



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

STEVEN G. CATES  
COMMISSIONER

BILL HASLAM  
GOVERNOR

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: All Department/Agency Heads

FROM: Steven G. Cates, Commissioner  
Department of General Services

SUBJECT: Records Management Responsibilities Clarification

DATE: April 10, 2012

On March 19, 2012, I requested that each department head assign their General Counsel to oversee the supervision of all Records Officers within their agency/department and that they notify us of their contact information. On Wednesday, March 21, 2012, your General Counsel and Records Officer received a copy of your agency's Records Disposition Authorization forms (RDA's) and a Records Management information packet, and we requested that all the RDA's be reviewed and revised by Monday, April 30, 2012. Given the volume of questions that we have received, I want to take this opportunity to further explain these new responsibilities and objectives for better records management.

We are not requesting any permanent organizational changes. The mass-RDA revision request is considered a special project as the Records Management Division attempts to get all of their data and paperwork up-to-date, and to ensure that the various retention requirements for all of your records are still valid. The General Counsel is expected to spearhead this project and assist the Records Officer in meeting with your agency's division directors and determining the legal requirements for the retention of your records. The Records Officer should then prepare the RDA creation, revision, or deletion requests and submit them to the General Counsel for review and signature. It is essential that you include the information detailed in the attachment. We are providing minimum requirements and relaxing some of our standard RDA procedures to expedite this process. All memos and forms requesting RDA creation, revision or deletion should have the signature of the General Counsel and should be sent to Records Management no later than April 30, 2012 for processing.

I would also like to reiterate that we are working to reduce file space in locations that have a high price per square foot. Pending budget approval, our new space plans will be constructed for each department with greatly reduced file storage areas. I understand that some departments have special legal and program requirements, and our Records Management team, along with our General Counsel, will work with you to accommodate your needs. The state has a contract with Richards and Richards for offsite storage which still allows for easy file access within 24 hours.

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Your department's Records Officer will need to arrange the transfer of your files to this location prior to your move. I appreciate your cooperation as we work toward more efficient records management statewide.

General Counsel questions can be directed to Thad Watkins, General Counsel, Department of General Services at 741-5922 or [Thaddeus.E.Watkins@tn.gov](mailto:Thaddeus.E.Watkins@tn.gov).

Records Management questions can be directed to Elizabeth Crawford, Management Consultant, Department of General Services at 741-2293 or [Elizabeth.C.Crawford@tn.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.C.Crawford@tn.gov).