

## Private email servers? Cyber Dust? Not at Fresno City Hall

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Locally and nationally, open government has been in the news.

At the national level, it's been Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton's use of a private email server for official business when she was Secretary of State. Locally, it's been Fresno Unified's use of an app that quickly deletes electronic messages.

At Fresno City Hall, Mayor Ashley Swearingin said none of that happens.

"We've been clearly instructed by our city attorney, years ago, that even if we're using private email to conduct public business, it is still a public record," she told The Fresno Bee's editorial board on Tuesday. "So yeah, it's all public... We know it's all subject to anybody and everybody coming in and taking a look at it and thankfully I embrace that."

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Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearingin

It's something that Swearingin applies to her as well.

"I pay for my phone privately, so that if I am ever in campaign season, I don't have to have two numbers, but I know that all my emails are public," she said. "And I do conduct all my business on government email."

Swearingin said her approach was shaped her parents, who told her "it's a small world and nobody keeps secrets, so you better be prepared for everything you ever do to be subject to any sort of public conversation."

As for Cyber Dust, the app that quickly deletes electronic messages, Swearingin said she'd never heard of it before news broke this week that Fresno Unified Superintendent and several high-ranking district officials had Cyber Dust on their phones.

Swearingin was in a Fresno Bee editorial board meeting with members of the good government group California Forward. She responded to a question about general use of apps such as Cyber Dust. A related app, popular among teens and people in their 20s, is Snapchat.

"I'm not even familiar with the app that you guys are referring to at the (Fresno Unified) district," Swearingin said of Cyber Dust. "I know Snapchat because my 15-year-old uses it."

And its use by her or other city officials?

"No, there's nothing like that," she said.

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