



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY**

**2023–2026 RECORDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC
PLAN**

September 27, 2022

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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Records Management Program Strategic Plan has a four-year planning horizon and will be revisited annually. Regular reviews and updates will reflect the need for the DOE Records Management Program to keep up with the ever-changing technological and records and information management landscape.

A robust and fully compliant Records Management Program helps ensure that the Department fulfills its various missions, while simultaneously protecting Federal records and preserving the Department's history. DOE employees and contractors are obligated to protect and maintain Federal records consistent with Federal laws, statutes, regulations, directives, and DOE policy.

Federal records are created when DOE employees and contractors make or receive recorded information, regardless of form or characteristic, under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by the Department as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, and other activities of the U.S. Government or because of the information value of data in them [44 U.S.C. 3301]. Everyone at DOE has a role in making sure records are created, maintained, used, and dispositioned consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and DOE policy. Information about the Records Management Program and the Federal employee and contractor responsibilities under it can be found in DOE Order 243.1C, *Records Management Program*.

The Federal records environment at DOE is complex and diverse. The origins of the DOE can be traced back to the Manhattan Project of the 1940s and the race to develop an atomic bomb during World War II. As a result, Federal records stored and managed by DOE are divided into Records Groups:

0138 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	0388 Southeastern Power Administration
0201 Western Area Power Administration	0430 Energy Research and Development Admin
0305 Bonneville Power Administration	0434 General Records of the DOE
0326 Atomic Energy Commission	0447 Alaska Power Administration
0387 Southwestern Power Administration	

The DOE Records Management Strategic Plan is designed to be forward-looking and transformative. It emphasizes the importance of modernizing our approach to records management, enabling us to better protect and secure the Department's records and information. The Department is committed to the continuous improvement of the management and security of our Federal records as set forth in the following statutes and directives:

- *Presidential and Federal Records Act Amendments of 2014*, Pub.L. 113-187
- *Federal Records Act of 1950*, as amended, 44 U.S.C. chapters 29, 31 and 33
- *Records Management*, 36 CFR Subchapter B
- *Transition to Electronic Records*, OMB M-19-21
- *National Archives and Records Administration 2022-2026 Strategic Plan*
- *DOE's Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan, 2019-2022*
- *Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794d)*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The *Department of Energy Organization Act of 1977* created one of the most diverse agencies in the Federal Government. Activated on October 1, 1977, the twelfth cabinet-level Department brought together for the first time within one agency two programmatic traditions that had long coexisted within the Federal establishment: 1) defense responsibilities that included the design, construction, and testing of nuclear weapons dating from the Manhattan Project effort to build the atomic bomb, and 2) a loosely knit amalgamation of energy-related programs scattered throughout the Federal Government.

SECURITY AND PROSPERITY THROUGH WORLD-CLASS SCIENCE

Over its 45-year history, the Department of Energy has shifted its emphasis and focus as the needs of the nation have changed. During the late 1970s, the Department emphasized energy development and regulation. In the 1980s, nuclear weapons research, development, and production took a priority. With the end of the Cold War, the Department focused on environmental cleanup of the nuclear weapons complex, nonproliferation, and stewardship of the nuclear stockpile.

Since the 2000s, the Department's priority has been ensuring the nation's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges through science and technology solutions. The Department has sought to transform the nation's energy system and secure leadership in clean energy technologies, pursue world-class science and engineering as a cornerstone of economic prosperity, and enhance nuclear security through defense, nonproliferation, and environmental efforts.

INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (IRM) STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

The DOE Records Management program supports the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and strives to meet the Department of Energy Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan goals. In particular, Goal 4.5 of the IRM drives many of the Records Management Community's goals and objectives.

