



Electronic Records Management: Can Records Be Encrypted?

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government entities on requirements when using encryption on public records.

Government agencies can encrypt their records, provided that they:

“...maintain the means to decrypt the record for the life of the record as designated by the approved required minimum retention period for that record.” (WAC 434-662-070)

Archival-designated records being transferred to the Archives must either:

- a) Be decrypted by the agency prior to transfer; *OR*
- b) Include *“the decryption means for any record transmitted in an encrypted format” (WAC 434-662-090)*.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**