



Ministry of Government  
and Consumer Services

Information, Privacy and Archives

# **Records and Information Management (RIM) 102: Managing Public Records in the OPS**

Tuesday January 13, 2015  
OPS RIM Day Soft Launch

# Learning Objectives

At the end of this training, you will understand:

1. What good records management is;
2. How good records management will benefit you;
3. What your records management obligations are; and
4. How to manage your records simply and effectively.

# What is Good Records Management?



- Good records management means:
  - Knowing the difference between business and transitory records;
  - Saving your business records in the right place for the right amount of time; and
  - Destroying your transitory records when no longer needed.
- You already manage records everyday when you make, receive and save records like Word documents, PowerPoint slide decks, paper notes and emails.
  - To practice good records management, you only need to tune up what you are already doing.

# How Will Good Records Management Benefit You?



- Have you ever experienced any of the following:
  - You can't find the policy document you're working on because you can't remember where you saved it?
  - You're working on a project with a colleague but neither of you are certain which is the most recent version?
  - You have 1000 emails in your inbox but you can't find the one you need?
  - You accidentally misplaced an important paper document amongst the piles of paper on your desk and you're worried that you may have accidentally shredded it?
- Many of us have!
- Good records management is a simple and easy solution to these frustrating, time-wasting situations.

# Good Records Management Improves Your Efficiency and Effectiveness



- Managing your records properly will:
  - **Help you to do your job better:** You will be able to find the records you need efficiently, making it easier to get work done and collaborate with colleagues;
  - **Support you:** You will have records that provide evidence of actions and reasons for decision-making;
  - **Save you time:** You will be able to find records quickly and reuse valuable work that you or someone has done in the past; and
  - **Provide you with records you can rely on:** You will be able to identify the correct and authoritative versions of records.

# Good Records Management Supports Your Compliance with Law and Policy



- Under the *Archives and Recordkeeping Act, 2006* (“ARA”), all public bodies (e.g., ministry or designated agency, board or commission) are required to manage their public records in accordance with records schedules approved by the Archivist of Ontario.
  - Public records made or received by public bodies in carrying out their activities.
  - This supports government transparency, openness and accountability.
- All OPS staff are required to manage their records in accordance with the *Corporate Policy for Recordkeeping*.
  - This supports the creation of authentic, reliable, enduring and useable business records in support of business functions and activities.

# Managing Records is an Everyday Part of Your Job



- Good records management is not a one time event – it should be an everyday part of your work routine, like checking your email or changing your voicemail greeting.
- Once you understand the basics of records management, it will become second-nature.
- It takes more time to find records that are disorganized and poorly managed than it does to manage them properly.

# RIM 101 Review

- There are two categories of public records:

<b>Business Records</b>	<b>Transitory Records</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have ongoing value or usefulness to support business operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have no ongoing value or usefulness beyond an immediate and minor transaction or the preparation of a subsequent record.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet legal or fiscal obligations; or</li> <li>Document, support or direct government decision-making, policy development, activities or operations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not required to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet legal or fiscal obligations; or</li> <li>Document, support or direct government decision-making, policy development, activities or operations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# RIM 101 Review (Continued)

- Public records can exist in any format or media:
  - Electronic records, such as Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, and emails; and
  - Paper records, such as handwritten notes, printed documents and notebooks.
- Public records may be created, sent or received using:
  - Outlook accounts;
  - Laptops and PCs;
  - Blackberries;
  - iPads and Windows tablet devices; and
  - Any other government-issued or personal information technology devices.
- You must manage all of your public records in accordance with your ministry's records schedule and the *Corporate Policy on Recordkeeping* regardless of format, media or how they were sent or received.

# Three Key Steps for Good Records Management



1. Identify the record – is it business or transitory?
2. Save business records in the shared repository.
3. Destroy transitory records when no longer needed.

# Step 1: Identify the Record

- **Was the record made or received in the course of carrying out your ministry's activities?**
  - If YES, the record is a public record.
  - If NO, the record is not a public record.
- **Does the record:**
  - Have ongoing value or usefulness to support business operations?
  - Need to be kept to:
    - Meet legal or fiscal obligations? Or
    - Document, support or direct government decision-making, policy development, activities or operations?
  - If YES to ANY of these questions, the record is a business record and must be saved.
  - If NO to ALL of these questions, the record is a transitory record.

