

# Records and Information Management

## Frequently Asked Questions

For specific information, please contact Joanne Kaczmarek, Archivist for Electronic Records

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### General Questions about Records and Information Management

#### **How do I know if something is a record?**

Refer to the “Definitions” document or the “Records Versus Documents” document, or contact the Archives and Records Services personnel: [jkaczmar@illinois.edu](mailto:jkaczmar@illinois.edu)

#### **How do I dispose of a record?**

You can submit a request for disposal (or transfer) of University records to the University Archives and Records Services. The Archives and Records Services will contact you to verify the contents, size and date of your records.

#### **How do I dispose of documents?**

Material that does not require state approval for disposal should be removed, destroyed or erased according to your unit policy of document disposal. If your unit does not have such a policy in place, you should consult the Archives and Records Services. Contact [jkaczmar@illinois.edu](mailto:jkaczmar@illinois.edu)

#### **What is a records liaison?**

The person responsible for an office’s records management procedures, including file organization and maintenance, records surveys, records transfer, and records disposition; and for maintaining contact with the Records Management Program. For a more comprehensive list of liaison responsibilities please refer to the [OBFS Policy Manual](#)

#### **Who is my unit's record liaison?**

If you do not know who your unit’s records liaison is or if you do not have one, contact the Archives and Records Services personnel: [jkaczmar@illinois.edu](mailto:jkaczmar@illinois.edu)

#### **What is a university record?**

*University Records* are compiled sources of information that represent official actions and transactions conducted by and on behalf of the University and are identified as supporting University functions..

#### **What does retention mean?**

In the context of records management, retention is the process of safekeeping documents / records /information sources in order to assure that they can properly support business functions for a reasonable amount of time. There is often a retention schedule, or period of time to safe-keep a document, attached to information sources at the university.

#### **How does one identify university records?**

Records should be identified through the process of conducting a records inventory.

**How does one keep records safe?**

The safe-keeping and proper stewardship of university records is of the utmost importance for state compliance and best business practices. Records should be stored in secure settings with a minimal exposure to risks.

**How does one organize university records?**

The organization of university records depends heavily on the format of the record. Electronic records and information sources should be arranged according to a unit level policy on hard drive storage. Alpha-numeric organization is probably the best solution for paper documents, but is somewhat limiting for an electronic environment.

**Questions about E-Mail****Is email a record?**

Whether or not any particular email message is considered a record depends on what purpose it is serving. Sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't. (For more discussion about email, find the Best Practices for Email Management document.)

**Should I keep all copies of an email?**

No. But you may want to keep an email thread and any emails not contained within the thread that provide further background information about the topic of discussion within the original email.

**What happens to emails when an employee separates from the University?**

What happens may differ from one department or campus to the next.

**Questions about Records-related Policies and Laws****How do I create a unit-level policy for managing records and other information?**

A unit-level policy for Records and Information management should be created with the input of records liaisons, unit or department directors and the university archivist. Consider first any established policies related to records and information management across the University. Build your policy to complement or augment existing policies.

**Does the University have any policies I should follow or be aware of?**

Article VI Section 4 of the University's General Rules:

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/rules.cfm#sec64>

**What laws are associated with Records Management?**

Illinois State Records Act :

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=86&ChapAct=5%C2%A0ILCS%C2%A0160%>

[2F&ChapterID=2&ChapterName=GENERAL+PROVISIONS&ActName=State+Records+Act%2E&Print=True](#)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

<http://www.registrar.illinois.edu/staff/ferpa/index.html>

Illinois HIPAA Law

<http://www.illinois.gov/hipa>

Illinois Electronic Commerce Security Act

<http://www.findlaw.com/bills/ildigital.html>