



Senior Agency Official for Records Management 2020 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 and the National Archives issued a memorandum: *Transition to Electronic Records* (M-19-21) to ensure that all Federal records are created, retained, and managed in electronic formats by December 31, 2022. This year's SAORM report provides an opportunity for agencies to report on plans and progress towards the milestones and target goals in this memorandum, as well as other important records management initiatives.

The reporting period begins on January 19, 2021, and reports are due back to NARA no later than March 19, 2021.

NARA plans to post your 2020 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 and on the website.

Instructions for Reporting:

- This template covers both records management program developments towards the transition to electronic recordkeeping outlined in M-19-21 through December 31, 2022, and other aspects of agency records management programs.
- 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 2020 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.

Provide the following information (required):

- Name of SAORM: Erica Barker
- Position title: Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer
- Address: 901 New York Ave., NW Suite 200 Washington, DC 20268

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

Postal Regulatory Commission

- 2. Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed any policies or practices related to records management at your agency?**

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

- 3. Does your agency have an established information governance framework that connects records management, data management, and other agency information lines of business? (A relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, RM Staff)**

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

The records management and information technology teams operate under the same organizational umbrella, reporting to the same executive at the Commission. This ensures that our records management and data management staff regularly coordinate to ensure that electronic records are appropriately identified and formalized throughout the Commission.

- 4. Has your agency made progress towards managing all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.2)**

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

The Commission's manages a majority of its permanent records electronically in its docketing system. These records are generated and stored electronically and managed in accordance with the Commission's approved record schedule. Other records have some determination of their status, and are manually aligned to approved records schedules. The Commission is developing a new records management policy to be implemented by FY 2022 that will address proper management of permanent records in an electronic format.

5. Has your agency made progress towards managing all temporary records in an electronic format by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

The Commission is developing a new records management policy to be implemented by FY 2022 that will address proper management of temporary records in an electronic format.

6. Is your agency investing resources in IT to support the transition to electronic recordkeeping?

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

Yes, the Commission is aligning its IT resources to support electronic recordkeeping, including transitioning to the cloud. The majority of the Commissions records are already kept in electronic form and the Commission is investing in a replacement of its electronic docketing system to ensure continuity.

7. To meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3, related to records storage facilities, does your agency have plans to use commercial storage to replace agency-operated records centers and NARA Federal Records Centers by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

The Commission does not have an agency-operated records center.

8. Does your agency have policies and procedures that include documentation to ensure records of newly appointed and outgoing senior officials* are properly captured and/or processed and not improperly removed, altered, or deleted including electronic records and email?

**Senior officials are the heads of departments and independent agencies; their deputies and assistants; the heads of program offices and staff offices including assistant secretaries, administrators, and commissioners; directors of offices, bureaus, or equivalent; principal regional officials; staff assistants to those aforementioned officials, such as special assistants, confidential assistants, and administrative assistants; and career Federal employees, political appointees, and officers of the Armed Forces serving in equivalent or comparable positions.*

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

All staff, including senior officials, are informed of their records management responsibilities and complete mandatory annual training. The Commission is an independent establishment whose political appointees serve 6 year terms that do not transition with administrations. Its senior officials are also career employees. Prior to leaving the agency, all outgoing employees, regardless of status, complete records certifications.

9. Do you, as the SAORM, see challenges within your agency in meeting the goal of fully-electronic recordkeeping?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

Yes, there are many challenges facing the agency with respect to meeting NARA's goal for fully-electronic recordkeeping. The Commission is a small agency, with 72 FTEs in FY 2020, and the SAORM role is a collateral duty for the Commission's Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer. Moreover, the Commission only has one staff member dedicated to records management and a small administrative team that must complete all the work of the agency from finance (accounting, budgeting, appropriations), IT, human resources, privacy, records management, and operations. The Commission faces the same challenges that affect many similarly-situated small agencies. The Commission does not have a records management application or software to assist in managing its records. Instead, records management must be achieved manually. Past budgetary constraints have derailed the Commission's attempt to procure an electronic records management system and delayed the implementation of an alternate approach.

10. Do you have suggestions for NARA to improve its engagement with you as the SAORM?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

The ongoing support of NARA's appraisal archivist has been paramount to the Commission's successful records management program. The Commission leverages the training resources on the NARA website to provide annual mandatory RM training for all agency employees. While NARA training is very detailed and informative, it is difficult for Commission staff who are serving in records management roles as collateral duty to other full-time positions to have the time to thoroughly review all materials in a timely fashion and translate how things could be utilized for an agency of the Commission's size and limitations. An area where NARA could be of service is in the area of training by providing a basic records management online/web-based training for small agencies, with a module for senior executives.