

**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

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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](mailto: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](http://www.archives.nysed.gov)  
Spring 2011

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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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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)

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## 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

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### CEO and Governing Board

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

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### All Government Officials

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

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### 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)

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## Attributes of a Records Program

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



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## Creation

Create only the records you need

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## Creation Activities

- Create records for a reason
- Control copies
- Identify record copy
- Address retention and disposition when designing an records system
- Preserve historical records as you create them

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## Retention

Retain only essential records

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## Retention Activities

- Determine retentions
- Destroy obsolete records
- Preserve permanent records
- Migrate electronic records

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## Storage

Store records safely and securely



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## Storage Activities

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



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## Retrieval

Find records when you need them



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## 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

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## Technology

Use information technology  
appropriately



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## Technology Activities

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

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## 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

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## Archives

Promote and support your historical records



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## Archival Activities

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



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## Policy

Develop policies and procedures to guide your program



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## 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



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## Tips for Building a Records Program

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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 3. Find Partners

- Governing board
- IT staff
- Historian
- Legal counsel
- Consultants and vendors
- Other partners 0

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## Other Partners

- Your RAO and other State Archives staff
- State Archives services and products
- Other state agencies
- Other local governments
- Professional organizations 2



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## 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

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## 5. Document Everything

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



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## 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

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## 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

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## 2. Educate Others

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

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## 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 <sup>4</sup>

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### 3. Benefits: Legal Compliance

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

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### 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

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### 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 5

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## Federal Rules of Civil Procedure

- Enacted in December 2006
- Apply to records relevant to federal cases
- Provides for “safe harbor”
- Emphasize
  - records inventory
  - file plan and classification
  - retention policy
  - staff training

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## 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

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## Basic ROI

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

## ROI for Compact Shelving

RS = Reduction in office space cost  
CS = Cost of shelving units

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

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## An ROI Example

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Office space      | • Storage space       |
| 4-drawer cabinet    | Steel shelving        |
| Letter-size         | 32" x 42" x 76"       |
| Avg cost=\$300      | Avg cost=\$400        |
| Holds 6 cu ft       | Holds 42 cu ft        |
| Cost=\$50 per cu ft | Cost=\$9.52 per cu ft |

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## 4. Seek Sources of \$

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



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## 5. Encourage Continued Growth

- Continue to seek opportunities for improvement 7



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## 6. Thank Everyone



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*Merci*

Bedankt

THANK  
YOU

*Grazie*

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## 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!

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## Questions?

Thank you for attending....

Please remember to fill out the  
online evaluation form!

[www.archives.nysed.gov](http://www.archives.nysed.gov)

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