

Office of Personnel Management
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Email Management Annual Notice (FY-2014)



This policy applies to all staff, contractors, interns and volunteers of OPM who receives or generates email records while executing their official duties.

Employees of OPM should be aware that emails are subject to FOIA requests and legal discovery when a lawsuit is pending. Should emails that are a subject of a FOIA request or legal discovery be deleted intentionally or negligently, OPM may face severe court sanctions and could be subject to criminal charges.

The OPM's, email management policy are related to the:

- Official email system use policy;
- Records management policy;
- Electronic records management policy;
- Web content management policy; and
- Document imaging policy.

Other policies that are closely related to the email management policy are the:

- Information security policy that is managed by the security manger;
- Internet usage policy that is managed by the IT manger; and the
- Promotion of access to information policy that is managed by the Chief Information Officer.

Emails that are evidence of the business transactions of OPM are Federal records and must be managed and kept for as long as they are required for functional and/or historical purposes.

Emails that approve an action, authorize an action, contain guidance, advice or direction, relate to projects and activities being undertaken, and external stakeholders, represent formal business communication between staff, contain policy decisions, etc. should be managed as records and should be filed into the file plan. This policy covers the email message itself as well as any attachments that meet these criteria.

An email message is a record if it:

1. contains unique, valuable information developed in preparing position papers, reports, studies, etc.
2. reflects significant actions taken in the course of conducting business
3. conveys unique, valuable information about OPM's programs, policies, decisions, or essential actions
4. conveys statements of policy or the rationale for decisions or actions

5. documents oral exchanges (in person or by telephone), during which policy is formulated or other business activities are planned or transacted
6. adds to the proper understanding of the formulation or execution of OPM's actions or of OPM's operations and responsibilities
7. documents important meetings
8. facilitates action by OPM's officials and their successors in office
9. makes possible a proper scrutiny by the Comptroller-General or other duly authorized agents of the government
10. protects the financial, legal, and other rights of the OPM and of the persons directly affected by the OPM's actions
11. approves or authorizes actions or expenditure
12. constitutes a formal communication between staff e.g. correspondence or memoranda relating to official business
13. signifies a policy change or development
14. creates a precedent e.g. by issuing an instruction or advice
15. involves negotiations on behalf of the OPM
16. has value for other people or the OPM as a whole

Emails that contain the following do not need to be filed:

1. meeting announcements
2. announcements of employees' absences or schedules
3. changes in telephone numbers or office locations
4. meeting arrangements that normally would have been done by telephone
5. copies of memoranda or text sent for information rather than action
6. messages that have only temporary value such as a message that a meeting time has changed
7. messages that contain no evidence of OPM's functions and activities
8. duplicate information already documented in existing records

By managing email records effectively and efficiently OPM strives to give effect to the actability, transparency and service delivery values contained in the legal framework established by: The National Archives and Records Administration, OPM Recordkeeping Policy, the Federal Records Act as Amended; OMB A-130; CFR 36 and 44 USC.