Your Role as
Records Management Officer
Workbook

New York State Archives

2012
New York State Archives Presents
Your Role as Records Management Officer
2012

Agenda:

Agenda and Overview

Essential Terms

Responsibilities of RMO and Others
  • CEO and Governing Board
  • All Government Officials

About Municipal Court Records

Attributes of a Records Program
  • Creation
  • Retention
  • Storage
  • Retrieval
  • Technology
  • Archives
  • Policy

Break

Tips for Building a Records Program

Tips for Maintaining a Records Program

Conclusion, Questions, and Thanks

For more information:

Website http://www.archives.nysed.gov/a/workshops

Email ARCHTRAIN@mail.nysed.gov

The New York State Archives is part of the Office of Cultural Education within the New York State Education Department.
Your Role as Records Management Officer

New York State Archives
www.archives.nysed.gov
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Agenda

• Who is the Records Management Officer (RMO)?
• Responsibilities of the RMO
• Basics of records management (RM)
• Starting a RM program
• Maintaining support over the long term

Essential Terms

• Record
  – Recorded information created or received
• Records management
  – Control of records through life cycle
• Records Management Officer
  – Oversees and coordinates records management program
Who is the RMO?

- Local Government Records Law
  - Each government must have an RMO
  - In towns and villages, the clerk is RMO
  - In fire districts, the secretary is RMO
  - CEO designates RMO in other governments

Who is the RMO?

- Regulations of the Commissioner of Education
  - Provide further details on RMOs in local government (Part 185)
  - Head of each state agency’s governing board must appoint an RMO (Part 188)

Responsibilities of the RMO

- Oversee and coordinate management of all records from creation
- Liaison with other departments
- Delegate responsibility as needed
- Constantly promote the program
- Follow State Archives guidelines
CEO and Governing Board

• Support and promote RM program
• Identify historical records and ensure their protection
• Designate RMO when not mandated by law

All Government Officials

• Create and maintain records that document business transactions
• Destroy records appropriately
• Pass records on to successors
• Support work of the RMO

About Municipal Court Records

• Property of town or village
• Open to the public, except as otherwise provided by law
• Must be filed with town or village clerk when justice leaves office
• Under jurisdiction of the Office of Court Administration (OCA)
Attributes of a Records Program

- Creation
- Retention
- Storage
- Retrieval
- Technology
- Archives
- Policy

Creation
Create only the records you need

Creation Activities
- Create records for a reason
- Control copies
- Identify record copy
- Address retention and disposition when designing an e.records system
- Preserve historical records as you create them
Retention
Retain only essential records

Retention Activities
• Determine retentions
• Destroy obsolete records
• Preserve permanent records
• Migrate electronic records

Storage
Store records safely and securely
Storage Activities

• Maintain a good storage environment
• Use appropriate equipment
• Keep storage areas organized
• Store all backups offsite

Retrieval

Find records when you need them

Retrieval Activities

• Index select records
• Scan records and implement full-text search engine
• Design a locator system
• Educate others on good filing systems
• Implement ECM for electronic records
Technology

Use information technology appropriately

Technology Activities

• Identify where technology is needed
• Plan for technology
• Evaluate software
• Work effectively with IT professionals

Managing Erecords

• Must file centrally to manage well
• Design file plan and classification system
• Tie to retention
• Educate end-users
• When possible, manage retention electronically
• Address email in your erecords strategy
Archives
Promote and support your historical records

Archival Activities
• Provide access to historical records
• Promote archives as a resource
• Encourage their use for education
• Prepare finding aids

Policy
Develop policies and procedures to guide your program
Policy Activities

• Support and develop a records policy
• Develop a records management plan
• Document your procedures
• Develop a disaster plan for your most important records

Tips for Building a Records Program

1. Getting started
2. Set goals
3. Find partners
4. Involve everyone
5. Document everything

1. Getting Started

If you inherit a mess…

• Consider conducting a records inventory first
• Meet with your Regional Advisory Officer (RAO)
• Attend State Archives workshops on basic RM functions
• Establish a Records Advisory Board
1. Getting Started

If you inherit a good program…

• Take care of it!
• Meet with your RAO
• Explore areas for improvement
• Attend advanced State Archives workshops

2. Set Goals

• Use your records management plan to set goals
• But think in terms of incremental steps
• Update your plan every 3-5 years

