




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

October 19, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: Maureen E. Wylie
Chief Financial Officer

FROM:  Lois J. Schiffer
General Counsel

SUBJECT: Revised Request to Deviate from Finance's Travel
Record Retention Policy

On October 17, 2011, the NOAA Office of the General Counsel submitted its request to deviate from the travel record retention policy recommended by Finance. Finance reviewed the deviation request and contacted NOAA GC stating that ink signatures are only required for Invitational Travelers or Excepted Employees (employees that do not route their documents electronically in the travel system). Since none of the NOAA GC employees fit in either of those categories, the NOAA GC deviation request has been revised.

(1) Variation

NOAA GC's Voucher Preparers will be responsible for retaining the original of the complete travel package. Travelers and Approving Officials will not be required to retain copies.

(2) Procedures to be Implemented

Effective October 24, 2011, hard copies of Travel Vouchers will no longer be submitted to the servicing Finance Branch, but retained in the traveler's office for filing and record retention. Ink signatures are no longer required on Travel Authorizations or Travel Vouchers.

EXCEPTION: Copies of Travel Vouchers selected for audit, and copies of Invitational Travel must be submitted to the servicing Finance Branch. All original travel documents must be retained by the Voucher Preparer and filed in accordance with the NOAA Travel Regulation and Federal record retention requirements. Only Invitational Travel requires ink signatures.

Voucher Preparers are designated as the document retention officials for travel documents and will be responsible for ensuring that the original complete travel package is retained for 6 years and 3 months. A complete travel package is defined as an approved Travel Voucher, all



associated receipts, and any other necessary documents to support the claim. Once the travel record's retention has expired, the records must be shredded to safeguard against unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information contained in the records. Travel records that are subject to an on-going investigation or pending litigation will not be destroyed until the litigation hold is lifted, even if the retention period for the records has expired.

The chart below identifies the Voucher Preparers responsible for retaining the original travel records for GC offices and they will serve as points of contact in the event documents need to be retrieved for Financial Statement audits, Office of the Inspector General audits, Freedom of Information Act requests, etc. The servicing Finance Office will provide notice to the Voucher Preparer of the production request. The Voucher Preparer must submit the requested copy of travel documents within five (5) business days.

GC Office/Location	Voucher Preparer	Email Address	Phone Number
Headquarters (Washington, DC)	Marilou Shanefelt	Marilou.Shanefelt@noaa.gov	202-482-4080
International Law (Washington, DC)	Alma Lyons	Alma.J.Lyons@noaa.gov	202-482-2570
Fisheries (Silver Spring, MD)	Evangeline Davis	Evangeline.Davis@noaa.gov	301-713-9661
Ocean Services (Silver Spring, MD)	Donna Robertson	Donna.Robertson@noaa.gov	301-713-7381
Weather (Silver Spring, MD)	Christine Martine	Christine.Martin@noaa.gov	301-713-9682
Enforcement and Litigation (Silver Spring, MD)	Monia Williams-Guy	Monia.Williams-Guy@noaa.gov	301-495-2202
Natural Resources (Silver Spring, MD)	Marjorie Sams	Marjorie.Sams@noaa.gov	301-713-1328
Northeast Regional Office (Gloucester, MA)	Marilyn Eldridge	Marilyn.J.Eldridge@noaa.gov	978-281-9211
Northwest Regional Office (Seattle, WA)	Mary Foote	Mary.Foote@noaa.gov	206-526-6078
Southeast Regional Office (St. Petersburg, FL)	Laura Carter	Laura.Carter@noaa.gov	727-824-5368
Southwest Regional Office (Long Beach, CA)	Donna Lemons	Donna.Lemons@noaa.gov	562-980-4080
Alaska Regional Office (Juneau, AK)	Carol Schirmer	Carol.Schirmer@noaa.gov	907-586-7415
Pacific Islands Regional Office (Honolulu, HI)	Donna Lemons	Donna.Lemons@noaa.gov	562-980-4080

(3) Communicating the Policy

NOAA GC's Voucher Preparers will receive a copy of this memo, as well as the supporting documents and links to policy updates on the Corporate Service's website.

(4) Plan for Ensuring Compliance

From March through June 2011, NOAA GC's Executive Officer and Records Liaison conducted file surveys of GC's administrative records throughout the regions. During scheduled office file surveys, travel records will be reviewed for completeness and disposition in accordance with the NOAA Records Schedule and the updated policy. The Executive Officer and Records Liaison will continue to monitor compliance of the administrative records and will enforce the new travel records retention policy.