

Electronic Records Management Strategy

Key Issues to Consider

Now that you are familiar with some key concepts in electronic records management, you can use the questions below as you develop your own strategy. The careful consideration of these questions will help ensure that:

- All relevant stakeholders agree to the process and are ready to use the procedures outlined in the strategy once it is implemented
- The strategy meets your legal requirements, such as public accountability, records retention schedules, and trustworthiness
- You maximize efficiency by working with other agencies and gaining from their experience

Discussion Questions

- What legal issues do we face? Who will need access to our records (e.g., the public, other government agencies)? Do we have information that *must* be accessible to the public? Do we have information that is not-public as classified by the MGDPA that must *not* be disclosed to the public (e.g., social security numbers, adoption records)?
- Can we adopt one of the general records retention schedules, or do we need to modify or create an agency-specific records retention schedule and seek approval from the Records Disposition Panel?
- What are the roles of different groups and individuals in our organization in ensuring a coordinated process? How can we facilitate planning, communication, and cooperation among all individuals who create and use the electronic records? What level of control should different individuals and groups have?
- Can we cooperate with other government agencies to streamline the process and save money or time?
- What best practices can we identify and apply to our own situation?
- What is the life cycle of our data? When should we capture records? How can we describe our records continuum? At which phases along our continuum do we need to actively manage the record? Would we benefit from developing a model of our operational process to aid in this discussion?
- How will we ensure long-term preservation and access? What are our requirements under the law?
- What are our options for long-term retention? What are the advantages of each option? How would each option work in our particular situation? What is our budget?

- What technological resources do we have available? How much of our chosen process can we or should we automate?
- What sort of appraisal process will we use to determine which records to keep? How will we ensure that this process identifies all records as defined by the law?
- What staff training do we need to ensure the staff complies with the new procedures and policies?
- What elements of the electronic records do we need to keep (e.g., text content only, graphical appearance, interactivity)?
- What metadata do we need to collect and preserve?