3. Find Partners

• Governing board
• IT staff
• Historian
• Legal counsel
• Consultants and vendors
• Other partners
Working with Your Board

• How do you work with your board?
• Propose resolution of support for records program
• Report on important projects and events
• Provide tours of records storage areas
• Give demonstrations of new technology

Working with IT

• How do you work with IT?
• Initiate and maintain ongoing dialog
• Educate IT on records management issues
• Educate yourself on IT issues
• Be involved in the design of eRecords systems
• Form a technology steering committee

Working with Your Historian

• How do you work with your historian?
• Share or give responsibility for historical research
• Encourage historian to attend training on managing archival records
• Help plan Archives Month events
Working with Legal Counsel

- How do you work with your legal counsel?
- Review various agreements
- Identify records needed for litigation
- When governments are consolidating
- Resolve disputes over records ownership

Working with Consultants and Vendors

Consultants
- Develop policies and plans
- Train project staff
- Provide technical expertise

Vendors
- Provide products and services
- Good source of information about the newest technology

Other Partners

- Your RAO and other State Archives staff
- State Archives services and products
- Other state agencies
- Other local governments
- Professional organizations
4. Involve Everyone

- In developing records policies
- In destroying records regularly
- When working on a disaster management plan for records
- When identifying projects for grant funding

5. Document Everything

- Take before and after photographs
- Report statistics on use of records
- Write monthly and annual reports

Tips for Maintaining a Program

1. Learn new things
2. Educate others
3. Emphasize benefits
4. Seek sources of funding
5. Encourage continued growth
6. Thank everyone
1. Learn New Things
- Continue to attend training
- Stay professionally active
- Keep up with new technology
- Be willing to change what you’ve always done

2. Educate Others
- Importance of records
- How to manage them effectively
- How to handle historical records
- Who owns your records
- Using records to teach

3. Emphasize Benefits of RM
- Ensures compliance
- Emphasize savings in $$$
- Provides the most value from information
- Improves access and retrieval
- Serves the citizens of New York
- Supports the state’s documentary heritage
3. Benefits: Legal Compliance

- Court cases
- State guidelines
  - Laws and Regulations
  - FOIL
- Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
  - And the states

Compliance with FOIL I

- Committee on Open Government:
  http://www.dos.state.ny.us/coog/coogwww.html
- Balances access and security
- Requires subject matter list
- May involve fees
- Must respond within 5 business days
- 2006 amendment (Chapter 182)
  - Requests can be by email
  - Court can award costs and fees if denial is considered unreasonable

Compliance with FOIL II

- 2008 amendments (Chapter 223)
  - Fees for electronic information
  - Large requests
  - Recognizing the benefits of IT
  - Creating, extracting, and generating records
  - Maximizing access to records
Federal Rules of Civil Procedure

- Enacted in December 2006
- Apply to electronic records relevant to federal cases
- Provides for “safe harbor”
- Emphasize
  - Electronic records inventory
  - File plan and classification
  - Retention policy
  - Staff training

Benefits: Emphasizing Savings in $$$

- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis or estimate ROI for
  - Adding staff
  - Introducing new technologies
  - Installing shelving units
  - Changing vendors
  - Establishing an in-house microfilm or imaging operation
  - Remodeling facilities

Basic ROI

\[
\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Gains} - \text{Investment Costs}}{\text{Investment Costs}}
\]

ROI for Compact Shelving

\[
\text{RS} = \text{Reduction in office space cost} \\
\text{CS} = \text{Cost of shelving units}
\]

\[
\frac{\text{RS} - \text{CS}}{\text{CS}} = \text{ROI}
\]
An ROI Example

- Office space
  - 4-drawer cabinet
  - Letter-size
  - Avg cost=$300
  - Holds 6 cu ft
  - Cost=$50 per cu ft

- Storage space
  - Steel shelving
  - 32” x 42” x 76”
  - Avg cost=$400
  - Holds 42 cu ft
  - Cost=$9.52 per cu ft

4. Seek Sources of $

- Your government
- State Archives LGRMIF Program
- Other state agencies
- Federal granting agencies
- Private sources
- Member items

5. Encourage Continued Growth

- Continue to seek opportunities for improvement
6. Thank Everyone

Conclusion
- Managing records is your legal responsibility
- Address all records
- There are simple strategies to keep a program going
- Take incremental steps
- You are not alone!

Questions?

Thank you for attending….

Please remember to fill out the online evaluation form!

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