

Frequently Asked Questions

About E-Mail Retention

Can I Print Messages, then Delete Them?

Yes, provided you print the following information with the message: name of sender, name of recipient, date and time of transmission and/or receipt. You then retain the printed message according to the appropriate records retention schedule, file them as suits your business needs, and destroy or transfer them to the Archives, depending on the schedule.

What about draft documents that undergo several revisions?

Draft documents or working papers that are circulated via e-mail, that propose or evaluate high-level policies or decisions and provide unique information that contributes to the understanding of major decisions of the agency should be preserved permanently.

Other drafts circulated for comment, which demonstrate significant revisions in the view of the author, should be scheduled as is the final product. Uncirculated drafts may be destroyed at will by the author.

What do I do with attachments I receive with e-mail?

File them with other electronic documents on your PC or network and apply the appropriate retention schedule. The principles of directory and file organization used in e-mail should be followed for content files (documents, databases, spreadsheets). If you have a PROJECTS\WORKFLOW\2005 folder in your e-mail system, you probably should have a similar one for related PC files. Attachments relevant to that project can be transferred to that directory.

What about multiple copies of the same document?

If another agency has responsibility for keeping a record copy, and if you have no business need to retain it, the document is simply a duplicate copy and subject to deletion/destruction at will.

So, minutes of meetings you attend may be destroyed at will. The secretary or other responsible person in the organization, committee or task force must retain the minutes permanently.

Where can I get help to organize my e-mail mailboxes & folders?

The State Archives will offer general training as part of its ongoing records training workshops. The State Archivist will also respond to particular requests for assistance in organizing your electronic files - PC-based as well as e-mail.

What is a record copy?

A **Record Copy** is a single copy of a record retained by its custodian as the official record of a government transaction and in accordance with the appropriate records schedule. All other copies are duplicate copies, held for convenience, and may be destroyed.

Functional Requirements for Recordkeeping Systems

These general guidelines should be considered by government agencies as they approach the management of automated office records, including e-mail:

- ! Recordkeeping systems must allow for the grouping of related records, to insure their proper context.
- ! Recordkeeping systems must make records accessible to authorized staff, to insure their usefulness to the agency.
- ! Recordkeeping systems must preserve records for their authorized retention period, to insure their availability for agency use, to preserve the rights of the government and citizens, and to allow agencies to be held accountable for their actions.

Implementation Schedule

Users of e-mail systems should have a management system in place to insure against inadvertent violations of records retention requirements.

If you would like more information on your records, please contact:



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