

RECORDKEEPING ADVISORY

(AR 25-400-2)

All personnel are required by public law and DOD/Army regulation to:

Create and maintain records as prescribed by DOD Directive 5015.2, para 5.3.8.1, which is defined as follows:

"All personnel are required to retain records containing documentation of the Command's history, traditions, organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, essential transactions and accomplishments in accordance with the disposition schedule designated by AR 25-400-2."

Identify records and distinguish them from non-record materials as prescribed by DOD Directive 5015.2, para 5.3.8.2, which is defined as follows:

"Applicable records include all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the U.S. Government 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 government or because of the informational value in them. (Taken from Title 44, U.S.C., Chapter 33, Sec. 3301)."

Identify personal papers and maintain them separately from organizational records, in compliance with Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter XII, "National Archives and Records Administration," Subchapter B, "Records Management," current edition as prescribed by DOD Directive 5015.2, para 5.3.8.5, which is defined as follows:

"Nonofficial documents (personal papers) are defined as documentary material belonging to an individual that are not used to conduct agency business. Categories are:

Files or records accumulated by an individual before entering Government service.

Documents brought into or accumulated in the office that relate to family and personal correspondence, outside business pursuits, professional activities, or private political associations. Examples include family and personal correspondence, volunteer and community service records, literature from professional organizations, and manuscripts and drafts of articles and books.

Work-related materials, such as diaries, journals, notes, personal calendars, and appointment schedules not prepared, received, or used in the process of conducting agency business."

Personal papers maintained in the office should be filed separately and clearly designated as such.

Unofficial personal papers become official government owned papers when both private matters and agency business appear in the same document. When this occurs, extract or copy the part relating to agency business and treat that extraction or copy as a Federal record.

Not remove records from Government custody or destroy them, except as required or allowed under authorized record Schedules, as prescribed by DOD Directive 5015.2, para 5.3.8.3 and defined in the MARKS retention schedules available from the following website:
<<http://www.arims.army.mil/>>.

Know how to inform appropriate officials of any actual, impending, or threatened unlawful removal, alteration, or destruction of Federal records, as prescribed by DOD Directive 5015.2, para 5.3.8.4.

Note that electronically recorded data that qualifies as record material that is made or received by DOD personnel, regardless of who created it or how the information was recorded must also be identified, classified, retained and disposed of as a Federal record in accordance with AR 25-400-2. This includes data files and databases, machine-readable indexes, word processing files, electronic spreadsheets, electronic mail and facsimiles, messages, and forms as well as other text or numeric information, scanned images, interactive WebPages, animation (still and/or motion), compound documents (those with embedded files of some other type), video, audio, and photographic (AR 25-1 describes handling of audiovisual records). Examples of information created or transmitted electronically that are most probably Federal records include:

- (1) Policies and directives.
- (2) Correspondence or memoranda related to official business.
- (3) Work schedules and assignments.
- (4) Agendas and minutes of meetings.
- (5) Drafts of documents that are circulated for comment or approval.
- (6) Documents that initiate, authorize or complete a business transaction
- (7) Final reports or recommendation to include after action reports.

Records management procedures designate the originating office as having responsibility to preserve the record copy. The definition of official records specifically excludes extra copies of documents used for convenience or reference, library and museum material preserved for reference and exhibition purposes, and stocks of publications and blank forms. So long as one copy of an electronic record has been set aside or designated for preservation according to the Army Records Retention Schedule, all other copies of that record may be disposed of when no longer needed for business. Examples of information created or transmitted electronically that are not identified as record material include:

(1) Electronic data files that are not the record copy due to an identical electronic or paper copy being retained in accordance with an Army Records Retention Schedule (retention schedules are available from ARIMS website), and drafts and working documents not contributing to the preparation of records.

(2) Personal messages and announcements not related to official business such as those for social events (retirement parties, holiday celebrations, etc.)

(3) Copies of extracts of documents distributed for convenience or reference.

(4) Phone message slips.

This advisory provides a general overview of the recordkeeping responsibilities that apply to all of us as DOD employees. For further information, please contact the Command Records Administrator at 724-6499. Let's do our part to ensure that our information is properly managed from its creation through final disposition, according to Federal laws and Army Recordkeeping requirements.