

For the Record

Maryland's Records Management Newsletter

Records Management Call to Action

Are your records management policies able to handle the increasingly digital 21st Century? Are all of your electronic records included on your records retention and disposition schedule with defined retention periods? The government's increasing use of electronic technology—including email, social networking, and cloud computing—opens new challenges and fresh opportunities for records management. However, evolving systems also makes it vital that government records management policies are up to date.

President Obama is well aware of the importance of records management policy reform. In November, the President launched an effort to improve records management that spans the entire Federal Executive Branch. While we are not part of the Federal Executive Branch, this effort can serve as a call to action for all of us at the state, county and local levels. The benefits of good records management apply equally to any level of government. Updated records management minimizes costs by improving the efficiency of storing and retrieving information. More accessible data also makes it easier to evaluate and improve upon all other government functions and practices. And, finally, no one wants to have vital records destroyed or lost among obsolete documents due to poor records management planning. With a new year upon us, it is an excellent time to review and revise your agency's records management policies.

Find a complete copy of the President's memorandum launching this records management revision effort at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/28/presidential-memorandum-managing-government-records>.

Who's Your Records Officer?

President Obama's plan to review and reform the records management policies of the Federal Executive Branch requires that each executive agency designate an individual to oversee the records management review for that agency. Experience has shown that keeping records management policies up to date is a lot easier when there is a designated records officer who implements and supervises records management procedures.

Like President Obama, Maryland understands the value of a records officer. COMAR 14.18.02.10 calls for the head of each Maryland government agency to designate at least one records officer for that agency. The records officer serves as a liaison for the agency with the Department of General Services Records Management Division and the Maryland State Archives and oversees the implementation of the agency's records management program.

A list of the records officers currently on file with the Archives is available at http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/intromsa/html/record_mgmt/agencies1.html. If your agency is not represented or if the information is incorrect, please contact Kathryn Baringer at 410-260-6467 or schedule@mdsa.net. And remember: records officers that supply us with an email address are automatically included in the mailing list for this newsletter.

In the market to have your permanent records digitized?

Contact the Maryland State Archives at 410-260-6467 to find out more about the scanning and online access services that we offer.

Questions? Suggestions?

Contact Kathryn Baringer at 410-260-6467 or schedule@mdsa.net