

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM: CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

SUBJECT: RECORDS OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

With the fiscal year nearing an end and the Presidential election a few months away, it is important that senior officials and political appointees be reminded of their responsibilities concerning Federal records.

The creation of adequate documentation and the preservation of Federal records are required by law and regulation (contained in 36 CFR Chapter XII). Federal records may not be destroyed or removed from Government custody without the approval of the Archivist of the United States, and criminal penalties may be applied to the unlawful removal or destruction of Federal records. Non-record materials may be removed only with the approval of the Program Records Management Official or the Departmental Records Officer, and non-record materials containing sensitive, classified or other restricted information must remain under control of the Department.

The National Archives and Records Administration requires that a reminder of the regulations be issued annually. The regulations emphasize the need to ensure retention of Federal records when personal and non-record materials are removed from agency custody. Also outlined are other responsibilities, such as the need to capture records of policy decisions that may be reached orally (i.e., create a note to file documenting decisions), maintain selected drafts and working papers that explain policy development, and control records created or received in electronic form. Additional information can be found in the pamphlet "Your Records Management Responsibilities," located on the Records Management section of the CIO website (<http://cio.doe.gov/RBManagement/Records/PDF/YourRecordsRespbPamphlet.pdf>).

Questions regarding Federal records, personal papers, and non-record materials may be directed to the Records Liaison Officer in your organization or the Departmental Records Officer at (301) 903-3666.