

General Schedule 6 - Electronic/Information Technology Records

State General Schedules are intended as minimum standards. Where other state or federal laws dictate longer retentions, agencies must submit "agency specific" schedules for approval. Intended for State agency use. Municipalities/Counties use [Local Government Record Retention Schedules](#).

NOTE: There is no single retention period that applies to all electronic messages or communications, whether they are sent by email, instant messaging, text messaging, multimedia messaging, chat messaging, social networking, voice mail/voice messaging, or any other current or future electronic messaging technology or device. Retention periods are determined by the content, nature, and purpose of records, and are based on their legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical values, regardless of the format in which they reside or the method by which they are transmitted. Electronic communications, as with records in other formats, can have a variety of purposes and relate to a variety of program functions and activities. The retention of any particular electronic message will generally be the same as the retention for records in any other format that document the same program function or activity. For instance, electronic communications would typically fall under the State Correspondence Schedule.

Series	Title	Description	Retention
GS6.1	Data Documentation (Metadata)	Records (sometimes known as metadata) generally created during system or application development or modification and necessary to access, retrieve, manipulate, and interpret data in an automated system, that explain the meaning, purpose, structure, logical relationships, and origin of the data elements. May include: data element dictionary, file layout, codebook or table, and other records that explain the meaning, purpose, structure, logical relationships, and origin of the data elements.	Retain 3 years after discontinuance of system or application, but not before system or application data is destroyed or transferred to a new structure or format.
GS6.2	Digitization and Scanning Files	These are records that are being scanned for the purpose of the entire record being captured in another format. Anytime agencies are planning to scan records into an electronic management system, the State Archives should be notified and approve the system being used for retention purposes. Only those records on approved schedules and those records which are non-archival are eligible for "scanning and tossing."	Source documents: For new programs, retain source documents for 1 year then destroy; established scanning programs, retain source documents until verified/indexed; archival documents, retain permanently Scanned electronic documents: Retain according to retention schedules and purge accordingly

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GS6.3	Email Messages	Email messages are similar to other forms of communicated messages, such as correspondence, memoranda, and circular letters. Email messages also contain features commonly associated with traditional records systems, including calendars, directories, distribution lists, and attachments such as word processing documents, spreadsheets, or images that are incorporated into an email message.	Retain according to Schedule 5 or another approved agency correspondence schedule.
GS6.4	Help Desk Telephone Logs and Reports	Records, including records generated from automated help desk ticketing systems, used to document requests for technical assistance and responses to these requests as well as to collect information on the use of computer equipment for program delivery, security, or other purposes.	Retain 1 year after creation then destroy.
GS6.5	Network Site/Equipment Support Files	Records documenting support services provided to specific sites and computer-to-computer interfaces on a network, including site visit reports, trouble reports, service histories, and correspondence and memoranda.	Retain site visit reports, trouble reports, and routine correspondence 3 years after creation then destroy. Retain service histories and other summary records after the related equipment or site is no longer in use. Destroy all records after retention has been met.
GS6.6	Services and Order Requests, Telecommunications	Requests by state agencies for telephone service, installation or repairs, and responses to the requests. May include requests for voicemail, network and data circuit services and other telecommunications services.	Retain for 3 years after request is filled or repairs are made then destroy

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GS6.7	Social Media Records	<p>Social media refers to the various activities integrating web technology, social interaction, and user-generated content. Agencies use social media internally and externally to share routine agency information, support their business processes, and connect the public to state government. Social media includes blogs, microblogs (Twitter), video sites (YouTube, TikTok), image sharing services (Flickr, Instagram), networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), and other interactive sites.</p> <p>NOTE: Maine State Archives recommends all agencies who use social media develop policies and procedures for regular identification, retention and capture of social media records. MSA is currently working on a pilot project for automated capture of social media records. Until/if this is something which can be utilized as a state-wide program, each agency is responsible for the management of their social media records.</p>	<p>If the information posted or received on a social media platform documents government business, the post is likely a government record. Agencies need to retain posts which are public records for at least the minimum retention period listed for those records in approved records retention schedules. If the information in a post exists elsewhere or it is not the official record copy, then it may be duplicate information with no retention requirements. If a post simply points to external resources, it may be transitory information and can be deleted as soon as the agency purpose has been served.</p>
GS6.8	Summary Computer/Network Usage Reports	<p>Summary reports and other records created to document computer and network usage for reporting or cost recovery purposes.</p>	<p>Retain 3 years then destroy</p>
GS6.9	Summary or Extracted Data Files	<p>Summary or aggregate data from a master file or database, including “snapshots” of data, created solely to distribute data to individuals or program units for reference and use, but not altered or augmented to support program-specific needs.</p>	<p>Retain until after data is distributed and, if necessary, receipt is acknowledged then destroy.</p>
GS6.10	Websites	<p>Agency websites provide access to records that document an agency's duties and activities. Websites may be static with content added and removed on a regular schedule or they may be interactive and dynamic where content is pulled together at the user's request from data in agency databases. Records commonly found on agency websites include: publications, meeting minutes, annual reports, photos, press releases, maps, organizational charts, policies and procedures, and mission statements. Websites may also serve as access points for data in agency databases. Agencies need to analyze the content of their websites and inventory the records that are found on the site to confirm duplicate data found elsewhere and what records are unique, requiring an agency retention schedule.</p>	<p>Retain duplicate copies of records until no longer needed by the agency then destroy. Retain official records as determined by approved agency retention schedules (those not captured elsewhere). Any archival publications on the web as defined by Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 501-A must be sent to the Maine State Library.</p>