



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

Records Management – Office of Legal Affairs

Transitory & Non-Records

Just because you work for a state agency doesn't mean that you have to keep everything that comes across your desk. There are two major categories of documents that do not require preservation – non-records and transitory records. **You may dispose of these records at any time without approval from the Office of Legal Affairs.**

What is a Record?

Any recorded information created or received in the course of **conducting university business**. It's not just paper records. Records could also be emails, voicemails, videos, Teams chats, photographs, etc.



"Transitory" definition: Records of temporary usefulness that are:

- not an integral part of a records series of an agency,
- not regularly filed within an agency's recordkeeping system, and
- are required only for a limited period of time for the completion of an action by an official or employee or in the preparation of an on-going records series.

How to determine if a document is a non-record or if a record is transitory:

- Does it document university business? If not, it's a non-record.
- Does it document what happened or decisions that were made? If so, it is probably a record.
- Is its usefulness temporary (transitory) or longstanding (record)?
- Is it only required for a limited period of time for the completion of an action or in preparation of an on-going record series?
- Common formats of non-records and transitory records: instant messages, text messages, drafts, post-it notes, personal notes, blank forms, unsolicited, unsigned, or anonymous materials.







Examples of transient and non-record messages:

Spam/Unsolicited: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ads, news articles, non-work related mail 	Traffic delays on campus today. 
Personal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not related to job• Please pick up some milk!• Late meeting, can you get the kids? 	Ready for lunch? How are your kids? 



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Temporary/Informal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting setup/requests• Non-substantive/short-term use• FYI/CC/BCC: no response needed• “Thank you!” only messages• Drafts of documents (except drafts of publications and proposed legislation)		I’ll be 10 minutes late to the meeting.	
Mass Distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brown Bag lunch at 12:00• “while you were out” notes• Administrative notices• Copies of publications (UTD or outside)• Recordings of trainings you attended		Campus safety notices.	
Listserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newsletters/Bulletins• Info-sharing communities• Discussion boards		Don’t forget to sign up for Vendor X’s new accounting software webinar!	

Note: The guidance regarding publications and mass-distribution messages is intended for the recipients of these types of messages. If your job functions include creating publications or campus notifications on behalf of the University, your department is responsible for maintaining the record copy for the full retention period.