4.5 MODERNIZE THE DEPARTMENT'S FEDERAL RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO ACHIEVE ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT TO THE FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE

The Department is transitioning to fully-electronic recordkeeping in accordance with the objectives of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, which includes, to the fullest extent possible, plans to no longer transfer permanent or temporary records in analog formats to NARA after 2022. The Department will transition its Federal recordkeeping to a fully-electronic environment in order to reduce costs and create efficiencies, while increasing appropriate and timely access to records and information. Included in this effort is an enterprise digital signature strategy and enterprise-level business process redesign, to ensure all Federal records and information processes are born digital and remain digital throughout the records lifecycle.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT MISSION

The DOE Enterprise Records Management Community’s mission is to develop, implement, and manage an agency-wide, comprehensive, integrated, and systematic Records and Information Management approach. Records Management at DOE must:

- Comply with the Federal laws, statutes, and policies
- Safeguard the Department’s Federal records by guiding the management, access, retention, storage, protection, and disposition of those assets
- Provide consultative and operational assistance to all components concerning their records management, retention, disposition, and secure information management practices

Individual DOE Element decisions are guided by the following tenets:

- Compliance with Federal laws, statutes, and policies
- Adherence to Departmental policies and procedures
- Accountability when handling Departmental records and information
- Efficient, effective, and ethical management of the Department’s records and information
- Consistency with professional standards and practices

VISION

DOE Records Management Community works to transition the Department to an all-electronic records management environment through information sharing, technology leadership, and collaboration. The Records Management community advances the modernization of records management while protecting the Department’s records, preserving the Department’s history, and promoting accountability and public understanding of the Department’s activities through documentation, preservation, and professional records management.

CORE VALUES



STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Improve the management of records in support of DOE's mission, in compliance with the *Federal Records Act* and in accordance with OMB M-19-21, *Transition to Electronic Records* (June 28, 2019).

The Records Management (RM) Program's primary goal is to support the RM Community to ensure DOE has access to records it needs to fulfill its mission, and to make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of DOE's organizations, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions.

- Objective 1.1 – Promote and excel in the fundamentals of records management practices. Show continuous improvement in the Department's handling of Federal records according to DOE O 243.1C, *Records Management*.
- Objective 1.2 – Consolidate and update DOE records control schedules. Records schedules must be media neutral, cross walked to the General Records Schedule (GRS), and written to support the DOE Mission.
- Objective 1.3 – Develop a plan to close all DOE-operated records storage facilities and transfer or digitize inactive, temporary paper records to Federal Records Centers or commercial records storage facilities (OMB M-19-21, Sect. I (1.1)).
- Objective 1.4 – Understand and document the records landscape at DOE by inventorying records across the Department, whether electronic or paper, and consolidating all file plans into an enterprise-wide file plan.
- Objective 1.5 – Implement controls to aid in the management of historical records collections throughout the Department. Conduct an inventory of all archives, libraries, and historical records collections within the Department that are holding permanent records. Create plans to accession the permanent records to the National Archives. Coordinate with DOE classification offices before the classified collections are transferred. Establish and foster open communication and collaboration with agency historians, librarians and archivists on Federal records management requirements, responsibilities, and initiatives.
- Objective 1.6 – Include Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) requirements in electronic records management solutions, including future drafts of file plans and system inventories created to support records management across the Department.

GOAL 2: Invest in our workforce by providing training, information, and consistent, compliant, and comprehensive records management services Department-wide.

The DOE RM Program works to ensure the Department's records management responsibilities, policies, and procedures are understood by DOE Federal employees and contractors through education and training opportunities and conveyed to our network of RM community professionals through communication and outreach. The RM Program invests in our records community by ensuring all members with RM roles throughout the Department are provided with the resources, expertise, and support needed to manage records effectively and efficiently.

- Objective 2.1 – Ensure that proper RM training is in place and required annually to support records management roles and responsibilities, and to ensure RM principles are properly understood and executed throughout the Department.
- Objective 2.2 – Develop and deliver effective RM training and materials to DOE personnel and other stakeholders through targeted outreach and communication, role-based training, RM working groups, and site visits to ensure common RM practices are well known, understood, and applied to the Department’s records to increase the successful execution of RM.
- Objective 2.3 – Support and promote teamwork within the records community to extend RM expertise, awareness, and outreach to DOE employees. Collaborate together to foster a culture of understanding the value of RM. Provide targeted assistance to employees, including file plan development and usage, records schedule use, preparation of records for disposition, the accessibility requirements for electronic records, and migration to electronic records management.

