



South Dakota State Archives Records Training: The Basics

Part 2: The benefits of good records management

Welcome to the South Dakota State Archives' basic records training series, Part 2: The benefits of good records management.



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Not all records have permanent value



Difficult to find what you need



Legal discovery costs/risk



Increased vulnerability to hackers

Why can't I keep everything?

If records are so important to our work and for documenting our activities for the public, then wouldn't it be easiest to keep everything? Well, there are some good reasons to not keep all records permanently.

The sheer volume of government records that are created everyday is staggering. Storing, maintaining, and providing access to that volume of records permanently would cost a fortune.

Not all records have permanent value. Less than 5% of records created have permanent historical, legal, or documentary value – the rest are only needed for a certain period of time.

When you have overflowing file cabinets or a server filled with extra files, it can be difficult to find the records you actually need to do your job.

If your agency's records are requested as part of a court case or public records request, and the records exist somewhere in your agency, then you must produce them. This includes records that could have been destroyed in accordance with your retention schedule but were not. Producing these records can be costly and time consuming, especially if you have to retrieve them from backup tapes or sort through and copy thousands of extra documents.

If your agency collects personally identifiable information or other sensitive and confidential information about citizens, and you retain that information past when

you need it for business purposes, you are creating a very tempting target for hackers and identity thieves.

Since we can't keep everything, good records management helps us destroy records responsibly. There are other perks as well.

For You (Employees)

- Control growth of records
- Improve personal efficiency and productivity
- Ensure program continuity

Benefits of Good Records Management



For employees good records management means you control the growth of your agency's records, making things easier to find when you need them and improving your personal efficiency and productivity. Good records management also helps ensure program continuity. Ever started a new position and needed to make sense of someone else's file cabinets or digital filing system? Good records management encourages documentation of the records being created by the office and where they are kept, making for a smoother transition.

For the State

- Minimize litigation risks
- Ensure compliance with state and federal laws
- Support decision making
- Preserve institutional memory

Benefits of Good Records Management



For the State, good records management minimizes litigation risks and helps ensure that agencies are complying with state and federal recordkeeping laws. It also supports decision making by giving policymakers access to the information they need. And it preserves institutional memory so agencies can learn and benefit from past experiences.

For the Community

- Improved government transparency and accountability
- More efficient use of taxpayer money
- Access to data and information
- Regular transfer of records to the State Archives means a more complete history of the State

Benefits of Good Records Management



South Dakota citizens also benefit from improved government transparency and accountability, and more efficient use of taxpayer money. Access to State data and information can help the public make decisions about which policies and candidates to support, as well as influencing economic and community development. And regular transfer of records with permanent value to the State Archives means future generations will have a more complete picture of the history of our State.

Have questions?
Contact:

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Thank you for joining us for part two of our series. If you have questions, please contact Sara Casper at the State Archives.