



Senior Agency Official for Records Management 2022 Annual Report

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requires Senior Agency Officials for Records Management (SAORM) to provide an annual report demonstrating how agencies are handling important records management initiatives as identified by NARA.

NARA uses the reports to determine the overall progress of the federal government in managing its records and the transition away from paper to digital formats, and to identify best practices and model solutions within federal agencies.

On June 28, 2019, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and NARA issued a memorandum, *Transition to Electronic Records* ([M-19-21](#)), to ensure that all federal records are created, retained, and managed in electronic formats. M-19-21 gave agencies until the end of December 2022 to comply with several specific deadlines.

On December 23, 2022, OMB and NARA issued a new memorandum, *Update to Transition to Electronic Records* ([M-23-07](#)) reinforcing the goals in M-19-21 and extending the 2022 deadlines to June 30, 2024.

Additionally, on January 1, 2021, Congress enacted the Preservation of Electronic Messages and Other Records Act, amending 44 U.S.C. Chapter 29, that requires the electronic capture, management, and preservation of such electronic records in accordance with the records disposition requirements of 44 U.S.C. Chapter 33.

This year's SAORM report provides an opportunity for agencies to report on plans and progress towards electronic recordkeeping and preservation under these requirements, as well as other important records management initiatives.

The reporting period begins on January 9, 2023, and reports are due back to NARA no later than March 10, 2023.

NARA plans to post your 2022 SAORM report on the NARA website upon receipt. Please ensure that your agency's report is a publicly releasable version. This action is in the interest of transparency in government and to promote collaboration and communication among agencies. NARA intends to list any non-responding agencies in a summary report on our website.

Instructions for Reporting:

- This template covers records management program developments, including those related to the transition to electronic recordkeeping as required by M-19-21 and M-23-07.
- Please be brief and precise in your answers. Limit answers to each question to no more than 500 words.
- Please complete the questions/items below and send the report to rmsselfassessment@nara.gov. Include the words “SAORM 2022 Annual Report - [Agency Name]” in the subject line of the email.
- If you are responsible for records management in multiple agencies, components, or bureaus, please determine how you will submit reports to NARA. While NARA prefers a comprehensive report, you may submit separate reports for each component.

NARA may follow up with agencies to obtain additional information and/or documentation related to responses provided in the template.

As in previous years, we will be validating selected questions and responses from agencies. Your agency may be selected at random to provide additional documentation and/or take part in interviews to discuss your records management program activities.

Provide the following information (required):

- Name of SAORM: Manisha Patel
- Position title: Deputy Executive Director
- Address: 1800 M Street, NW, Suite 6006

1. What agencies, bureaus, components, or offices are covered by this report and your position as SAORM and which will be reporting separately?

The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) is an independent Federal agency charged with improving the transparency, predictability, and outcomes of the Federal environmental review and authorization process for “covered” infrastructure projects. The Permitting Council was established in 2015 by Title 41 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m et seq. The Permitting Council became a permanent Federal agency through the enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58), in November 2021.

The Permitting Council is a collaborative body comprising the Deputy Secretaries (or equivalents) of thirteen agencies, plus the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality. The Permitting Council also had a Presidentially-appointed Executive Director who serves as the chair of the Permitting Council. The Permitting Council is collectively charged with implementing FAST-41. However, the Permitting Council Office of the Executive

Director (OED) functions as the permanent agency supporting the functions of Permitting Council.

This report covers the Permitting Council OED.

2. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, have any of the temporary adaptations to agency business processes become permanent improvements to the management and preservation of electronic records?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable, no adaptations were needed
- Do not know

3. Has your agency taken action to meet the goal to manage, preserve and transfer all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by June 30, 2024? (M-19-21, 1.2 and M-23-07, 1.1 and 1.2)

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

The Permitting Council OED has an Information Governance Manager tasked to work with the SAORM to ensure the agency efficiently and appropriately complies with all applicable records management statutes, regulations, NARA policy, and OMB policy.

4. Has your agency taken action to meet the goal to manage and preserve all temporary records in an electronic format by June 30, 2024? (M-19-21, 1.3 and M-23-07, 1.3)

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

The Permitting Council OED has an Information Governance Manager tasked to work with the SAORM to ensure the agency efficiently and appropriately complies with all applicable records management statutes, regulations, NARA policy, and OMB policy.

5. Will your agency meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3 and M-23-07, 1.3 to close agency-operated records storage facilities and transfer inactive, temporary records to Federal Records Centers or commercial records storage facilities by June 30, 2024?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable, all records are in electronic format
- Do not know

- 6. Does your agency have policies and procedures that incorporate records management into the information governance (IG) framework for information, data, and other agency information management? (This includes a relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, Records Management (RM) Staff, Security, Privacy Officers, and FOIA)**

Note: The incorporation of records management into information governance is part of the framework covered by [OMB Federal Data Strategy - A Framework for Consistency \(M-19-18\)](#) as it provides a vision for managing and using federal data, along with recordkeeping requirements included in [OMB Circular A-130, Managing Information as a Strategic Resource](#).

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

As a nascent permanent agency, the Permitting Council OED has a prioritized slate of policies for development, including policies and procedures for records management.

- 7. Has your agency developed policies and procedures to ensure the capture and preservation of electronic messages, including when hardware or software is upgraded?**

Note: Electronic messages means electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals. Electronic messages that satisfy the definition of a federal record under the Federal Records Act are electronic records. This includes email, text messages, chat messages, voicemail, social media posts, and other similar applications. (See: [Email Management](#) and [CFR 1236: Electronic Records Management](#))

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

As noted, the Permitting Council OED is a relatively new agency and is in the process of establishing standard agency policies and procedures. The OED policy for records management which will address preservation of electronic messages. The Permitting Council OED has a service level agreement with the General Services Administration (GSA), under which GSA is responsible for managing all hardware and software upgrades for the OED. We believe GSA complies with preservation requirements.

- 8. Is your agency using or exploring cognitive technologies to identify records and distinguish between temporary and permanent retention?**

Note: Cognitive technologies generally describe automated technologies that can be applied to recordkeeping practices and procedures. These include Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Process Automation, Software Robot or Bot, and other machine learning technologies.

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

The Permitting Council OED Information Governance Manager has been tasked with exploring cognitive technologies to identify records and distinguish between temporary and permanent retention.

9. Do you as SAORM regularly oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of your records management program and its compliance with statutes and regulations?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

As the newly appointed SAORM, I intend to regularly oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of our records management program and its compliance with statutes and regulations.

10. Is there specific policy or guidance you need from NARA to support the strategic direction of your records management program?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

As the Permitting Council OED develops its records management program, the SAORM and Information Governance Manager will engage with NARA for guidance to establish a robust, effective and legally compliant program.

11. Do you have any suggestions for how NARA can better engage with you and your program in your role as SAORM?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

Thank you for the opportunity. Our records management program is too new and still developing to be able to provide suggestions at this time.