

FAQ	RESPONSE
<p>How do I know if an email is a public record?</p>	<p>An email is a public record if it was made, sent or received in the course of conducting business.</p> <p>If you answer yes to the following questions, the email is a public record and should be captured and managed appropriately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it document a business decision? • Does it document advice given or received? • Is it required by legislation or another regulatory instrument to be kept? • Is it evidence of a business transaction? <p>In contrast, ephemeral emails are not public records (see below).</p> <p>Emails that are public records may also be referred to as business emails.</p> <p>For further information refer to the Public Records Brief <i>What is a Public Record?</i> at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/publications/PublicRecordsBriefs/what_is_public_record_200409.pdf</p>
<p>Are there emails that are not considered public records?</p>	<p>Yes. These are referred to as ephemeral emails. They have short-term informational value and are only required to be retained for a short time, while they are needed for reference purposes.</p> <p>Ephemeral messages are not required to be captured as records in a recordkeeping system.</p> <p>Examples of ephemeral emails include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notifications of team meetings • emails received as part of a distribution list or listserv for information • emails that are duplicate copies of records already included in a recordkeeping system and used as reference material • spam • personal emails that do not relate to the business of the public authority, and • unsolicited advertising material. <p>For more information refer to section 6 of the General Retention and Disposal Schedule, available at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/downloads/GeneralDisposalSchedule.pdf</p>
<p>Who owns emails that are public records?</p>	<p>Emails that are public records are owned by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State if they are in possession or control of a State Government agency. • A local government if they are in the possession or control of a local government.

<p>Who is responsible for email capture?</p>	<p>Overall responsibility and accountability for recordkeeping lies with the public authority's Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>However, all senders and receivers of email have a responsibility to ensure emails (including received and sent items) are captured (with the associated metadata) into the public authority's authorised recordkeeping system in accordance with the public authority's business rules and business classification scheme.</p>
<p>What if I have received an email from a staff member in my agency?</p>	<p>Firstly, determine whether it is a business email or an ephemeral email. If it is a business email then the process of capture must be initiated. Generally, the capture of internal emails should be initiated by the sender.</p> <p>However, the receiver of internal emails should initiate capture when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The email relates to their project or area of responsibility, or • They are directly involved in the business transaction to which the email relates. <p>Consult your agency's recordkeeping email policy or talk to your Records Manager or Chief Information Officer regarding your agency's protocol for capturing internal email.</p>
<p>How soon after I have created or received an email that is a public record should it be captured?</p>	<p>Emails that are public records must be captured into an identifiable and authorised recordkeeping system as soon as they are created or received, or as soon as possible thereafter.</p>
<p>What should I do with emails that have been received by multiple recipients from an external sender?</p>	<p>Consult your agency's recordkeeping email policy or talk to your Records Manager or Chief Information Officer regarding your agency's protocol for capturing emails in this situation.</p> <p>Depending on your agency protocol, capture of the email into the recordkeeping system may be the responsibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recipient who is most directly involved in the business transaction or has designated responsibility for the issue, task or project, or • The first person on the receiving list.

<p>Do I have to capture an email that is a public record if I am a Carbon Copy (cc) recipient?</p>	<p>If the email is business related, it is a public record and therefore it must be captured into a recordkeeping system. Depending on your agency protocol, capture of a cc email into the recordkeeping system may be the responsibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recipient who is most directly involved in the business transaction or has designated responsibility for the issue, task or project, or • The first person on the cc receiving list. <p>The protocol may also vary depending on whether it is an external or internal email. If you, as the cc recipient, are the only recipient in your agency, it is your responsibility to capture it.</p> <p>Please consult your Records Manager, Chief Information Officer or email recordkeeping policy for agency specific advice.</p>
<p>If there is a series (or thread) of emails relating to the one issue or topic, how should they be captured?</p>	<p>Emails that are public records should be captured as soon as they are sent or received or as soon as possible thereafter. However, emails often involve a thread of communication that can continue for a period of time. There are a number of options for capture. You will need to consult your agency's email recordkeeping policy or talk to your Records Manager or Chief Information Officer about your agency's protocol.</p> <p>Options may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture of each email as it is sent or received. This will reduce risk of non-capture. • Capture at the end of the communication thread. This may increase the risk of non-capture of the record into the recordkeeping system, as the end of the thread may not always be apparent. • Capture at significant points throughout the communication thread, where key decisions are made, subjects change, or key issues addressed.
<p>Do I need to capture email attachments?</p>	<p>Attachments that form part of the content or context of an email need to be captured. They should be printed out and captured with the covering email if your agency has a paper-based recordkeeping system or linked to the covering email if your agency has an electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS).</p> <p>If emails are sent with attached documents that have already been captured into a recordkeeping system, it may not be necessary to capture the attached document again. In these circumstances, a reference or link to the location of the attachment within the recordkeeping system may be sufficient.</p>
<p>What happens if there is an attachment to an email but no text? Do I need to capture the email?</p>	<p>The email, despite not having any content still provides vital context to the attachment (for example; who sent it, who other recipients may be, what time and date it was sent). Therefore the email, despite including no message body, should be captured.</p> <p>Please consult your Records Manager, Chief Information Officer or email recordkeeping policy for agency specific advice.</p>

