

File Naming

Key Issues to Consider

Now that you are familiar with some of the basic concepts of file naming, you can use the questions below to discuss how they relate to your agency.

Pay special attention to the questions posed by the legal framework, including the need for public accessibility, as appropriate. Consider your current and future activities and records to help determine the components of a file naming policy that will work now and in the future. For example, you may currently publish official statements or press releases on paper, but in the future, you may publish such records on the web.

Discussion Questions

- Who will use the file naming policy to name files? What policy will make sense to each group?
- Who will need access to these records? Are there different groups with different needs (e.g., the public, internal users)? How will people “think of” this record (e.g., “I need to find a copy of XYZ.doc.” or “I need information about legislation passed in 2002/2003.”)?
- Will the records move location (e.g., from one server to another, from a server to long-term storage)? How will these changes affect file naming?
- What style issues are important? For example, how should the record names appear in print?
- How does file type affect file name? Does our software or computer system limit the number of digits in the file name?
- What types of electronic records will we name?
- How will staff members and the public access and open files in the short-term and long-term? What limitations do these systems have for file naming?