

Recordkeeping Roles and Responsibilities

Introduction

This description of roles begins with the agency head, proceeds through the normal records management network (chief information officer (CIO), agency records officer, records liaison, and records custodian), covers the program manager (supervisor), refers briefly to various other officials, and concludes with the average staff member (employee).

You will notice that this document describes several more positions than were covered in the on-line training and more details are provided on the positions that were discussed. You can never have too much information!

Agency Head

- The agency head is responsible for the entire records management program in the agency but normally delegates this responsibility to the agency records officer. The statutory basis (The Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended) is as follows:
- “The head of each Federal agency shall”
 - a. “Make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency’s activities.” (44 U.S.C. 3101)
 - b. “Establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of the records of the agency.”

Chief Information Officer (CIO)/IRM Official

- Serves as the agency official responsible for the information resources management program; that is, the process of managing information resources to accomplish agency missions, which encompasses both information itself and related resources, or assets, such as personnel, equipment, funds, and information technology.
- Coordinates with the agency records officer to ensure that the design and implementation of the agency’s information systems incorporate Federal and agency records management requirements.

Agency Records Officer

- Serves as the official responsible for overseeing the agency’s records management program.
- Ensures that the agency has an up-to-date records management directive.
- Creates and maintains a network of records liaisons responsible for overseeing the program in headquarters and field offices in cooperation with the records officer.
- Serves as the primary agency official who coordinates records management matters with NARA and other oversight agencies.

- Coordinates the development of a records schedule with NARA, IRM, program and agency officials. The records schedule identifies records as either temporary or permanent. All records schedules must be approved by NARA.
- Coordinates matters relating to records management with the agency's FOIA/Privacy Act official(s), IRM official, system administrators, program managers, the inspector general, the general counsel, the public affairs officer, the web manager, the agency historian, and the imaging and micrographics manager as well as with program officials responsible for other special media, such as audiovisual records, cartographic and architectural records, and printed records.
- Ensures that recordkeeping requirements are established, implemented, and periodically updated for all offices at all levels and for all record media, including electronic and other special records.

Records Liaison

- Coordinates the records management activities of a major component, whether at headquarters or in the regions.
- Serves as the primary component official who coordinates records management matters with the regional NARA office and any other local oversight agencies.
- Coordinates changes to the records schedule with the agency records officer and local program managers.
- Coordinates matters relating to records management with the component's FOIA/Privacy Act official(s), IRM official, system administrators, program managers, internal auditors, visiting inspector(s) general, counsel, the public affairs officer, the web manager, the agency historian, and the imaging and micrographics manager as well as with program officials responsible for other special media, such as audiovisual records, cartographic and architectural records, and printed records.
- Ensures that component recordkeeping requirements are established, implemented, and periodically updated for all offices at all levels and for all record media, including electronic and other special records.
- Coordinates with the agency records officer to report that each office within the component has a designated records custodian.
- Ensures that each office creates and maintains records documenting its program and administrative activities.
- Works with records custodians to make sure that all the records of each office are listed in the office file plan and are described accurately in the agency's records schedule.
- Works with records custodians to ensure the transfer of eligible records to a records center, the prompt disposal of temporary records when their retention periods expire, and the timely transfer of permanent records to NARA.
- Ensures the proper training of records custodians and employees and the proper briefing of program and senior managers.
- Promotes the records management program within the component.
- Conducts periodic evaluations of records management activities within the component.

Records Custodian

- Has assigned responsibility within a particular office for records management matters and complies with guidance issued by the records liaison and the agency records officer.
- Makes sure that all the office's records are listed in the office file plan and are described accurately in the agency's records schedule. Checks with the records liaison or the agency records officer for assistance.
- Follows the agency's records schedule to ensure the proper disposition of the office's records, including:
 - a. Systematic file cutoffs (breaks).
 - b. The retirement of eligible records to a records center.
- The prompt disposal of temporary records when their retention periods expire.
- The timely transfer of permanent records to NARA.
- Assists the program manager in reminding the staff not to mix personal papers and nonrecord materials with Federal records and not to remove records from the office without proper authorization.
- Assists the program manager in implementing procedures to prevent departing employees from destroying ineligible records or removing records from the agency's custody.
- Cooperates with the records liaison and the agency records officer in periodic evaluations of the office's records.

Program Manager (Supervisor)

- Ensures that the office has a designated records custodian who coordinates the office's records management activities with the records liaison and others.
- Ensures that the staff receives basic records management training and guidance.
- Ensures that the staff creates and maintains records documenting the office's program and administrative activities.
- Works with the records custodian to make sure that all the office's records are listed in the office file plan and are described accurately in the agency's records schedule.
- Reviews the office file plan annually.
- Reminds the staff not to mix personal papers and nonrecord materials with Federal records and not to remove records from the office without proper authorization.
- Implements procedures to prevent departing employees from destroying ineligible records or removing records from the agency's custody.
- Ensures that the records custodian follows the agency's records schedule in carrying out the disposition of the office's records.
- Cooperates with the records custodian, the records liaison, and the agency records officer in efforts to promote and evaluate the office's records management activities.

System Administrator (Information Technology Manager)

- Serves as the person primarily responsible for managing an information system.

- Works with the records liaison, the records custodian, and others to ensure that the design and implementation of the system incorporates Federal and agency records management requirements.

Web Manager

- Serves as the person primarily responsible for managing the Web pages within a component, i.e., assuring compliance with agency and local directives. Usually not the person responsible for content of a Web page.
- Works with the records liaison, the records custodian(s), and others to ensure the web page managers understand and adhere to Federal and agency recordkeeping requirements.

Inspector General

- Serves as the official responsible for monitoring agency programs and operations to prevent and reduce waste and fraud and to improve agency management.
- Coordinates with the agency records officer and others regarding any recordkeeping deficiencies identified during inspections and investigations.

General Counsel

- Serves as the official responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to agency officials and employees.
- Provides advice to the agency records officer and others regarding the legal value of the agency's records and the issue of public access to them.

Public Affairs Officer

- Serves as the official responsible for coordinating information being released to the public such as news releases, speeches by high-level officials, media presentations, appearances of agency representatives at public events, etc. The public affairs officer may be responsible for coordinating content of public Web sites.
- Works with the records liaison to ensure release of information is in compliance with Federal and agency public affairs directives.

Historian

- Serves as the official responsible for writing narratives of past agency activities.
- Provides advice to the agency records officer on what agency records are likely to have long-term or permanent value.

Imaging and Micrographics Manager

- Serves as the official responsible for directing the agency's imaging and microfilming operations or for monitoring contractors who scan or microfilm records for the agency.
- Cooperates with the agency records officer to ensure that the agency's scanned and microform records comply with Federal and agency requirements.

Staff Member (Employee)

- Obtains basic records management training and guidance from the office's records custodian, the records liaison, or the agency records officer.
- Recognizes that the office's records are Government property and consist of recorded information (documentary materials) required by law or used to conduct agency business.
- Creates and maintains records documenting office activities.
- Cooperates with the records custodian to ensure that all records are listed in the office file plan and are described accurately in the agency's records schedule.
- Does not mix personal papers and nonrecord materials with Federal records.
- Cooperates with the records custodian in transferring eligible records to a records center and permanent records to NARA.
- Cooperates with the records custodian in destroying records only as authorized in the agency's records schedule.
- Avoids removing records from the office without proper authorization.