g. via courier services, they must be sealed inside an opaque envelope.
- Where SENSITIVE documents or information are transmitted electronically, they should be protected through appropriate security measures, including encryption in transit using appropriate cryptographic mechanisms.

Downgrading (applicable to ELA staff only)

- Only the originator may downgrade a document.
- When a document no longer needs to be marked, the marking should be removed from the document and the handling instructions should also be removed.

Destruction

- The destruction of documents marked as SENSITIVE must be done in such a way that they cannot be easily reconstructed. Paper copies must be shredded, and electronic copies must be securely overwritten, physically destroyed or otherwise rendered irrecoverable.