Using a Digital Certificate in Mozilla® Thunderbird to Digitally Sign and Encrypt Emails

If you have a digital certificate, you can use it to digitally sign and encrypt emails. IdenTrust digital certificates that can be used for this application include:

- DoD ECA certificates
- IdenTrust TrustID® certificates
- IdenTrust Global Common (IGC) certificates
- GSA ACES certificates (which can *only* be used to digitally sign emails)

Mozilla Thunderbird has its own certificate storage mechanism that is independent of certificate storages in Microsoft® Windows® or other Mozilla products.

Please note that you will need to have backed up your certificate to a file beforehand. If you need assistance with that process, please see our instructions on *How to Export a Certificate When Using Microsoft Windows OS*.

To install your digital certificate into Mozilla Thunderbird to digitally sign or encrypt emails, follow these instructions:

1. Within Thunderbird, click on **"Menu"** and then hover over the **"Options"** or **"Preferences"** section.

2. Click on the **"Account Settings"** section; then click the **"Security"** tab.

3. Click the **"View Certificates"** button; then click the **"Import"** button.

4. Locate the backup file for your certificate and click **"Open"**.

5. You will be asked to enter the certificate backup password; then click **"OK"**. (The certificate backup password is the password you chose when exporting/backing-up the certificate.)

6. Click **"OK"** to close the **"Certificate Manager"** screen. Click **"OK"** again to close the **"Options"** window.

Configure Thunderbird with a Default Certificate

1. Within Thunderbird, click on **"Menu"** and then hover over the **"Options"** or **"Preferences"** section.

2. Under your **"Email Account Heading"** (you may need to expand it), click on **"Security"**.

3. Next to the box for **"Use this certificate to digitally sign messages you send"**, click **"Select"**.

4. Choose the correct digital certificate to use.

   Note that the email address in your email account should match the address in the certificate.

5. Next to the box for **"Use this certificate to encrypt & decrypt messages sent to you"**, click **"Select"**.

6. Choose the correct digital certificate to use (per the instruction in Item 4 above).

7. Click **"OK"** to finish and save these settings.

(Optional) Configure Thunderbird to Sign and/or Encrypt Every Message

If you would like Thunderbird to digitally sign and/or encrypt every email message sent, follow the steps below. Please note that this is not necessary to do; you may choose to sign and/or encrypt each message individually.

1. Within Thunderbird, click on **"Menu"** and then hover over the **"Options"** or **"Preferences"** section.

2. Under your **"Email Account Heading"** (you may need to expand it), click on **"Security"**.

3. If you want to digitally sign all email messages, under **"Digital Signing"**, place a check in the box titled **"Digitally sign messages (by default)"**.

4. If you want to digitally encrypt all email messages, under **"Encryption"** make sure the option **"Required"** has been selected.

   Note: To encrypt an email, you must have a copy of the recipient's digital certificate (but not private key).

5. Click **"OK"** to finish and save these settings.

Choose to Sign and/or Encrypt Individual Emails

1. Within Thunderbird, click on **"Menu"** and then hover over the **"Options"** or **"Preferences"** section.

2. If you want to digitally sign this message, select **"Digitally Sign This Message"**.

3. If you want to encrypt this message, select **"Encrypt This Message"**.

   Note: To encrypt an email, you must have a copy of the recipient's digital certificate (but not private key).