



## *Senior Agency Official for Records Management 2021 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. 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 records keeping and preservation under both these requirements, as well as other important records management initiatives.

The reporting period begins on January 10, 2022, and reports are due back to NARA no later than March 11, 2022.

NARA plans to post your 2021 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 records management program developments towards the transition to electronic recordkeeping outlined in M-19-21 through December 31, 2021, 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](mailto:rmsselfassessment@nara.gov). Include the words "SAORM 2021 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: Diana Andrews
- Position title: Senior Advisor
- Address: 6401 Security Blvd, Suite 3000 Robert M. Ball Building  
Baltimore, MD 21235

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

*Please provide a list, and also indicate any that are new or have been changed due to reorganization or other circumstances.*

**Social Security Administration (SSA's) Response:**

*This report covers the Social Security Administration.*

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

- X Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):*

**SSA's Response:**

*COVID-19 has changed SSA's practices as they relate to compiling, shipping, and transferring records to and from the Federal Records Center (FRC). SSA, like many Federal agencies, has limited personnel on site to arrange, organize, or receive paper records for transfer to an external location, or accept returned records from the FRC.*

*During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Records Management Staff (RMS) provided additional reminders to all employees of their records and information management responsibilities and provided specific guidance related to records management in a telework setting, including instructions for use of personal devices, electronic messaging applications, and physical records created outside of the office.*

**3. Does your agency have an established information governance framework that integrates records management, data management, and other agency information lines of business? (This includes a relationship between CIO, CDO, SAORM, DRO/ARO, RM Staff, Security,**

**Privacy Officers, and FOIA)**

Yes

No

Do not know

*Please provide details. If 'Yes,' provide details on how your RM program is integrated into this framework. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain your response.*

**SSA's Response:**

*As of 2018, SSA established the Records and Information Management Stakeholder Governance Council (RIMSGC) with representation from all agency components to offer insight and oversight of the Records Management Program working closely with the RMS and Agency Records Officer (ARO). The SAORM and RMS meet quarterly with the RIMSGC to keep them abreast of projects, processes, and new developments. The SAORM serves on the Data Governance Board and confers with the Data Governance Officer (DGO).*

**4. Will your agency meet the goal to manage and preserve all permanent records in an electronic format with appropriate metadata by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.2)**

Yes

No

Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific goals, example metrics, and/or challenges):*

**SSA's Response:**

*Modifying our systems and applications will extend beyond December 31, 2022.*

*The migration of legacy permanent electronic records from File Shares and SharePoint on premise to the Permanent Records Repository in M365, and the modification of Systems or Applications to include retention and disposition capabilities will extend beyond December 31, 2022. The effort to identify and digitize paper records will go beyond December 31, 2022.*

*However, SSA is making progress to implement the Manage Records Electronically (MRE) solution for permanent electronic records by December 31, 2022. The agency created the MRE Product Team, which is dedicated to this goal.*

*To date, the progress of the effort can be measured by these accomplishments:*

- Conducted extensive Customer Discovery and Product Discovery sessions and developed capability and requirements documents.*
- Decided on SharePoint Online (part of Microsoft 365) as the primary repository for the agency's permanent electronic records.*

- *Configured and tested permanent record site collections in SharePoint Online.*
- *Developed PowerShell scripts to provide functionality to SharePoint Online.*
- *Began developing reporting capabilities for SSA electronic records stored in M365*
- *Began configuration of the Permanent Records Repository (seven permanent record site collections) in February 2020 and finished in June 2020.*
- *Decided that for permanent records stored in systems or applications, Electronic Records Management (ERM) functionality will be built into each system when practical.*
- *Drafted ERM policy for permanent electronic records.*
- *Began rollout of the Permanent Record Repository in May 2020 and completed 80% of that rollout.*
- *Investigated and tested migration tools and strategies to move permanent records and their associated metadata into the Permanent Records Repository.*
- *Created the Permanent Record File Share to secure permanent records that exist outside of Microsoft 365.*
- *Implemented Information Governance policies for the Permanent Record Repository.*
- *Revised the Records Management Questionnaire for the approval of new and modified software systems and applications that house permanent records.*
- *RMS became a member of the Enterprise Architecture Assessments Stakeholders group.*

