

APPOINTING RECORDS LIAISONS

Effective Date: January 1, 2009
Revised: April 17, 2015
(Procedure VSARA0005)

I. OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION

Every Records Officer is responsible for implementing and maintaining an active and continuing records management program for his or her agency or department (3 V.S.A. § 218). Because of the size and complexity of many of these organizations, Records Officers may appoint Records Liaisons to facilitate their important work.

Under the supervision of a Records Officer, Records Liaisons can help carry out the day to day tasks associated with records management programs. While a Records Officer is responsible for managing an agency/department's overall records program, Records Liaisons can help manage the detail work within a division or district office. The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) will recognize the authority of a duly appointed Records Liaison to perform certain records management functions.

This procedure defines the role of Records Liaison and outlines how Records Liaisons may assist Records Officers in establishing and sustaining effective records programs. It also describes the necessary steps for appointing Records Liaisons. While this procedure applies specifically to executive agencies and departments in state government, constitutional officers and legislative and judicial bodies may adopt this procedure as a best practice and designate Records Liaisons accordingly.

II. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Records Officer: Oversees the records management program for a state agency or department (3 V.S.A. § 218), and appoints and supervises Records Liaisons to help manage that program.

Records Liaison: Carries out records management functions, as delegated by a Records Officer, within a division or district office.

Chief Records Officer: Coordinates Records Officer and Liaison Program and oversees the maintenance of a register of Records Officer designations and Records Liaison appointments.

Records Analyst: Records Analyst I or II handling the day-to-day administration of the Records Officer and Liaison Program, as assigned by the Chief Records Officer.

III. GUIDELINES

A Records Liaison is appointed by a Records Officer to help manage an agency/department records program at the division or district office level. While a Records Officer is responsible for managing an agency/department's overall records program, Records Liaisons can help carry out the daily tasks associated with that work. Records Liaisons are expected to:

- Assist Records Officers in implementing and maintaining the agency/department's overall records management program within a division or district office;
- Serve as the primary contact within a division or district office for records management information;
- Provide general guidance to division or district office staff regarding the proper management of records, including the use of records schedules and implementation of records management policies and procedures;
- Refer records-related issues to the Records Officer as necessary;
- Authorize and oversee the transfer of agency records to and from the State Records Center;
- Authorize the destruction of records at the State Records Center.
- Authorize division or district office staff to view agency records at the State Records Center.

This list defines the role of a Records Liaison as recognized by VSARA. VSARA will assume that any individual who is appointed as a Records Liaison has the authority to perform all of these duties, including authorizing the destruction of records at the State Records Center and authorizing the use of agency records at that facility. Records Officers can tailor these duties and authorities as they wish through their own internal records management policies and procedures. VSARA however will not be responsible for enforcing internal agency policies. **The Records Officer remains ultimately responsible for all aspects of his or her agency/department records program.**

Anyone who can perform the above duties can be designated by a Records Officer to be a Records Liaison. Regardless of his or her position within a division or district office, an individual appointed as a Records Liaison should be familiar with the records that his or her division or district office maintains.

Each Records Liaison also should be aware of the agency/department records management policies and procedures, as well as the policies and procedures of the State Records Center. Records Liaisons should be able to communicate these policies and procedures to other staff members as necessary.

By limiting the number of individuals authorized to transfer or approve access to agency/department records, Records Officers can exercise greater control over those records for which they are ultimately responsible.

As a result, each Records Officer can appoint up to two Records Liaisons per administrative division or district office. Records Officers may enlist additional support as needed, but VSARA will only recognize the authority of a limited number of Records Liaisons as described. At the sole discretion of VSARA, more than two Records Liaisons per administrative division or district office may be approved if the Records Officer provides sufficient reason for requiring more than two.

A Records Officer should contact VSARA for guidance if he or she has any questions about where Records Liaisons might be effectively placed within his or her particular agency or department.

A Records Officer shall confirm the appointment of Records Liaisons annually, or at the request of VSARA. In the event that an individual serving as a Records Liaison is suddenly unable to perform the requisite duties, the Records Officer must immediately inform VSARA, and appoint a new Records Liaison as necessary.

IV. PROCEDURE STEPS/CHECKLIST

A. Records Officer:

1. Understands the role of Records Liaisons and the authority that they may exercise in helping to carry out an agency/department records program.
2. Identifies individuals within the divisions and district offices of his or her agency/department who can perform the duties of a Records Liaison.
3. Appoints one or two individuals per division or district office to act as Records Liaisons, and informs the individuals of their appointments.
4. Ensures that their designees have the appropriate skills, resources, time, and support to perform their assigned duties.
5. Completes and signs the "Records Liaison Appointment Form" (VSARA-02) and has each appointed Records Liaison sign the form.
6. Submits the form to: (preferred) rim@sec.state.vt.us or

Vermont State Archives and Records Administration
Attn: Records Officer and Records Liaison Program
1078 US RTE 2, Middlesex
Montpelier, VT 05633-7701

Fax: (802) 828-3710

7. Immediately informs VSARA of any changes in the appointment of a Records Liaison, and appoints an individual to fill a vacant position as needed.
8. Upon request, verifies the status of his or her Records Liaison appointments.

B. Records Liaison:

1. Understands the role and responsibilities of a Records Liaison.
2. Signs the “Records Liaison Appointment Form.”
3. Informs his or her Records Officer whenever he or she is no longer able to fulfill the duties of a Records Liaison.
4. Informs VSARA of any changes in his or her status as Records Liaison and of any changes to his or her contact information.

C. Chief Records Officer:

1. Advises Records Officers about Records Liaisons and provides the appropriate form for designating a Records Liaison.
2. Oversees the processing of completed Records Liaison Appointment forms and maintains a register of Records Liaison appointments.
3. Annually requests Records Officers to appoint or re-appoint Records Liaisons as necessary.

D. Records Analyst:

1. Processes Records Liaison Appointment forms and other changes to Records Liaison appointments.
2. Handles other duties as assigned by the Chief Records Officer.

DEFINITIONS

District office: An office located in an administrative district in order to provide services on a regional or local level (3 V.S.A. § 4004).

Division: A major division of an administrative department, usually headed by a director (3 V.S.A. § 218).

Records management: “The systematic identification and management of public records to assure their authenticity and accessibility from creation to ultimate disposition” (3 V.S.A. § 117)

Record schedule: A “manual, directive, or policy containing descriptions of and disposition instructions for retention, access, and management” of records (3 V.S.A. § 117).

V. GETTING HELP

The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) provides records training, assistance and services to public agencies.

<i>If you need help with....</i>	<i>Contact....</i>
Appointing or updating Records Liaisons for your agency or department.	Records Analyst at rim@sec.state.vt.us

VI. APPLICABILITY AND AUTHORITY

The Vermont State Archivist is the statutory authority for records management programs and this procedure for designating Records Officers. This procedure was initially approved by the Vermont State Archivist on December 20, 2008. The State Archivist reviewed and approved the current version of this procedure on April 17, 2015. The next review date is April 2017, or sooner at the discretion of the State Archivist.

REVISION HISTORY	
2015-04-17	Corrected typo from 3 V.S.A. § 213 to 3 V.S.A. § 218. Made general changes to language throughout the procedure, updated appropriate titles, changed process for submitting form via email, and updated links. Added Records Analyst.
2010-10-12	Updated contact information in “Getting Help” section.
2008-12-20	Procedure approved by State Archivist.