

## **Improving Agency Records Management Programs: Recommended Policies and Procedures for Managing Records**

**Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local agencies regarding the types of policies and procedures needed for a successful records management program.**

There are three types of policies and procedures that agencies should be using to guide records management activities:

**1. General Records Management Policy** – Each agency should have at least one general policy establishing their records management program. This general policy should:

- ✓ Explain the benefits of managing public records
- ✓ Outline the roles and responsibilities of the Records Officer, department contacts, Information Governance officers, agency leaders, and general staff
- ✓ Demonstrate the agency's commitment to managing records in compliance with the laws and rules for records management
- ✓ Set a tone of openness and transparency

**2. Normal Operating Procedures** – Records are part of every task carried out at every level of the agency. Therefore, every work process should include directions for handling records throughout the workflow – from creation, to use and sharing, to storage, and finally to disposal. Each department, office, or work unit should have a customized file plan or filing instructions which covers management of the records they create or receive.

**3. Activity or Technology-Specific Policies and Procedures** – Each agency should have written policies and procedures for any records management-specific activities, like destroying or transferring records. Any new technology which produces records in formats that are difficult to capture and manage should also be regulated with policies and procedures to prevent staff from creating unique, long-term, or archival records in problematic formats.

- ✓ Email
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Websites
- ✓ Use of Personal Devices/Accounts
- ✓ Use of Cloud Storage
- ✓ Use of Off-Site, Contracted Records Storage
- ✓ Use of On-Site, Central File Storage
- ✓ Digital/Electronic Signatures
- ✓ Essential Records
- ✓ Disaster Preparedness
- ✓ Use of databases
- ✓ Use of an Electronic Content Management System
- ✓ Use of Bodycams or Dashcams
- ✓ Use of Drones
- ✓ Scanning and Tossing
- ✓ Destroying Non-Archival Records
- ✓ Transferring Archival Records to Washington State Archives
- ✓ Required Records Management Training for Staff

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