<p>What happens if someone sends me an email with several attachments that pertain to different business purposes?</p>	<p>Each attachment that pertains to a separate business purpose should be treated as a separate email.</p> <p>The actual email should be recaptured for each attachment that has a different business purpose, so that context is provided for each attachment.</p>
<p>Do I need to capture emails into the recordkeeping system when I have set up folders in my email system?</p>	<p>Yes. Storing emails in personal folders does not meet recordkeeping requirements for the proper capture, access, management, security and disposal of emails that are public records.</p> <p>Email systems (including email archiving solutions) are not designed to manage emails that are public records and therefore have limited recordkeeping functionality. A recordkeeping system enables the record and its context to be captured, accessed by authorised staff and retained for as long as required.</p>
<p>My agency has an email archive to store emails. Is this a recordkeeping system?</p>	<p>No. Email archives or repositories and back-up stores of emails within email server systems are not considered to be recordkeeping systems. Nor is the ad-hoc saving of emails to network directories or email folders.</p> <p>For further information refer to the Public Records Brief <i>Email archiving solutions alone do not achieve recordkeeping compliance</i>, available at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/publications/PublicRecordsBriefs/email_archiving_solutions.pdf</p>
<p>Can I alter an email that is a public record?</p>	<p>No. In order to maintain their evidential value as full and accurate records, emails must be inviolate. They are not to be altered or manipulated during any stage of their transmission, capture or storage. Any alteration must result in the amended email being captured as a new record, along with the original email.</p>
<p>When can I dispose of emails that are public records?</p>	<p>Emails that are public records can only be disposed of in accordance with an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule authorised by the State Archivist.</p> <p>Copies of emails that are records may only be deleted from user inboxes and sent-boxes after they have been captured into the agency's authorised recordkeeping system.</p> <p>Further information about disposal of records is outlined in the joint Queensland State Archives and Crime and Misconduct Commission's publications <i>Managing Public Records Responsibly</i>, available at: http://www.cmc.qld.gov.au/data/portal/00000005/content/57402001156128645546.pdf</p> <p>Contact your Records Manager or Chief Information Officer for further advice in relation to your agency's protocols.</p>

<p>When can I dispose of ephemeral emails?</p>	<p>Ephemeral messages can be disposed of as soon as their administrative or informational use expires.</p> <p>For more information refer to section 6 of the General Retention and Disposal Schedule, available at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/downloads/GeneralDisposalSchedule.pdf</p>
<p>My agency's recordkeeping system is paper-based. Is it sufficient to capture the email as a paper record?</p>	<p>In the absence of an Electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS), a paper-based recordkeeping system can be used provided that the emails and appropriate contextual information can be printed to paper and filed.</p> <p>In order to be full and accurate records, emails, including any attachments, links and graphics, must be captured in such a way that they maintain their context, content and structure.</p>
<p>Where do I go for further guidance on managing emails that are public records?</p>	<p>For further guidance refer to <i>Managing Emails that are Public Records</i> policy and guideline at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/downloads/emails_that_are_public_records_policy_and_guideline.pdf.</p> <p>See also the Public Records Brief <i>Email archiving solutions alone do not achieve recordkeeping compliance</i> at: http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/publications/PublicRecordsBriefs/email_archiving_solutions.pdf.</p> <p>Also, contact your Records Manager or Chief Information Officer to find out more about the specific recordkeeping procedures used in your agency.</p>