



Records Management 101

First Steps to a Successful Record Management Program

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Agenda

- What is Records Management?
- Core requirements and best practices for compliant records management
- Records Management program development
- Records Retention

What is Records management?

- Records management is a systematic approach to the creation, organization, retention, maintenance, and destruction of organization records, regardless of the media involved

What is Records Management?

Management of the life cycle of a record to ensure that authentic and accurate information can be retrieved quickly, easily and cost effectively

- Creation
- Storage
- Retrieval
- Retention
- Disposition

Enables

- Access to information
- Effective cost management
- Compliance with legal and contractual retention and security requirements
- Effective response to audits

Benefits of Records Management

- Identifies inactive records. It is estimated that 90% of all documents generated have a very short life-span.
- Allows for the legal destruction of obsolete records
- Ensures permanent retention of records with historical, legal, fiscal, and/or administrative value

Myths About Records Management

- I have plenty of space in my new office and I don't need to worry about records
- Someone might ask me for that document and I should keep it
- Office XYZ isn't that good at keeping things so I better keep copies of the documents they send me.
- All of my stuff is on the computer and those files aren't records!
- What would be the harm of keeping the records until I retire?

Effective Records management

- Provides the right information
- At the right time
- To the right people
- Effectively & efficiently
- At the lowest possible cost.

What is a record?

Recorded information, regardless of media, that evidences an organization's business decisions, or which supports future decision. Documents a transaction or activity and if it is produced, collected, received or retained in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of business

Examples:

- Invoices
- Correspondence
- Contracts
- Offer of employment
- Benefit sign up form
- Individual tax forms
- Board minutes
- Personnel Policies
- Grant reports
- Proposals
- Financial statements
- Client applications and intake forms
- Program activity records

Includes all mediums and formats

Is it a record?

Your document probably is a record if you answer "yes" to any of the following questions:

- Is it evidence of a decision made or decision making process used to make a decision?
- Does it authenticate or affirm the truthfulness or accuracy of information about the organization, its activities or its employees or agents?
- Does it commit the organization to or document an action (payment, expenditure, work to be carried out)?
- Is it evidence of something for which the organization is accountable to the public?
- Does it document work or an activity that was required to be conducted by a grant or contract?
- Does it document how grant or contract funds were spent?
- Is it evidence that can be used for audit or legal purposes to prove the organization complied with a policy, procedure or standard?
- Is there any law, regulation or other requirement that says the record must be kept?
- Is it seeking or providing information that might be used for decision-making?
- Does it document, explain or clarify the history of the organization?

Records exist in many formats

- The medium used to document an official activity or function is irrelevant
- The content of the record determines if it is evidence of an official government transaction, action, or activity
- Records can be stored as paper, photographs, maps, drawings, microfilm, databases, digital images, spreadsheets, e-mail, tweets, etc.

Email is a format, not a record

- Asking how to file an email is the same as asking how to file a piece of paper.
- The content determines the disposition.
- Recommend filing emails that are “records” not just in “email folders” but in appropriate electronic folders on local or shared drive of computer, along with other related electronic files

What is usually not a record

- **Reference materials:** reference texts, magazine and newspaper articles, textbooks, presentation handouts, extra copies of official records, etc.
- **Administrative and personal correspondence/e-mail:** meeting times, lunch dates, staff association memos, FYI memos, spam, etc.
- **Personal materials:** errand lists, bills, checkbooks, personal letters and/or photos, etc.
- Stationary, blank forms, and personal copies of publications for distribution
- Personal copies of policy and procedure manuals
- Printouts from a database

Do I Have To?

OMB Circular A-110 (Administrative Grant Requirements) 2 CFR 215.53 (e) (applicable to direct federal grants as adopted by federal agencies in agency regulations)

The Federal awarding agency, the Inspector General, Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, have the right of timely and unrestricted access to any books, documents, papers, or other records of recipients that are pertinent to the awards, in order to make audits, examinations, excerpts, transcripts and copies of such documents..

(b) Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to an award shall be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report or, for awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, from the date of the submission of the quarterly or annual financial report, as authorized by the Federal awarding agency

Additional Legal and Compliance Issues

- Both State and Federal legally mandated retention periods
- Statutes of limitations for legal actions such as breach of contract or tort lawsuits for negligent hiring
- Compliance with legal holds
- Compliance with audits
- Confidentiality
- **Legal Holds**

Legal Holds

What is a Legal Hold?

- The preservation of records that may be relevant to lawsuits, government investigations, or audits (pending or potential) against the organization, or an employee or grantee of the organization.

