

First Steps for New Agency Records Officers

Congratulations! As a new ARO, you have joined an important group of approximately 300 designated Agency Records Officers who oversee records and information management programs across the federal government.

Start your journey by taking a few helpful, practical first steps.

Meet your SAORM

Connect with your agency's Senior Agency Official for Records Management. What are your agency's current issues and opportunities? How can you work together?

Prepare a list of questions and discussion points, and schedule time to meet with your SAORM.

Next step: find a [list of agency SAORMs on NARA's website](#).

Complete the AROC

You are required to complete NARA's Agency Records Officer Credential within one year of your appointment. You'll have options to test out or complete a set of self-paced lessons on fundamental records management terms, policies, and tools.

Next step: [learn more about the AROC on NARA's website](#).

Find your network

Identify and connect with your agency records and information management network. What structures and networks are already in place? Where do you need new contacts and connections? What training and support do your records managers, liaisons, and contacts need?

Next step: [download NARA's training materials for use in your own program](#).

Connect with NARA

Stay in contact with your NARA Appraisal Archivist, Federal Records Center account representative, and the NARA Records Management Training Program. How can they help you? What information and support do you need?

Next step: find [contact information for appraisal points of contact, the Federal Records Centers, and the Records Management Training Program](#) on NARA's website.

Review your program

Find and review recent inspection and audit reports. Identify critical processes and information systems. Talk with leaders, managers, and staff about the records and information management issues they are experiencing. Where are the needs and opportunities?

Next step: review [self-assessments](#), [inspection reports](#), and more [oversight information](#) on NARA's website.

Find partners

Connect with your agency's Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act teams. Connect with agency legal counsel, information systems and security staff, emergency management teams, and auditors. How can you work together to ensure your agency's information is retained safely for the right amount of time?

Next step: connect with other Agency Records Officers [in other organizations](#).