



# RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND EMAIL

1

## IS MY EMAIL PUBLIC RECORD?

If the e-mail is created or received in connection with the transaction of the agency's public business (such as discussion of a policy revision, review of a grant application, evidence of a decision made, etc.), then it is a public record and needs to be retained according to the appropriate retention schedule.

2

## WHEN IS MY EMAIL NOT PUBLIC RECORD?

If the e-mail is not related to agency business, such as "chit chat" between colleagues or messages from family or friends of a personal nature, then the e-mail is not a public record and should be deleted. **Do not mix business and personal e-mail.** When e-mail contains both personal and business discussion, the e-mail must be treated as public record.

3

## HOW LONG SHOULD I KEEP EMAILS?

Retention is based on content, not format! You should use the same records series for the contents of an e-mail that you would use if the same information was on paper. E-mail can most often be classified as correspondence (GS-19 for localities; GS-101 for state agencies). When e-mail is not correspondence, the employee must determine the content and identify an appropriate retention period based on the retention schedules.

4

## HOW SHOULD EMAIL BE RETAINED?

Agencies need to determine how they will retain e-mail classified as public records through a collaborative discussion between the agency records officer, management, and IT staff. Agencies should not purchase e-mail "archiving" systems that will not allow them to purge e-mail from the system.

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## HOW CAN I MAKE EMAIL MANAGEMENT EASIER?

Set aside time to manage your e-mail; delete those that are non-records and sort those that are records into folders according to the appropriate records series. Use a meaningful subject line to make sorting and retrieving e-mail simpler; change the subject line if the subject changes throughout the thread.