
Electronic Records Management: Basics of Managing Voicemail Records

Purpose: Provide a high-level overview to state agencies and local government entities on the basics of managing voicemail records.

- Voicemail messages about the work of the agency are public records.
- Voicemail messages received on personally-owned devices about the work of the agency are still public records.
- Retention of voicemail messages:
 - Is the responsibility of the agency;
 - Must follow the approved records retention schedules;
 - Is based on the function/content of the message – not its format.
- Agencies need to adopt a strategy to manage the retention of voicemail. Some suggestions include:
 1. Automatically capture the recording in another format;
 2. Memorialize the content manually;
 3. Retain within voicemail system;
 4. Disable service until another effective retention strategy is implemented.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**