



Archivist of the
United States

Date: October 28, 2024

To: Heads of Federal Departments and Agencies

From: Dr. Colleen J. Shogan
Archivist of the United States

Subject: Federal Records Management During Presidential Transition

I am writing to remind you of the importance of records management in your agencies as part of the transition to the next Presidential Administration. The National Archives cannot meet its mission to the nation without a strong and productive partnership with you and your agency.

Together, we work toward government transparency, public engagement, and accountability by promoting our obligations under the Federal Records Act (FRA). The FRA, at [44 U.S.C. 3101](#), charges agency heads with creating and preserving federal records containing adequate and proper documentation of the agency's activities so that the legal and financial rights of the Government and individuals affected by the agency's activities are protected.

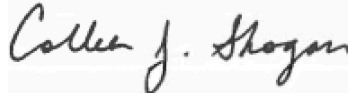
Records management takes on increased importance during transitions. The ability to capture and share records and information is paramount to ensuring a smooth transfer of power. As Archivist, I want to call greater attention to the importance of records management, as well as to archives, history, and civics in American society.

All federal employees create and manage records as an integral part of their responsibilities in performing their agency mission. Federal records may protect the rights and interests of the public, allow officials to be held accountable for their actions, and document our nation's history. Also, good records management helps your agency operate more effectively and efficiently.

It is crucial that agency heads work with their [Senior Agency Official for Records Management](#) and [Agency Records Officers](#) to communicate the importance of their records management responsibilities. Both offboarding and incoming federal staff, including [political appointees](#), have roles and responsibilities in the management of federal records.

Thank you for your prompt and deliberate attention to these important requirements. If you have any questions about your agency's records management responsibilities during this transition, or would like to discuss these issues further, please contact William Fischer, Acting Chief Records Officer, at william.fischer@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen J. Shogan". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

DR. COLLEEN J. SHOGAN
Archivist of the United States

cc: Senior Agency Officials for Records Management
Agency Records Officers
General Counsels

Enclosure: [Records Management Guidance for Political Appointees Handout](#) (one page)