When must a record be on Legal Hold?

The Duty to impose a legal hold is triggered when the CAA is “duly notified”

- Order to produce records
- Subpoena

Legal Hold

Failure to comply with Legal Hold can result in:

- Spoliation
- Obstruction of justice

What is Spoliation of Evidence?

The intentional or negligent withholding, hiding, altering, or destroying of evidence relevant to a legal proceeding.

Consequences

- Audit deficiencies, fines, termination of grants, denial of refunding, damage to reputation, public confidence, business disruption

Starting a Sound Records Management Program: What to Address

- What is a record?
- Who owns the record and retains responsibility for managing the record. (the Record Custodian)
- Organization-wide labeling and file plan
- What to do with convenience copies
- Consistency
- Legal and compliance issues

Core Requirements and Best Practices for Compliant Records Management

- Executive-level program responsibility
- Organization-Wide
- Physical and electronic records are governed by the records management program
- Policies and procedures
- Roles and responsibilities with proper delegation
- Communication and training
- Auditing
- Ongoing Program Improvement

Roles & Responsibilities in a Compliant Records Management Program

Executive Director and Board

- Mandates the program
- Backs the implementation of the program
- Mandates Communication & Training

Records Manager

- Creates policy, and procedures determine program outcomes
- Designs and communicates processes to manage records in the organization
- Has accountability for program compliance and success

Technology Department

- Implements technology to support policy and business workflow
- Processes, stores and retains records.
- Very rarely the owner or creator of a record.

Records Coordinators

- Coordinates records management with owner/custodian and ensure proper labeling, filing and handling of records
- Coordinates record storage both on and off site.

Records Owners/Custodians

- Responsible for maintenance of record and life cycle management
- Often the creator of the record or most consistent user of record content.

First Steps in Record Management:

Understanding the basic difference between active documents and records

Active Documents

- Active documents are documents that are in use like e-mail, working copies of documents in your files or on your hard or a shared drive or any page on a website.
- Active documents are called active because in time they will change, maybe they will be shared, all in all they will travel some distance inside the organization.

Records

- Records are documents in your organization in physical or electronic forms that have been classified as records since they are **evidence of the activities of the organization**.
- Records need to be kept for a certain time period according to the retention schedule.

Important Records Management Concepts

- Taxonomy = subject categories: How records are classified
- Filing guidelines: What types of records are properly filed within each category

Together, the taxonomy and filing guidelines are:

- The “file plan” of the organization
- The backbone of the records program

What is a File Plan

- File Plan is a written schema that classifies records in some way (usually according to business function) across a working group, department, or entire organization.

The key purposes of a File Plan is to...

- Provide links between records that originate from the same activity or from related activities
- Determine where a record should be placed in a group of records (either physically, or conceptually)
- Assist users in retrieving records
- Assign and control retention periods
- Ensure the historical preservation of records with enduring value

Creating a File Plan

- Create record categories (taxonomy) and filing guidelines
- Designate storage and repository sites
- Procedures and workflow
- Retention schedule development
- People and resources
- Technology

Sample CAA File Plan

Function	Business Process	Record Category	Description	Label Schema	Retention
Executive Director's Office	Governance	Board of Directors	Board and committee meeting minutes	ED-Gov-Board Minutes-CY	Permanent
Executive Director's Office	Legal	Corporate	Records documenting Organization's incorporation, Nonprofit status, Board meeting minutes and any other records related to legal status of organization	ED-Legal-Corporate filings-Subject-CY	Permanent
Executive Director's Office	Legal	Contracts and Agreements - Private Parties	Records documenting any legal agreement between two private parties	ED-Legal-CY-Contracts-Name of Parties	7 years after expiration
Executive Director's Office	Legal	Contracts and Agreements - Governments	Records documenting any legal agreement between Organization and government entity	ED-Legal-CY-Contracts-Federal-Name of Parties	7 years after expiration
Executive Director's Office	Legal	Real Property	Records documenting the purchase and ownership and improvement or sale of property	ED-Legal-Property-Name of Property	Permanent
Financial Department	Accounting	Core accounting records	Record related to A/P and A/R, purchase orders, expense reimbursements etc.	Acc-FY-dept-subject	7 years
Financial Department	Finance	Annual Financial Statements	Year end reports of annual accounts, income or liabilities and any supporting documents	Fin-CY-Annual statements	Permanent
Financial Department	Payroll	Timesheets	All time reporting and personnel activity reports	Fin-CY-Payroll-timesheets	4 years
Human Resources	Personnel	Current Employee Personnel Files	Records documenting activities of staff	HR-Personnel-Employee Files-employee name	Permanent
Human Resources	Compensation and Benefits	Employee Termination Records	Records documenting job titles, pay scales and cumulative leave for individual employees	HR-Benefits-terminations-CY-employee name	7 years after termination
Human Resources	Recruiting	Job Recruitment materials	Records documenting job requirements description and salary range	HR-recruiting-Job materials- Dept- Position	7 years
Human Resources	Recruiting	Resumes and Job applicant information	Resumes and any information gathering during the interview process	HR-Recruiting-Applicants-CY-Dept- Position	1 year
Programs (LINEAP)	Administration	Program Files	Substantive program files related to client intake, assistance rendered, subcontracts performance and evaluation	LINEAP-CY-Subject	4 years
Programs (LINEAP)	Funding	Unfunded disapproved or Withdrawn Grants or Awards	All Grant documentation	LINEAP-CY-Proposal #	4 years



