Electronic Records Program Policy

Florida Department of State

Division of Library and Information Services, State Archives of Florida

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Mission of the State Archives of Florida

- To ensure the preservation and accessibility of the historical records of Florida.
- To provide leadership to ensure the preservation and accessibility of Florida's historical documentary heritage.
- To provide assistance to Florida government agencies, archives, libraries, institutions and individuals in preserving and making available those records deemed archival and/or historical.
- To promote and encourage research in Florida history and develop appreciation of the value of historical records.

The State Archives of Florida serves the State of Florida and its citizens by preserving and making accessible Florida's public and private records of enduring historical value in its custody and by assisting government agencies in managing their permanent records. The Archives provides leadership in preserving historical records and ensuring that those records are known and valued by citizens, students and scholars.

Purpose of the Electronic Records Program Policy

This document formalizes the State Archives of Florida's commitment to the preservation of historically significant records of the state, as well as private historical manuscript collections, local government records, photographs and other materials that complement the official state records, created and maintained in electronic form.

As the business of government is increasingly conducted through electronic means, it is imperative to the State Archives' mission and statutory mandate that archival electronic records are actively preserved. The long-term preservation of electronic records is complicated by limited media stability and hardware and software dependence and rapid obsolescence. It is essential that the Archives ensures the authenticity and reliability of all electronic records in its custody and that these records remain sustainable and accessible to the user community in perpetuity.

Mandate and Authority for the Electronic Records Program Policy

Pursuant to Section 257.35(1), *Florida Statutes*:

> There is created within the Division of Library and Information Services of the Department of State the Florida State Archives for the preservation of those public records, as defined in s. 119.011(12), manuscripts, and other archival material that have been determined by the division to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation and have been accepted by the division for deposit in its custody.

Pursuant to Florida Public Records Law, Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*:

> "Public records" are defined as:
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> > all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency.
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> "Custodian of public records" is defined as:
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> > the elected or appointed state, county, or municipal officer charged with the responsibility of maintaining the office having public records, or his or her designee.

Pursuant to Rules 1B-26.003(4)(e) and 1B-24.001(3)(e), *Florida Administrative Code*:

> An electronic record is any information that is recorded in machine readable form. Electronic records include numeric, graphic, audio, video, and textual information which is recorded or transmitted in analog or digital form.

Pursuant to Rule 1B-26.003(4)(f), *Florida Administrative Code*:

> An electronic recordkeeping system is an automated information system for the organized collection, processing, transmission, and dissemination of information in accordance with defined procedures.

Pursuant to Section 119.01(2)(a), *Florida Statutes*:

> Automation of public records must not erode the right of access to those records. As each agency increases its use of and dependence on electronic recordkeeping, each agency must provide reasonable public access to records electronically maintained and must ensure that exempt or confidential records are not disclosed except as otherwise permitted by law.

Accordingly, agencies must take steps to ensure that their electronic records are properly maintained, available when requested, and transferred to the State Archives when appropriate.

Key Principles of Electronic Preservation

The terms listed below are key principles essential to effective preservation of electronic records. All terms are as defined in the Society of American Archivists' Dictionary of Archives Terminology except where noted.

Authenticity

> The quality of being genuine, not a counterfeit, and free from tampering, and is typically inferred from internal and external evidence, including its physical characteristics, structure, content, and context.

Interoperability

> The ability of different systems to use and exchange information through a shared format. Standards facilitate interoperability.

Trustworthiness

> The quality of being dependable and reliable. In the context of electronic records, trustworthiness often implies that the system is dependable and produces consistent results based on well-established procedures.

Objectives of the Electronic Records Program Policy

The Electronic Records Program Policy serves as the foundation for the State Archives' archival electronic records program. The program exists to preserve the historically significant records of the state, as well as private historical manuscript collections, local government records, photographs and other materials that complement the official state records, created and maintained in electronic form. The program ensures the preservation of Florida's historical heritage as documented in those records and their continued accessibility to the user community. To this end, the program's objectives are to:

- Develop and implement policies and procedures for the transfer of authentic, reliable archival electronic records from the office of origin or producer to the Archives.
- Develop appropriate documentation and procedures, in accordance with best practices, for the normalization, continued migration and maintenance, and quality assurance of electronic records entrusted to the custody of the Archives.

- Institute a secure, stable repository environment for the management and monitoring of permanent electronic records, working toward compliance with ISO 16363: Audit and Certification of Trustworthy Digital Repositories.
    - Ensure records are trustworthy and contain information that is reliable and authentic.
    - Ensure records are complete and have all the information necessary to ensure their long-term usefulness.
- Establish, according to best practices and existing standards, a system for the management of metadata about these records to ensure continued accessibility and discoverability.
- Provide for the seamless integration of electronic records into existing descriptive tools and mechanisms.
- Develop a method of delivery for electronic records to ensure ease of access to and use by the public in support of transparent and accountable government.
- Serve as a resource to others in the state regarding best practices for the creation, maintenance and preservation of electronic records.
- Provide an appropriate level of security to ensure integrity of the records, which may include:
    - Access to electronic records granted only to authorized personnel.
    - Backup and recovery of records to protect against information loss. Documented disaster recovery plans and procedures shall be established for all electronic records systems.
- Provide appropriate staffing with the necessary combination of technical and archival expertise to ensure that program objectives can be achieved.

Scope

The Archives' electronic records program is responsible for securing and providing the means to preserve and ensure ongoing access to the historical records of Florida, including state and local government records, historical manuscripts collections, photographic collections, genealogical collections and other historical records in the Archives' custody. The Archives' electronic records program will also serve as a resource for advice and expertise in the care of electronic records, permanent and non-permanent, in the custody of other state and local government entities.

Collaborators

The Archives will work with records creators and producers to assist in identifying the disposition of electronic records early in the records' lifecycles to ensure preservation of those

scheduled as long-term or permanent and/or appraised as having archival value. The Archives will consult with electronic records archivists in other states and organizations to identify best practices, methods and tools to best achieve the program's objectives.

Transfer Requirements/Acceptance of Content

The Archives will accept records appraised by Archives staff as having archival value. For state government records, the general schedules identify some records that may have archival value. The Archives will accept formats or file types that can be preserved and made accessible long-term.[1] Archives staff will work with the records creators and producers to ensure that accurate, reliable and authentic records are transferred to the Archives.

Restrictions/Redactions

The Archives is committed to providing the broadest possible access to all materials in our collections within the constraints of the law. Access to some records, or portions of records, may be restricted if confidential or exempt pursuant to Florida's Public Records Law, Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*, or other sections of the *Florida Statutes*. More information about exemptions and confidentiality of public records can be found in *Government-In-The-Sunshine-Manual: A Reference for Compliance with Florida's Public Records and Open Meetings Law*. allowable by law while applying technological best practices for redacting or withholding materials that cannot be legally released.

Updates

State Archives staff will review this policy biennially and make any necessary revisions, amendments and updates.

[1] Sources for identifying such formats include the National Archives and Records Administration's *Format Guidance for the Transfer of Permanent Electronic Records, Appendix A: Tables of File Formats*.