



# United States Department of the Interior

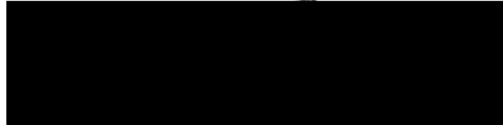
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Memorandum

SEP 26 2016

To: All Political Appointees

From: Sylvia W. Burns  
Chief Information Officer



Subject: Managing Federal Records for Departing Political Appointees

This memorandum updates guidance issued in February 2013, entitled “Managing Federal Records and Documents for Department Political Appointees.” I am sharing this guidance to help you identify and manage your Federal records prior to your departure.

Please remember that you are responsible for ensuring all Federal records are properly managed and preserved, consistent with the Federal Records Act, until their authorized disposition. Also, federal cybersecurity policies require that all official government business be conducted on government furnished equipment (GFE). The only exception to the exclusive use of GFE is if you use the secure container application provided by the OCIO to access your work email, calendar, and contacts on your personally-owned mobile device.

### *What actions do I need to take before I depart?*

Schedule time with your Records Officer at your earliest convenience. In preparation for that meeting:

- Ensure all of your Government-issued information technology equipment and storage devices are readily available and accessible, including passwords. (This includes desktop computers; laptop computers; tablets such as iPads, smart phones, Blackberries; and portable storage devices).
- Ensure all of your records and files (digital and paper) are available and accessible (including your email, social media, or electronic messaging accounts).
- Prepare a list of projects or issues you worked on while at DOI.
- Forward electronic messages sent for official business from a non-official (e.g., personal) email account to your DOI official email account.
- Determine if there are any records you wish to take copies of with you when you leave, so they can be reviewed and approved prior to your departure.

*How can my staff and I get assistance?*

- For general support and training for you and your support staff, contact David Alspach, OCIO, at [REDACTED].
- You and your staff should attend brown bag lunch sessions that OCIO will host in September and October.
- You may also contact your Bureau Records Officer. A list of all Records Officers is attached and contact information for all Records Officers can also be found at: <https://www.doi.gov/ocio/policy-mgmt-support/information-and-records-management/records/contacts>
- If you want to take copies of Federal records with you upon your departure, contact David Alspach. He will coordinate with the Office of the Solicitor, as appropriate. An attorney will likely work with you on this request.
- For more detailed information on Federal records management, refer to Attachment 1 and <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/publications/documenting-your-public-service.html>

**Attachments**

1. Basic Guidance on Federal Records
2. [REDACTED]
3. February 15, 2013 memo, "Managing Federal Records and Documents for Departing Political Appointees"

**cc:** Associate Chief Information Officers  
Bureau and Office Records Officers  
Director, Human Resources  
Bureau and Office Human Resources Directors  
Director, Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs  
Deputy Director, Correspondence, Document Production, and FOIA Management  
Staff Assistant, Immediate Office of the Secretary  
Departmental Records Officer

## ***Attachment 1 - Basic Guidance on Federal Records***

### ***What are Federal Records?***

Federal records are all recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business. Federal records must be preserved by an agency - as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the United States Government or because of the informational value of the data in them – until they are authorized for disposal as temporary records or for transfer to the National Archives as permanent records.

Federal records exist in many forms including, but not limited to:

- audio and video recordings
- electronic messages, including email, instant messages, and texts
- maps and geospatial information
- memoranda
- photographs
- presentations
- social media content
- statistical and narrative reports
- web records

Many factors contribute to the determination that recorded information qualifies as a Federal record. If the answer to any of the following questions is "yes," the item is a Federal record.

- Did the agency require creation or submission and maintenance of the information?
- Was the information used to conduct or facilitate agency business?
- Does the item contain unique information that explains formulation of significant program policies and decisions?
- Was the information distributed to other offices or agencies for formal approval or clearance?
- Is the information covered by an item in an agency records schedule or regulation?

Federal records are the property of the agency, not the individual employee, and must not be removed without agency approval. Government employees should work with their agency's records management staff to ensure records contain a full accounting of their organization, functions, policies, and activities. Agencies need to ensure that their records are complete and contain information needed to protect the rights of the Government and public.

### ***What are not Federal Records?***

Non-records include materials such as library or museum materials used solely for reference or exhibition purposes and duplicate copies of records kept only for convenience.

