<u>Agency Records Officer</u>

The purpose of this document is to provide direction to new records officers on the steps they should take to fulfill their responsibilities.

As the new Agency Records Officer (ARO) Your Senior Agency Official (SAO) must submit written notice to the email address ‘RO.updates@nara.gov’ to provide formal designation for the new (or acting) position.

- The email must come from the SAO’s address and include the agency name and contact information for the new designee.
  - The designation in our system will automatically enroll you in RM communications, an E-Mail listserv, for all deadlines, updates, and important RM information at NARA

The following steps will ensure that a new records officer sets off on the path to enabling an effective records management program within their agency

- Make your role and responsibilities as the records officer visible
  - Have senior management display support for and understanding of the program and your role within it by announcing your appointment to all staff. Management should send a clear message that cooperation and compliance are expected from everyone.

- Become familiar with the Departmental Records Officer for your agency.
  Contact Information for Federal Agency Records Officers

- Become familiar with the records retention schedules, policies, and guidelines set forth by your agency.

- Review records schedules at the Records Control Schedule page on www.archives.gov; http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/rcs/

- Review the records retention and disposition schedules, and other resources provided by your agency.
  - These resources set the foundation for fulfilling the responsibilities of the records officer role such as overseeing the destruction, reformatting, and/or recovery of public records.

- Meet with your NARA Appraisal Archivist
  NARA Appraisal Archivists

- Obtain an ERA account for Scheduling and Transferring permanent records to NARA
    - The Agency Records Officer sends an email to NARA's ERA Account Official at ERAaccounts@nara.gov giving the name and contact information of the new ERA Account Manager. The ARO will most likely need to receive two separate roles in ERA; Scheduler & Certifying Official
    - Find out more information about ERA at http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/era/

- Assess the current records management needs of the agency
    - Evaluate the current records management practices of the agency to determine areas that are in need of development and improvement. Conduct an inventory of all public records created and used by the agency and review the Disposition of Federal Records. Remember to include records in both paper and electronic formats. Your results will determine which departments you work with first to update retention schedules and encourage records destruction.

Things to remember…..

- As the Agency RO, you must receive your certificate of Federal Records Management Training signed by the Archivist of the United States within one year of your appointed position.
    - To register for the 5 required courses to complete your certificate and find out more information, visit http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/training/certification.html and select the FAQ's.
- Review the Managing Government Records Directive and become familiar with the deadlines in place for Federal agencies;
    - https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2012/m-12-18.pdf

- Records Management Self Assessment
    - The notice for this assessment will be provided by RM Communications in September/October. The due date will run into December of this FY.
    - More information about the assessment; http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/resources/self-assessment.html

Steps to take later on…..

- Consider joining the FRON - Federal Records Officer Network;

Here is a link to our (Office of the Chief Records Officer) blog post describing this organization. It is not run by NARA, but a great place for networking and conversation among like professionals.
http://records-express.blogs.archives.gov/2013/12/20/federal-records-officer-network-fron/

- Develop policies, procedures, and training programs for the agency;

Develop internal records management policies and procedures that are approved by senior management and disseminate and provide training on those policies and procedures. Offer training to all staff at least once a year.

- Appoint records coordinators if/when needed;

The ongoing maintenance of a records management program can warrant the need for additional assistance. Designating additional staff members as records coordinators within their department/ division creates a network of individuals who share responsibility for oversight and compliance.