GOAL 3: Establish and maintain an electronic records management lifecycle environment to the fullest extent possible in accordance with OMB M-19-21, *Transition to Electronic Records* (June 28, 2019).

To maintain an active and compliant enterprise RM program that supports the DOE Mission, the DOE RM program must promote and advance the management of electronic records across the DOE enterprise. DOE is taking a decentralized approach to RM that fosters electronic records management compliance through creativity, innovation, and collaboration with internal and external partners.

Our objective is to identify an integrated approach to electronic records management that preserves the integrity of our records, protects the Department against loss, is sustainable throughout the records lifecycle, and manages records in accordance with applicable Federal law and statutes, regulations, directives, and policies.

- Objective 3.1 – Manage all records in electronic format, regardless of temporary or permanent records status, to the fullest extent possible (OMB M-19-21, Sect. I (1.1), Sect. I (1.2), and Sect I (1.3)). Monitor progress through annual reporting on the status of DOE Element efforts to establish a fully electronic records management environment. Efforts to meet this objective should include transferring permanent electronic records with NARA-required metadata, and implementation of automated or semi-automated record disposition where feasible and defensible.
- Objective 3.2 – DOE will use the NARA Universal Electronic Records Management (UERM) requirements for all electronic information systems. Ensure that the associated requirements of the UERM are included in all new systems requirements traceability matrix (RTM) during the system development lifecycle (SDLC). Identify, assess, and work with DOE HQ and Elements to schedule and apply lifecycle controls to legacy IT systems, file shares, and storage locations to ensure compliance. This effort includes partnering with IT service providers to identify legacy systems, and to update or migrate systems to a new baseline enabling the preservation, scheduling, and proper disposition of Federal records.
- Objective 3.3 – Create and/or update an inventory of all DOE electronic information systems to ensure electronic records stored within the systems are captured, categorized, and dispositioned in accordance with DOE Records Control Schedules.
- Objective 3.4 – Provide guidance, documentation, and steps for activities needed to complete electronic records management within each DOE organization. This includes, but is not limited to,

checklists and roadmaps to assist elements with managing records in accordance with UERM requirements.

GOAL 4: Empower the DOE Records Community to improve the management of records and reduce risk through modernized paperless business processes, the application of technology, and site assistance.

- Objective 4.1 – Ensure that the RM program is an active participant in leadership discussions and is consulted in areas where technical innovation must include RM functionality, promoting the success of records management for our customers and partners.
- Objective 4.2 – Promote records management best practices in the establishment of new digital business processes and electronic records management technologies. Promulgate digitization standards and guidance in accordance with NARA requirements for permanent and temporary records. Provide guidance and documentation on managing electronic records in accordance with UERM. Incorporate and promulgate requirements from NARA regarding the management of electronic records.
- Objective 4.3 – Target the improvement of DOE essential records management through the establishment of a subject matter expert with authorities for providing administrative and technical guidance, introducing new technologies involving the implementation of a robust, modernized DOE Essential Records Program.

CONCLUSION

This 5-year Records Management Strategic Plan was developed as a measurable and practical plan for ensuring that the Department of Energy manages its records in accordance with Federal laws, regulations, and DOE policy. It will serve as the guiding light for the next 5 years of records management activities across the Department. The RM Strategic Plan is instrumental in continuing excellence in records management, especially in relation to electronic records. A Plan of Action will be created and published in support of this Strategic Plan, and will provide concrete, measurable activities to meet these goals. For more information about records management or this plan, please contact doerm@hq.doe.gov.

GLOSSARY

CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION. Information that is identified and safeguarded under Executive Order (E.O.) 13556, Controlled Unclassified Information. E.O. 13556 mandates a Government-wide uniform program to identify and protect sensitive but unclassified information.

