

GEORGIA DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

PRIVACY/ACCESS ISSUES AND E-GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF PROJECT

The project will provide statewide education on privacy/access issues and e-government for Georgia's state and local governments as well as produce a white paper on this topic. Project goals are to:

- educate administrators, information management professionals, records managers, and archivists about privacy/access issues related to e-government
- gain consensus among these groups about the issues involved and possible solutions
- bring archival issues to the forefront before administrators and information management professionals develop e-government practices for state agencies
- produce a white paper that can be used to develop statewide guidelines on privacy/access issues and e-government

This project will bring recognized experts to Georgia to speak on open records legislation, e-government, and issues related to security/privacy, technology, and long-term access. Educational programs are necessary because many records professionals in Georgia need a better understanding of the archival issues involved in e-government and the relationship between privacy issues and electronic records. This is especially important at this time because many state agencies are at the early stages of designing systems and establishing procedures for e-government.

The speakers' presentations will be utilized in several ways to maximize the training potential. Presentations will be:

- made before a group of administrators and information management professionals from selected statewide organizations and state agencies
- transmitted to a statewide audience of records administrators, records managers, archivists, and information management professionals through an audio-video network
- discussed on a moderated web site
- recorded on compact disc and captured for web casting, which will allow them to be used for future training sessions

After the training is completed, representatives of the selected group of organizations and state agencies will serve as a working group to develop a white paper on the rights and conditions of access to electronic government information. Georgia is moving forward rapidly in the area of e-government, and the white paper will allow the Archives to represent records and archival issues with state agencies in this process and to develop statewide guidelines. The process of developing the white paper will include presentations by speakers, facilitated meetings, and moderated web discussions.

The Georgia Archives will coordinate the project, which will run for 15 months from January 2003 – March 2004. The project will be co-sponsored by Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU), the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, the Society of Georgia Archivists, the Georgia Records Association, and the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board.

SIGNIFICANCE & RELATIONSHIP TO NHPRC GOALS & OBJECTIVES

This project fits into the category of “Advocacy” identified in NHPRC’s *Research Issues in Electronic Records*. The project will build on the proven track record of the Archives in training and leadership, and will provide a mechanism for coordinating a statewide solution to privacy and access issues impacting Georgia electronic records. It will strengthen the Archives’ position as a leader in privacy and access issues with public records.

This project also addresses research question number six identified in NHPRC’s *Research Issues in Electronic Records* – “What policies best address archival concerns for the identification, retention, preservation, and research use of electronic records?” The project’s goal is to produce a white paper leading to development of statewide guidelines that will address the use of electronic records.

This project supports NHPRC’s recently announced three-year initiative to “broaden the base and increase the level of archival expertise in the area of electronic records.” The project will provide training on privacy/access issues and e-government to administrators, records managers, archivists, and information management professionals to help them address the issues and challenges posed by electronic records. Previously most programs and services of state agencies and local governments have centered on the management of and access to non-electronic records. Now many governments are moving towards e-government to manage their information and often they are taking these steps without input from records managers and archivists.