

Description and Transcript for Records Management Training Program video, “Word of the Week: Personal Papers.”

Opening slide: The U.S. National Archives’ logo, an eagle with one wing raised, appears on the screen with the title, “Word of the Week: Personal Papers.”

Narrator: Our phrase of the week is - - personal papers.

On screen: A woman in late 1950s clothing and hairstyle appears on screen. She looks pensive.

Narrator: Let’s get personal for a minute.

On screen: A montage of 1950s and 1960s office activity. A man stands by a truck with a clipboard, writing down notes. Women in an office type at typewriters. A military man sits by a telephone and refers to a red notebook for information.

Narrator: When we talk about the information stored in the workplace, we typically look at records – the documents, images, data, and information systems that support our work – and things like nonrecord copies, published reference material, and other resources that also help us get our jobs done.

On screen: A 1950s or 1960s office building with people working inside.

Narrator: There’s one more category of information that sometimes finds its way into the office – Personal Papers. Personal papers are all about you.

On screen: A man and woman drive up to a bank drive-in window in a late 1950s convertible. A man and two small children look at a department store window. Many people ride bicycles through a suburban street. A 1950s graduation ceremony.

Narrator: Your personal finances, your family, your hobbies, and your life outside work. They include things like personal correspondence, family photos, records related to your volunteer and community service, and other material related to your outside professional, business, and academic pursuits.

On screen: The same woman in 1950s clothing appears on screen. She pauses. Next to her appears a white bubble with black text, reading, “Personal Papers: Relate solely to your private affairs. Not used for agency business. Belong to you.”

Narrator: So, personal papers relate only to your private affairs and are not used to conduct agency business. They belong to you as an individual.

On screen: A man in a dress shirt and necktie works with papers in an office.

Narrator: If you're not sure whether you have company records or personal papers, ask yourself why the information is being created, and how it’s being used.

On screen: Several video images of people working in a 1950s or 1960s office. A man distributes paperwork. A woman works with several stacks of records at her desk. Another woman puts a stack of paperwork on a shelf.

Narrator: If you created it on agency time, with agency equipment, for agency business, it's likely to belong to the agency and is probably a record.

On screen: A 1950s automobile drives out of a suburban house carport and drives away. Another 1950s car pulls up to a gas station, and we see a gas pump registering 3 gallons of gas for one dollar.

Narrator: If it relates to your life outside of work, it's most likely to be personal papers. That gas receipt for your normal daily commute? Personal. The gas receipt for the time you filled up the government-owned vehicle? Probably an agency record.

On screen: A woman is seated at a desk in an office. She is typing. We then see the typewriter producing text on a sheet of paper.

Narrator: The annual report you created for your project at work is a record, but your first draft of the next Great American Novel? Well, that's personal.

On screen: A busy office or factory floor.

Narrator: Records and nonrecords must be retained according to your organization's approved records schedule and information management policies.

On screen: A woman sits at her kitchen table. She is looking at a document and is writing something. A white bubble with black text appears on screen. It says, "Personal papers belong to you."

Narrator: Personal papers are yours to keep – and yours to destroy on your own schedule – so it's important to keep them separate.

On screen: Two men in suits are working in an office. One is seated at a desk, working with papers. The other is standing at a bank of filing cabinets. The man retrieves a paper from the cabinet and hands it to the man at the desk. The camera freezes on the man at the desk, and a bubble appears with the words, "Do not mix personal papers with official records."

Narrator: If you must keep personal papers at work, make sure it's all right to do so under your organization's policies, and maintain those personal papers separately from your official records and other work information.

On screen: Two men sit on opposite sides of a desk. They are talking and looking at paperwork. In the next shot, two women are seated at a desk, also looking at paperwork. In the third scene, the two men are shown again. They rise and shake hands.

Narrator: If you have questions about the best ways to manage your official records and other work papers, or if you need help determining whether something might be a record, nonrecord, or personal papers, you can always turn to your organization's Records Officer or records manager.

Closing slide: The National Archives eagle logo appears again. Next to it are the words, "For more information about the U.S. National Archives and records management, visit [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)."

Narrator: You'll find more information about managing all kinds of records and information on our Web site at [archives.gov](http://archives.gov).