# Step 2: Save the Business Records in the Shared Repository

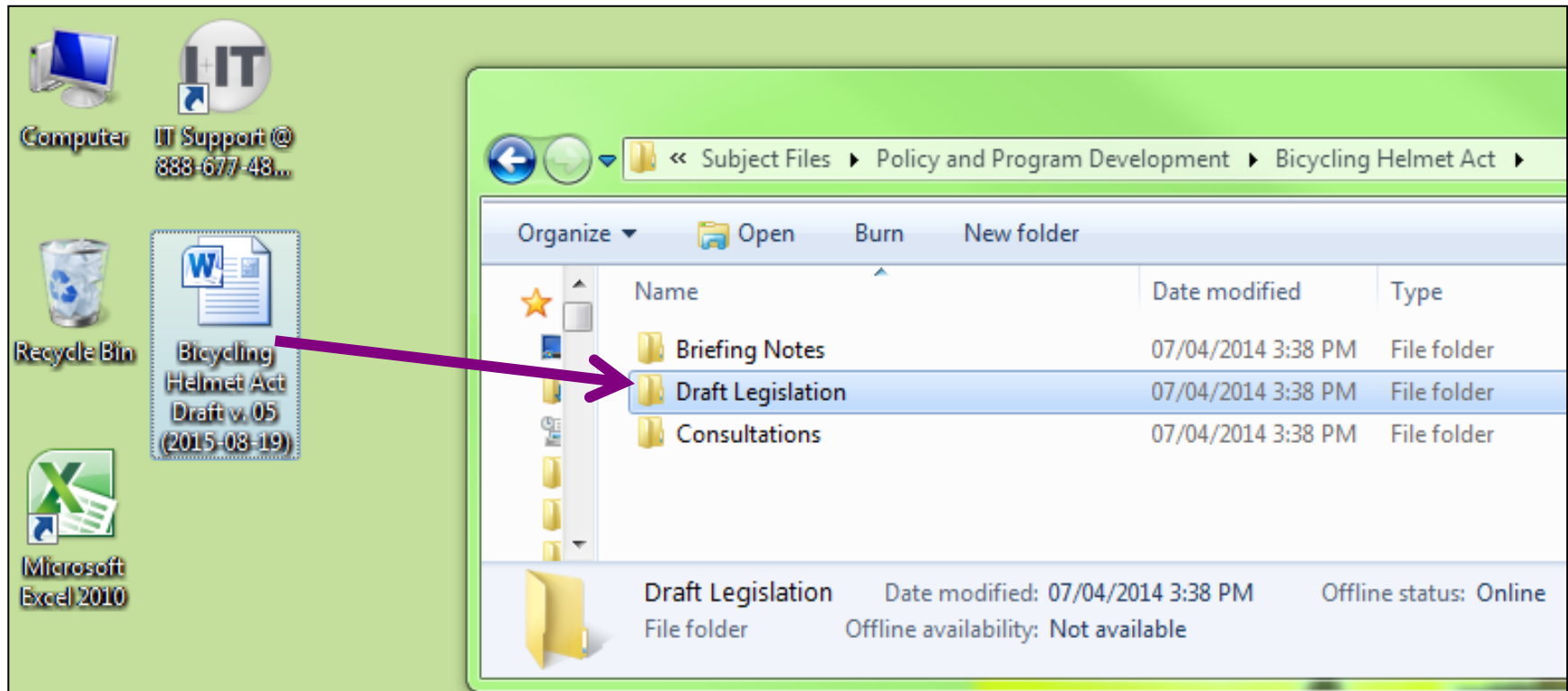


- Pursuant to the *Corporate Policy on Recordkeeping*, all business records, including email records, must be saved in your ministry's shared repository (e.g., shared network drive and filing cabinets).
  - Save your records in the right place by reviewing your program area's file classification plan.
    - This ensures that records that relate to the same subject, issue or activity are stored together.
  - Name your records using a standard file naming convention.
    - This will make it much easier to identify the right record and right version.

# How to Name Your Records

- To name your file, use:
  - A brief and meaningful description of the subject matter;
  - The type of record;
  - Version; and
  - Date created (YYYY-MM-DD).
- Example:
  - ✓ Bicycling Safety Helmet Act Briefing Note v. 03 (2015-06-06)
  - ✗ NOT: Legislation Note.doc
- Tip: Change the version of a record if you make changes to it after sending it to colleagues.

# Click, Drag and Drop Electronic Records into the Shared Drive



# How to Manage Your Email Records



- Email messages that are business records (including attachments) must be saved in the shared repository.
- Set aside time for managing your emails daily or weekly – don't let it pile up.
- Delete transitory emails as soon as possible – don't wait!
- Create Outlook folders for each subject, topic or activity and sort your emails containing business records as soon as you receive or send them.
- Write a meaningful subject line and keep to one topic to make emails easier to classify and file.
- Be sparing with group mail and replying to all – send only to the people who need to know or take action.
- Delete “CC” or “BCC” that are FYIs or for convenience only.

# You've Saved the Business Record – Now What?



- Your ministry's records schedule specifies how long you must retain your business records and how you must dispose of them (i.e., transfer to the Archives of Ontario or destroy).
- Each program area should have a records contact who is familiar with the requirements of your ministry's records schedule.
- Before destroying any business record, consult with the records contact for your program area to ensure:
  - It has reached the end of its retention period;
  - It has a disposition of destroy; and
  - There is no reason why the disposition may not be carried out, such as a legal request for records (e.g., FOI request, legal discovery, etc.)



# Step 3: Destroy Your Transitory Records



- You should securely destroy your transitory records when they are no longer needed using methods appropriate to their level of sensitivity in accordance with the [Information Security and Privacy Classification Policy and Operating Procedures](#).
- Transitory paper records that contain sensitive information should be shredded.
- **Before destroying transitory records, ask: Is the transitory record subject to a legal request for records?**
  - If YES, the transitory record must not be destroyed and must be saved.
  - If NO, the transitory record can be destroyed.

# What Happens to my Records if I Leave my Ministry or the OPS?



- The public records you make and receive are the property of the Crown and belong to your ministry.
- When you leave your ministry or the OPS, your records must remain in the ministry.
- Before you leave, you should ensure:
  - All transitory records are destroyed, unless the records are responsive to a legal request for records (e.g., FOI request or litigation hold);
  - All business records (including emails) are saved in the appropriate folder in the shared repositories; and
  - Your colleagues are aware of the location of business records in the shared repositories.

# Good Records Management: Summary



1. Identify the record – is it business or transitory?
  2. Save business records in the shared repository.
    - Follow your program area’s file classification plan
    - Properly name your records – title, date and version
    - Check with your manager or records management contact before destroying business records
    - Manage your email records on a regular basis
  3. Destroy transitory records when no longer needed.
    - Use methods appropriate to their level of sensitivity
    - Make sure transitory records are not subject to a legal request for records before destroying them
- Before leaving your ministry or the OPS, make sure all your records are properly managed!