

No:	CL002	Type:	Enterprise Records Directive
Department:	Office of the City Clerk		
Date:	12/03/08	Approval:	



Electronic Records

I. Purpose

Using well-designed electronic information systems can improve City services to the citizenry and staff. However, if the need for such systems to create and maintain reliable records is not considered when they are initially evaluated or designed, it can be expensive, or even impossible, to deal with the problem later.

Developing electronic information systems that are effective and efficient in servicing the public and staff requires understanding of an offices business processes, available technology to support those business processes, and understanding of recordkeeping principles and regulations. Unless all three forms of knowledge are brought together, the office, the City, and the public will not be as well served as they should be. The foundation for developing effective and efficient electronic information systems is a sound electronic records policy and its implementation.

The purpose of this directive is to ensure that public records in electronic format are preserved, maintained, and remain accessible for the life cycle of the record.

II. Departments Affected

All Departments.

III. Definitions & Legal Citations

Electronic record means a representation of a record of a local governmental entity in electronic format containing information, knowledge, facts, concepts or instructions which is being prepared or has been formally prepared and is intended to be processed, is being processed or has been processed in a system or network. (NAC 239.035, NRS 239.125, 378.255)

Records management means the systematic control and management of information throughout the life cycle of the information, including, without limitation, the creation, use, maintenance, retention and ultimate disposition of the information. (NAC 239.106, NRS 239.125, 378.255)

Series of records means records that are kept or filed in a unified or sequential arrangement, having similar characteristics or relating to a similar function or activity. (NAC 239.121, NRS 239.125, 378.255)

IV. Procedures

In planning and implementing electronic information systems, preference shall be given to open standards and facilitating interoperability.

In addition, all electronic records creation and maintenance in respect to City business, whether through acquisition of equipment, software and in-house creation, or through out-sourcing, shall conform to these procedures.

The existence of any current electronic information system that does not conform to these procedures requires that a plan be made, budgeted for, and implemented, to bring it into conformity. All departments shall work with the Enterprise Records Management Division, and the Department of Information Technologies to ensure current and proposed systems conform to these procedures.

- A. Unless the system functions purely as an information system, is so designated in written departmental policies and procedures, and is not used to perform actual City business transactions, all electronic information systems must:
 1. Create or capture and identify records sufficient to support the business process, including meeting all recordkeeping requirements.
 2. Function as a recordkeeping system, or have the ability to transfer records to a recordkeeping system.
- B. All electronic recordkeeping systems must:
 1. Be able to maintain electronic records that are accessible, accurate, authentic, reliable, legible, and readable throughout the record life cycle, which include maintaining a records content, structure, and context.
 2. Be administered in line with best practices in information resources management to ensure the reliability of the records. Best practices in information resources management include, but are not limited to:
 - a. The recordkeeping system is used consistently in the normal course of business.
 - b. The records maintained by the electronic recordkeeping system are designated as the copy of record and redundant systems discontinued.
 - c. Written policies and procedures defining normal operations for the maintenance and use of the system are developed and followed. The trustworthiness of the records may be judged by the adequacy of its procedures and how well the procedures are followed. The policies and procedures must be kept up-to-date and should include:
 - the methods used to create, modify, duplicate, and destroy records.
 - the roles and responsibilities of the individuals involved in record creation, maintenance, and destruction.
 - the quality control procedures, typical problem resolutions, and other activities that might otherwise subject the system to inconsistent action or misinterpretation.
 - the purpose and uses of the system.
 - Established policies and procedures demonstrate the intent of any agency to manage and control the process or system.

- d. Training and user support are adequate to ensure system procedures are understood and will be correctly and consistently implemented by users.
 - e. Adequate system controls are in place to ensure the quality and reliability of the records in the system, including, but not limited to: provision for audit trails, routine tests of system performance, routine tests of hardware and software reliability, and security procedures to prevent unauthorized use.
 - f. A disaster recovery plan is in place.
 - g. Comprehensive system documentation on all aspects of system design, implementation, maintenance, and oversight is created and maintained including: documentation describing how the system operates and describing the nature of the records within it is retained for at least as long as any records that depends upon the system for access is retained.
- C. In planning and budgeting for implementing any electronic system it must be taken into account that:
- 1. One of the most costly parts of implementing any electronic system is labor.
 - a. Unless labor costs are planned and budgeted for to take full advantage of the possibilities provided by hardware and software, the investment in equipment is unlikely to be worthwhile.
 - b. Planning and budgeting for labor must include providing sufficient training and ensuring adequate ongoing access to support. A system will only be used satisfactorily if there is sufficient understanding of it within the department using it.
 - 2. Acquiring an electronic information system is not a one-time cost. Maintaining the hardware and software for a system tends to cost between 10% and 20% of the initial cost per year.
 - 3. Electronic information systems are consumable tools, not permanent solutions. Implementing an electronic information system means committing to a dynamic environment. It should be assumed that maintaining business efficiency in an electronic environment requires regularly replacing the system or elements of the system, at a minimum every five years and preferably every three.
 - 4. As a result of the dynamism of the electronic environment, implementing a system must include planning for continued access to the records it produces. An ongoing budgetary commitment to maintaining access to those records produces cost implications which may increase over time.
 - 5. Creation of records in an electronic environment requires planning and budgeting for offsite storage of backup copies in a facility meeting appropriate national standards for security and environmental control.
 - 6. Creation of records with a retention of six years or more in an electronic environment requires planning and budgeting for those records to be exported to an eye-readable format at an appropriate point in the business process. For records for which this is impossible (e.g. GIS; multi-media), or for which there is a business process rationale to maintain access to the electronic version in addition, there must be procedures to refresh and migrate them on an appropriate timetable.

- 7. Creation of records with a retention of less than six years in an electronic environment requires planning and budgeting for their migration to successive iterations of the system, or for other means of ensuring their accessibility until their full retention period has expired.
 - 8. Assurance that the proposed plan for implementation of a system will provide access to records for the full required period is a fundamental consideration in determining whether it is in the City's interest to adopt it.
 - 9. Providing for appropriate public access to records must be considered when planning and operating electronic systems.
- D. In order to adequately safeguard rights and ensure accountability, only electronic information systems, or their constituent parts, acquired in conformity with these procedures may be used to conduct City business. Personal electronic equipment or software may not be used to create City records.

Attest:

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