Records Management Introduction for Wisconsin Senior Management

Requirements and Responsibilities

WHY RECORDS MANAGEMENT?

- Ensure statutory and regulatory compliance
- Preserve the rights of citizens
- Support better decision making
- Improve transparency and access to public decision making
- Safeguard vital information
- Preserve organizational memory
- Reduce operating costs through control over creation, growth and management of records
- Minimize litigation risks – ensure systematic and routine disposal of records

WHAT RECORDS RESPONSIBILITIES DO SENIOR MANAGERS HAVE?

- Create records necessary to document your activities and actions taken on behalf of the department
- Ensure you, or an assigned employee, capture program area records
- Identify a custodian who can file records for safe storage and efficient retrieval
- Ensure records are managed appropriately and can be accessed by authorized staff
- Identify and transfer records prior to your departure

WHAT RECORDS DO SENIOR MANAGERS TYPICALLY HAVE?

- Records pertaining to committees, advisory boards and councils in which the senior manager participated
- Materials for internal and external meetings
  - May include briefing materials, minutes, personal notes
  - Need to preserve if not captured elsewhere
- Records that document the development of agency policies and programs
  - May include memos, briefings, papers and reports, on policy, strategy, research and legislative priorities, program evaluation and planning etc.
- Reports to the Secretary or Governor
- Speeches and testimony
- Significant memos or correspondence
- Calendars, schedules and logs of daily activities

For More Information

Contact Your Agency Records Officer

www.doa.state.wi.us

Scroll left hand menu bar to "Public Records" list

Wisconsin Public Records Board (PRB) : Protecting the legal, financial and historical interests of the state in public records

Where Can Public Records Occur?

Note: *Information content determines what is a public record and not the format in which the information is generated. Records may be textual, pictorial, paper, electronic, audio, video etc.*

E-mail

- Key substantive comments on draft action memos
- Documentation of significant agency decisions
  - Capture e-mail records into a recordkeeping system (LAN) on a regular basis (Outlook is not a recordkeeping system)

Calendars

- Must be retained for 6 years for appointed staff or equivalent positions

Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) / Blackberries

- PDAs may contain records which must be retained
  - Synchronize email and calendars with agency servers on a regular basis

How Do I Manage My Records?

Establish a records management program, which is composed of:

People – Designated records managers (e.g. Records Management Coordinators)

Policies – Mandatory records schedules

- Identify the public records
- How long to keep them (retention – RDAs)
- What to do with them afterwards (disposition)

Procedures – Organizational file plan

Recordkeeping system (paper-based or electronic)

- Collects, organizes, and categorizes records, and
- Facilitates their preservation, retrieval, use, and disposition

Communication - Roles and responsibilities of agency staff

Note: *Your agency may **only** legally dispose of public records as approved by an authorized records schedule.*

What Is a Record?

Created in the course of business

Examples: *correspondence, agreements, studies*

Received for action

Examples: *Open records requests, controlled correspondence*

Documents agency activities and actions

Examples: *calendars, meeting minutes, project reports*

Mandated by statutes or regulations

Examples: *administrative records, complaints received, claims*

Supports financial obligations or legal claims

Examples: *grants, contracts, litigation case files*

Communicates agency requirements

Examples: *guidance documents, policies, procedures*

Can be in any format

Examples: *paper, electronic including e-mail, photos, videos, maps, sound recordings, posters, slides*

What Is Not a Record?

Personal papers not related to agency business

Examples: *soccer schedule, PTA roster*

Reference materials

Examples: *vendor catalogs, phone books, technical Journals*

Duplicate copies

Examples: *copies of correspondence or memos, directives or agency publications maintained for convenience purposes only*

Draft documents

Examples: *drafts with no substantive revisions or comments*

Working papers (Unless needed to support the decision trail or otherwise required in the records schedule)

Examples: *rough notes, calculations, working papers*

- Rough notes, calculations or drafts created to prepare or analyze other documents
- Background materials used to develop a record
- Documents or communications not needed for the official record, but useful to an individual for recall of events, activities, and actions

Note: *Once a draft prepared for signature of a supervisor is approved for circulation or is distributed outside the area of the supervision, it becomes a record.*