

Records Management for New Employees

Welcome to your new position as an employee of the Province of Prince Edward Island. As you fulfill your duties, you will inevitably create records. These records will take many forms: paper records; video or audio recordings; emails and other forms of electronic records, etc. This memo gives a quick overview of the Province's Recorded Information Management (RIM) Program and your role in safeguarding the records of government.

What is "recorded information management" (RIM)?

Records Management or Recorded Information Management (RIM) is a system of rules and procedures governing the creation, use, storage, and disposition of all recorded information, regardless of format, within government.

What is a "record"?

A record is information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

Records may include any email message, correspondence, memorandum, book, plan, map, drawing, diagram, pictorial or graphic work, photograph, film, microform, sound recording, video tape, electronic file, text message, social media posting, and any other documentary material, regardless of physical form, characteristics or media on which it is stored.

What are "public records"?

"Public record" is the official term for a government-owned record. Public records are records kept by any provincial officer or employee in the course of his or her employment with the Provincial Government.

What is a "transitory record"?

Transitory records are those records required only for a limited time to ensure the completion of a routine action or the preparation of a subsequent record. Examples of transitory records include:

- duplicate copies used for convenience or reference
- information received as part of a distribution list
- miscellaneous, "FYI" notices or memoranda on meetings, holidays, charitable campaigns, boardroom reservations, etc.
- casual communications and personal messages
- photocopies of departmental publications
- draft documents where all critical content changes have been incorporated into a subsequent document
- working versions not communicated outside of your office

What is a “records retention and disposition schedule”?

Records retention and disposition schedules are documents created by departments to describe the records that are created and how long those records must be retained. A records retention and disposition schedule:

- Identifies and describes the records or classes of records to which it applies.
- Specifies how long the records are to be kept by government.
- Identifies records to be destroyed at the end of their life cycle.
- Identifies the records or classes of records that have archival value.

Why are records important?

- Because they have value!
- Records contain information that is needed for the day to day work of government. Their purpose is to provide reliable evidence of, and information about, “who, what, when and why” something happened.
- In some cases, the requirement to keep certain records is clearly defined by law, regulation or professional practice.
- The *Archives and Records Act* requires that records created and kept by government offices are managed effectively and disposed of responsibly.
- The *Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act* requires government to make public records available to the public.

What are my records management responsibilities?

- Good recordkeeping is everyone’s responsibility.
- All government employees have a duty to create full and accurate records of their actions, and file and capture them in formal recordkeeping systems.
- Contact the Health PEI RIM Coordinators to obtain retention schedules.
- Follow Health PEI RIM policies, procedures, file plans, and retention schedules.
- Employees at all levels must not destroy records except as provided by approved retention schedules, and in accordance with established procedures for records destruction. Contact Health PEI RIM for more information.
- Remember, all records you create as an employee of the government are the property of the government.

Who should I contact if I have questions about records management?

For more information, contact the Health PEI RIM Coordinators at healthpeiRIM@ihis.org or 902-368-6886

Resources: *Archives & Records Act*
Treasury Board Policy and Procedures Manual, “Section 5: Recorded Information Management”