

AN OVERVIEW OF

Creating a Records Management Policy

Tip

Review this plan at least once a year with your team.

The State Archives and Public Records Administration provides records management advice, assistance, and consultation to government agencies and oversees the proper care of public records in Rhode Island. This checklist is intended to serve as a resource providing recommendations and steps for all agencies, state and municipal, to create an appropriate Records Management Plan or Policy.

Policy Basics

What should a policy/plan include?

Any Records Management Policy should include information on your agency, the records it creates and receives, and how they will be safeguarded from loss or damage. Set up your policy with the following:

- Your Agency and Division
- Effective date
- Version Number and/or dates of amendment
- Purpose
- Policy Statement
- Scope
- Legislation or Other Key Mandates
- Creation and Maintenance of Information and Records
- Systems Used to Maintain Information and Records
 - Retention Schedules
 - Filing schemas
 - Digital records maintenance system
- Access to Information and Records
- Roles and Responsibilities of members of your agency
- Communication and training on use of the policy

Records Care

What should the policy say about destruction?

Any Records Management Policy should include information on how records are preserved, where they are preserved, and how they will be archived (if appropriate) or destroyed (when eligible) once they are no longer needed for daily business.

The Policy should identify proper disposition of your records:

- For state agencies:
 - Are they eligible for transfer to the State Archives?
 - Have you established an account with the State Records Center for off-site records storage of inactive records?
- For local government (municipal) agencies:
 - Identify an appropriate storage environment with water, fire and security controls for both permanent and non-permanent records.
- Retention or Destruction:
 - Identify who is responsible to draft the Certification of Records Destruction form and who is responsible to sign and submit it to the [Public Records Administration](#).

Updating the Policy

How often should the policy be revised?

The Records Management Policy should include a section establishing how often it will be reviewed, updated, or revised. The State Archives & Public Records Administration advises a review every 2 years.

This section of the policy should include:

- Set schedule for annual/bi-annual review;
- Who is responsible for review; and
- Management Endorsement of the plan.

