**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE**

**Myths and Realities: Records Management**

**Myth #1: Records management is hopelessly old fashioned and obsolete.**

**Reality:** While it is not always appreciated, good records management is and should be an integral part of any business process. Records and information are among an agency’s most important and valuable assets and deserve focus and attention as a priority and not as an afterthought.

Managing records used to be ***(and absolutely still should be)*** a core component of a business process and needs to be systematically and strategically applied to successfully manage information in a technology-driven and digital-centric world.

**Myth #2: Records management only applies to paper.**

**Reality:** Records management applies to *all public records*, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and regardless of the devices used to create them or the locations/mechanisms in/on which they are stored. It doesn’t matter if it is paper, electronic, or data managed on a work computer, home computer, cloud, or mobile device – if it’s a public record, it needs to be managed as such.

There are still vast amounts of paper being generated. Mix the paper in with the increasing volumes of digital information perpetuates a hybrid environment that adds to the challenge of managing informational assets. Getting your records and informational house in order needs to be one of the top priorities as part of an overall information governance strategy. Records are at the core of the mission of the agency, provide for continuity and link the other strategic functions of government.

**Myth #3: Records management doesn’t need to be a priority; we need to use the money to buy more technology.**

**Reality:** Records and information management is often viewed as a low priority, lacking budgetary assistance to support a program. Many agencies do not have adequate record management programs and policies in place, instead choosing to focus more on the technology and neglecting the management of informational assets.

Buying more technology is not a bad thing. The bad thing has been the decisions to buy systems or tools that do not really help or play nice with other systems. Reviewing and assessing the impact on public records prior to purchase is part of an overall information governance strategy. Investing in a robust records management program for the agency and purchasing appropriate tools such as Enterprise Content Management (ECM) systems pays off in increased productivity, improved compliance with public disclosure and discovery, less need for additional tools, and reduced costs for storage, licensing and maintenance.