DISPOSITION. Any activity with respect to the disposal of temporary records no longer needed for the conduct of business by destruction or donation; the transfer of records to Federal agency storage facilities or records centers; the transfer to the National Archives of the United States of records determined to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation (44 U.S.C. 2901(5)).

ELECTRONIC RECORD. Electronic record means any information that is recorded in a form that only a computer can process and that satisfies the definition of a Federal record under the Federal Records Act. The term includes both record content and associated metadata that the agency determines is required to meet agency business needs (36 CFR 1220.18).

ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT (ERM). Functionality to support records collection, organization, categorization, storage of electronic records, metadata, and location of physical records, retrieval, use, and disposition (National Archives).

ESSENTIAL RECORD. Records an agency needs to meet operational responsibilities under national security emergencies or other emergency conditions (emergency operating records) or to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and those affected by Government activities (legal and financial rights records). Previously referred to as vital records (36 CFR 1223.2b, NARA Essential Records Guide).

FILE PLAN. The basic structure in records management that groups together records with similar characteristics. File plans can be a subset of the entire DOE/GRS record schedule series that would be specific to an organization, project, program, or location within an agency. At a minimum, a file plan includes the series, description, disposition instruction (retention) and authority, and other specific instructions that provide guidance for effective management of records (e.g., identifying number, title, organization, locations) (36 CFR Chapter XII subchapter B, 36 CFR 1220.34(i), and 36 CFR 1225.12(b)).

GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULE. Records schedules issued by the Archivist of the United States to provide disposition authorization for records common to several or all agencies of the Federal Government.

METADATA. Preserved contextual information describing the history, tracking, and/or management of an electronic document (36 CFR 1220.18).

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (NARA). An independent agency of the United States Government charged with the preservation and documentation of government and historical records. It is also tasked with increasing public access to those documents which make up the National Archives (National Archives).

PERMANENT RECORDS. Any federal record that has been determined by NARA to have sufficient value to warrant its preservation in the National Archives of the United States, even while it remains in agency custody. The term also includes all records accessioned by NARA into the National Archives of the United States (36 CFR 1220.18).

RECORDS. Includes 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 and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor 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 data in them (44 U.S.C. 3301 and 36 CFR 1220.18).

RECORDS MANAGEMENT. Planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved with respect to records creation, records maintenance and use, and records disposition in order to achieve adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the Federal Government and effective and economical management of Agency operations (44 U.S.C. 2901(2)).

RECORDS SCHEDULE. This identifies records as either temporary or permanent. All records schedules must be approved by NARA. A records schedule provides mandatory instructions for the disposition of the records (including the transfer of permanent records and disposal of temporary records) when they are no longer needed by the agency. As part of the ongoing records life cycle, disposition should occur in the normal course of agency business. Federal records must be scheduled (44 U.S.C. 3303) either by an agency schedule or a General Records Schedule (GRS).

SCHEDULE. A request for disposition authority approved by NARA to authorize the disposition of Federal records. The DOE records disposition schedules are posted on the DOE Chief Information Officer Records Management web page.

TEMPORARY RECORDS. Federal records NARA approves for either immediate disposal or for disposal after a specified time or event (36 CFR 1220.18).

ACRONYMS & REFERENCES

Acronym	Meaning
CUI	Controlled Unclassified Information
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
ERM	Electronic Records Management
GRS	General Records Schedules
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
RM	Records Management
UERM	Universal Electronic Records Management Requirements

Reference	Comment
36 CFR Chapter XII	Established the National Archives and Records Administration
21st Century IDEA	Integrated Digital Experience Act
44 U.S.C. Chapters 29 , 31 and 33	Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended
DOE Order 243.1C	DOE Policy on the Records Management Program
Delivering Government solutions in the 21st Century	President’s Management Agenda: Reform Plan and Reorganization Recommendations
M-19-21	OMB Memorandum: Transition to Electronic Records
NARA 2022-2026 Strategic Plan	National Archives and Records Administration Strategic Plan
OMB Circular A-130	Managing Federal Information as a Strategic Resource