



STATE OF MAINE

POLICY ON PRESERVATION OF STATE GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Effective: October 30, 2013

TO: All State Employees

Applicability: This policy applies to all employees of Maine state government, including all Executive Branch agencies, employees of the Judicial Branch, Legislative Branch, the Constitutional Offices, and semi-independent agencies.

Statutory Authority: Maine State Revised Statutes, Title 5, Chapter 6, Section 95, §7 (www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec95.html).

Policy: Records management statutes, rules and policies provide the public with the evidentiary assurance and proper documentation that state and local government operations are operating in accordance with their public mandate and that their work is carried out with transparency. Public records are the property of the public and must be made available to citizens unless specifically proscribed in law. Agencies may destroy records only in accordance with statutorily-approved retention schedules. If agencies wish to destroy records earlier than those retention times, they must get approval from the State Archivist.

Purpose: This policy establishes uniform records management practices throughout Maine state government. State government employees create and receive documents and e-mails as part of their official duties, therefore, most documents and e-mails are official state records. State Archives records retention schedules dictate how long to retain any document or email created or received in connection with official government business; or evidence of the agency's functions, policies, and procedures; or because of its informational or historical value. These records schedules apply to both paper and electronic records. General Records Schedules apply to records common to most agencies. Most agencies also have agency-specific records schedules to supplement the General Records Schedules for paper and electronic records.

For questions about records retention schedules specific to your agency, contact your agency records officer. See list at: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/statero.html>.

Guidelines for Correspondence and E-mail: E-mail is considered general correspondence. In the General Records Schedules, most general correspondence, and therefore most e-mail, has a retention period of 3 years. The only exceptions are:

- Commissioner or Agency head correspondence and e-mail is considered of historical value and to be kept permanently.
- Correspondence and e-mail related to the official state budget is to be kept for 4 years (two biennia) and then destroyed.

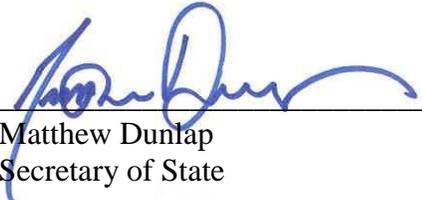
- Correspondence and e-mail related to equipment and property is to be kept for 5 years, and then destroyed.
- Junk mail such as advertisements and any personal e-mails an employee may have in their state e-mail accounts do not need to be preserved, since these are not official state government records.

In summary, most state agency correspondence and e-mail has a retention schedule of 3 to 5 years (unless for a commissioner or agency head, which is archival / permanent). In most cases, agency users should be managing their e-mail to retain for 3 to 5 years.

Guidelines for Other Record Types: Non-correspondence records have various retention periods, some even permanent. For example, contracts must be kept 7 years, official budget records 10 years, personnel records 60 years, and some record types that have historical value must be kept permanently. For details on each record type, see links to the records schedules below.

Actions by Employees: Every State employee shall comply with this policy by taking the following actions:

1. Properly manage all of their State government records, including correspondence, e-mail and electronic documents.
 - a. Employees are to save (archive) their correspondence, email and other documents so that it is preserved for the amount of time required by the records schedules. It is the responsibility of Agency managers and supervisors to secure and archive records of former employees. For steps on how to archive e-mail, see the instructions on the State internal website at: <http://inet.state.me.us/foaa/archiving.aspx>.
 - b. Executive Branch: If assistance is needed, employees can call the OIT Help Desk at 624-7700.
 - c. Judicial Branch, Legislative Branch, Constitutional Offices and semi-independent agencies: If assistance is needed, employees should call their individual HelpDesk.
2. Review the following Schedules and Guides:
 - General Records Schedules: www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/gensched2.html.
 - State Agency Schedules (pertaining to their agency): <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/stsched.html>.
 - Email Retention Guide: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/emailguide.pdf>.
 - Basics of Records Management Guide: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/trainingguide.pdf>.
3. Annually sign the web-based acknowledgement form (within 60 days of receiving notice): <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/policyform.html>.



Matthew Dunlap
Secretary of State