**5. Will your agency meet the goal to manage and preserve all temporary records in an electronic format by December 31, 2022? (M-19-21, 1.3)**

- Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response (include specific goals, example metrics, and/or challenges):*

**SSA's Response:**

*The migration of temporary records from File Shares to SharePoint Online will take an estimated seven years to complete. Incorporating retention and disposition capabilities in Systems and Applications will take several years beyond December 31, 2022. We will continue to work to incorporate the capabilities as legacy systems and applications come up for renewal or replacement and incorporate the capabilities as new Systems and Applications are developed. The effort to identify and digitize paper records will go beyond December 31, 2022.*

*However, SSA has made progress towards managing all temporary records in electronic format. To date, the MRE Product Team has:*

- *Created a comprehensive agency-wide inventory of all systems and applications currently in use.*
- *Developed a plan for managing temporary records.*

- *Implemented a plan to manage temporary electronic records in SharePoint Online and other Microsoft 365 products (such as OneDrive and Teams) by creating and applying Information Governance policies in Microsoft 365.*
- *Established Records Management as a stakeholder in the Enterprise Architecture review of systems and applications.*
- *Implemented Information Governance policies for SharePoint Online, Microsoft Teams, and OneDrive.*
- *Enabled retention of chats and messages in Microsoft Teams.*
- *Investigated and tested migration tools and strategies to move records in File Shares into Microsoft 365.*

**6. Does your agency have plans to submit to NARA a request for an exception to the M-19-21 requirements before December 31, 2022?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' please include an estimate of when you plan to submit an exception and any relevant details. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain your response.*

**SSA's Response:**

*In February 2020, the SAORM submitted justification requesting an exception to keep our National Records Center (NRC) operating and housing records. We have subsequently been in contact with NARA to ensure that no additional information is required as we await NARA's approval of this exception. For the records housed in the Records Holding Area (RHA) in our Perimeter East Building (PEB), we plan to transfer the records held there to the FRC no later than December 31, 2022. However, considering that the restrictions of COVID-19 have lingered far longer than anyone imagined, we may have need to submit an addendum to the initial exception. If necessary, we will submit prior to December 31, 2022.*

**7. Is your agency utilizing the General Services Administration's Special Item Number for Electronic Records Management (518210 ERM) 6 to procure solutions to assist in transitioning to an Electronic Environment?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Do not know

*Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' please include specific examples and how this will support records management processes. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain.*

**SSA's Response:**

*SSA is not currently utilizing the General Services Administration's Special Item Number for*

*Electronic Records Management. However, we continue to look for opportunities to do so.*

**8. Has your agency developed plans to meet the requirements of M-19-21, 1.3 to store temporary records in commercial storage facilities by December 31, 2022? \***

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

\*M-19-21, 1.3 includes closing of agency-operated storage facilities and no new transfers of paper records to the Federal Records Centers.

*Please explain your response. If 'Yes,' provide details about the use of commercial storage and other changes related to storage. If 'No' or 'Do not know,' please explain.*

**SSA's Response:**

*Yes. For the temporary paper records with long-term retention periods beyond December 31, 2022, stored in our Records Holding Area (RHA) in our Perimeter East Building (PEB), we plan to transfer these records to the FRC no later than December 31, 2022. We have not accepted any new records into the RHA and will close (no longer use) the RHA to store records beyond December 31, 2022.*

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

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please explain your response (include details of specific challenges, if applicable):*

**SSA's Response:**

*The challenges that exist relate to having the resources and budget to meet M-19-21 Requirements, such as managing permanent and temporary electronic records electronically, the digitization of paper records by 2022 and ceasing the use of agency-operated storage facilities.*

**10. NARA is always working on ways we can make your role as the SAORM easier, improve how we interact with you and how you interact with each other. Do you have any suggestions?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

*Please explain your response (include any comments on previous NARA SAORM engagements, topics for future engagements, or other suggestions):*

**SSA's Response:**

*It would be helpful for NARA to reconsider and provide an extension to the deadlines in Memorandum M-19-21. During NARA presentations and BRIDG meetings throughout 2020 and 2021 with SAOs and Federal agencies, concerns were raised regarding the inability of Federal agencies to meet the December 31, 2022, goals. While we are committed to meeting the goals outlined in the memorandum and significant progress has been made, the reality is that with less than one year remaining, additional time is required.*