

## HOW TO ENCRYPT A FILE:

Encryption is “the real deal”. When encrypted the file is converted into undecipherable bits and bytes and cannot be used or re-assembled without the proper password. If you forget the password or consistently put a typographical error in the password and cannot replicate it later, the file is forever rendered useless and all contents are lost. There is no “administrator over-ride” to re-capture the file. Please use it carefully and cautiously.

When trying encryption for the first time it is suggested that you try this with a temporary/example file. Any type of document will suffice and can be encrypted; text, word, spreadsheet, pdf, etc.

- When in Windows (not in Word, etc.): Right click on the file. It should bring up a drop-down menu.
- Towards the top, perhaps 1/3 of the way down the list you should find AxCrypt. If it's not there (most PC's on campus have it, but there are a few that don't) please contact Serve ([serve@gcsu.edu](mailto:serve@gcsu.edu) or x7378) to have it installed.
- Click on AxCrypt; it'll give you your options. The main 3 are up top:
  1. **Encrypt:** This will encrypt the file you're working with. Type the password twice and press the OK button. Depending on the size of the file it should take no more than a few seconds to encrypt. Your file will be renamed with a .axx extension. You will need the AxCrypt software to decrypt this file.
  2. **Encrypt a copy:** This will make a copy of your file and encrypt the copy (leaving the original unencrypted). Type the password twice and press OK. The new file with the .axx extension will show up. It's the encrypted file. The recipient of the file will need AxCrypt to decrypt this file.
  3. **Encrypt a copy to .EXE:** This should be used when the recipient doesn't have AxCrypt. This will make a copy of your file, encrypt the copy, and imbed self-extractable code in the file so that when the proper password is entered it will decrypt automatically.

## TO DECRYPT A FILE:

There are two main ways to decrypt a file. If you prefer to auto-launch your application software by double clicking on the file, it will know that the file is encrypted. You'll be prompted for the password, and once successful the file will be decrypted in memory (while the original is still left encrypted) and your application will be launched. If it's a word document, when you double click on the file you will be prompted for the password and then afterwards Word will load with your document. Look carefully, the encrypted version is still there.

The second and main way to decrypt the file is to simply right click, choose AxCrypt from the drop-down menu, and now the first option up top is to **Decrypt** rather than Encrypt. Choose Decrypt, type the password and press OK. The file will be decrypted.