### ***What are personal materials?***

Personal materials refer to documentary items not relating to or having an effect upon agency business. Personal materials belong to an individual, not the agency. Traditionally, personal materials have included the following categories:

- business or professional files created before entering Government service
- reference files, for example professional association journals or library materials
- copies of your official personnel file that were created when you entered Federal service
- personal correspondence, emails, and other materials documenting outside business or political pursuits not relating to agency business

Employees may remove documentary materials of a purely personal nature when they leave the agency. However, employees often intermingle their personal and official files. In those situations, the agency may need to review and approve the removal of personal materials to ensure all Federal records are properly preserved and agency policies are followed. Employees should consult David Alspach to help determine whether files are personal or Federal records. He will coordinate with the Office of the Solicitor, as appropriate. An attorney will likely work with you on this issue.

As a best practice, employees should not conduct personal business on official agency accounts and information technology systems.

Personal and non-official accounts should only be used to conduct agency business in exceptional circumstances. In 2014, the Federal Records Act was amended to require that an officer or employee of an executive agency may not create or send a record using a non-official electronic messaging account unless they:

- copy an official electronic messaging account of the officer or employee in the original creation or transmission of the record; or
- forward a complete copy of the record to an official electronic messaging account of the officer or employee not later than 20 calendar days after the original creation or transmission of the record.

National Archives and Records Administration guidance further requires that if an officer or employee of an executive agency receives an electronic message on a personal account, they must forward a complete copy of the record to an official electronic messaging account of the officer or employee not later than 20 calendar days after the original creation or transmission of the record.



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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

**FEB 15 2013**

## Memorandum

**To:** All Political Appointees

**Through:** Andrew Jackson [REDACTED]  
Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services

**From:** Bernard J. Mazer [REDACTED]  
Chief Information Officer

**Subject:** Managing Federal Records and Documents for Departing Political Appointees

This memorandum updates and modifies guidance to departing political appointees regarding their responsibilities for records management, litigation, pending Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Congressional document requests. To reduce the current transition burden associated with the departure of political appointees, the Department of the Interior (DOI) has streamlined the procedures for retaining electronic documents for departing political appointees.

### Introduction

Departmental e-mail messages and other electronic and paper documents may be subject to retention requirements under the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C.), Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, and litigation holds, as well as collections for pending FOIA or Congressional document requests. Federal regulation and guidance requires employees to preserve all electronic documents (including e-mail) that are Federal records or subject to legal action. Upon transition of the employee, these documents and records have historically been retained by the organization through printing and filing of electronic documents and records, and preservation of paper records.

To improve the efficiency of DOI's operations, the Office of the Secretary (OS) has implemented a more efficient approach to meet the legal obligations with respect to Federal records and litigation holds. Specifically, DOI will maintain an electronic copy of any e-mail or other electronic document and data from your Government-issued equipment (e.g., desktop and laptop computers, iPads, Blackberry, portable storage devices, etc.) in order to accomplish the goal of preserving electronic records for future retrieval.

### Required Action

To facilitate this new approach, every departing political appointee shall:

1. Contact the OS Records Officer, David Alspach, to coordinate the collection of your electronic records, document and data;

2. Ensure that all Government-issued information technology equipment and storage devices are readily available and accessible, including passwords;
3. Prepare a list of projects or issues worked on at DOI;
4. Identify 5-10 key words associated with each item on the project/issue list;
5. Provide complete responses to any pending FOIA and/or Congressional request, including copies of their electronic and paper data;
6. Provide this information to David Alspach, or a member of his team, who will assist in the records management exit clearance process; and
7. Provide complete responses to any FOIA request.

Political appointees who work for bureaus other than the OS should work with the OS Records Officer, David Alspach, in order to ensure consistency of this new process. Mr. Alspach will coordinate, as appropriate, with other bureau programs, including FOIA and Congressional programs.

It is extremely important that all departing political appointees comply with these steps and take the time to provide DOI with their project/issue list prior to their departure.

If you have any questions regarding these responsibilities, please contact David Alspach, the OS Records Officer [REDACTED]; or Edwin McCeney, the Departmental Records Officer [REDACTED].

cc: Assistant Directors of Information Resources  
Bureau and Office Records Officers  
Bureau and Office Human Resources Directors  
Edwin McCeney, Departmental Records Officer  
John Montel, eRecords Service Manager  
Thomas Mulhern, Director, Human Resources  
Fay Iudicello, Director, Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs  
Robert Howarth, Deputy Director, Correspondence, Document Production, and FOIA Management  
Donna Deen, Staff Assistant, Immediate Office of the Secretary  
David Alspach, OS Records Officer