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Steps to creating an effective File Plan

- Gather Information
- Identify Functions and Activities
- Create Classifications
- Document the File Plan
- Link the file plan to retention schedule
- Inventory and Implementation
- Maintenance



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Executive Director's Office	Legal	Contracts and Agreements - Governments	Records documenting any legal agreement between Organization and government entity	ED-Legal-CY-Contracts- Federal- Name of Parties	7 years after expiration
Executive Director's Office	Legal	Real Property	Records documenting the purchase and , ownership and improvement or sale of property	ED-Legal-Property - Name of Property	Permanent
Financial Department	Accounting	Core accounting records	Record related to A/P and A/R, purchase orders, expense reimbursements etc.	Acc-FY-dept-subject	7 years
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Financial Department	Payroll	Timesheets	All time reporting and personnel activity reports	Fin-CY-Payroll- timesheets	4 years
Human Resources	Personnel	Current Employee Personnel Files	Records documenting activities of staff	HR-Personnel- Employee Files- employee name	Permanent
Human Resources	Compensation and Benefits	Employee Termination Records	Records documenting job titles, pay scales and cumulative leave for individual employees	HR- Benefits- terminations- CY-employee name	7 years after termination
Human Resources	Recruiting	Job Recruitment materials	Records documenting job requirements description and salary range	HR- recruiting-Job materials- Dept- Position	7 years
Human Resources	Recruiting	Resumes and Job applicant information	Resumes and any information gathering during the interview process	HR-Recruiting-Applicants- CY-Dept- Position	1 year
Programs (LIHEAP)	Administration	Program Files	Substantive program files related to client intake, assistance rendered, subcontracts performance and evaluation	LIHEAP-CY-Subject	4 years
Programs (LIHEAP)	Funding	Unfunded disapproved or Withdrawn Grants or Awards	All Grant documentation	LIHEAP-CY-Proposal #	4 years

Gather Information

- Work with staff organization wide to gather information about documents and records
- Use staff familiar with their office records for guidance in describing and categorizing records

Identify Functions

- Business activities form the basis for developing most (top-level) Classifications
- Survey users for common file titles

Create Classifications and document the File Plan

- Top level classifications should be broad enough to account for all records.
- Classification should be simple but inclusive.

Inventory, Classifying and Labeling

- The process of locating, identifying, describing, labeling, organizing and grouping all records regardless of medium in office and storage areas
- Use staff familiar with their office records for guidance in describing records
- Label records using File Plan schema

Implementing the File Plan: Where to start?

- Executive offices
- Human Resources
- Accounting

What about Electronic records?

A well thought-out File Plan used to classify, label and organize physical records can be used to organize and store and group for retention, electronic records.

- Categorize and label all electronic files
- Create a folder system that mirrors your physical file plan
- Designate a shared drive, server or SharePoint site to serve as a repository
- Group by retention categories
- Group electronic files and folders by the length they need to be retained
- Procedures and workflow
- Designate staff member to monitor the shared repository and make sure that records are correctly filed and labeled.
- Designated staff member should work with IT to handle the disposition of the electronic files according to the retention schedule.

Link the File Plan to Retention Schedule

- Organizations must have a file plan that hierarchically organizes all of the company's records and links with their legally compliant record retention schedule.


What is a Retention Schedule?

- An approved legal document that specifies minimum retention periods for certain group of records

Why Follow a Retention Schedule?

- Risks of keeping records too long
- Wastes space
- Harder to find records you need
- Risks of destroying records too soon
- Violation of federal or State law
- Avoid random record purging by establishing a routine within the normal course of business

Sample CAA record retention schedule



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