



## RECORDS MANAGEMENT ADVICE

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Basics of Records Management:

### What is a Record?

Purpose: Provide guidance to state government agencies regarding the definition of a record for the purposes of records retention.

As a state government employee, you are responsible for managing any and all records, regardless of media or characteristics, that are created within your agency. If you can answer “**yes**” to any of these questions, the item in question is a record and must be retained:

#### **Was it created in the course of business?**

*Examples: correspondence, agreements, studies*

#### **Was it received for action?**

*Examples: FOAA requests, hearing requests*

#### **Does it document agency activities and actions?**

*Examples: calendars, meeting minutes, project reports*

#### **Is it mandated by statute or regulation?**

*Examples: administrative records, dockets*

#### **Does it support financial obligations or legal claims?**

*Examples: grants, contracts, litigation case files*

#### **Does it communicate agency requirements?**

*Examples: guidance documents, policies, procedures*

Public records defined by the Maine Freedom of Access Act (“FOAA”) are quite broad and may extend beyond the definition of a record used for records management purposes. FOAA grants the right of access to public records while protecting legitimate governmental interests and the privacy rights of individual citizens. For FAQs relating to FOAA, visit <http://www.maine.gov/foaa/faq/index.shtml>.

Additional advice regarding the management of records within your agency and the purpose of record retention is available by calling 287-5798, or by visiting the Archives website at <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/statetraining.html>.