



Office of the Chief
Records Officer for the
U.S. Government

Sent Via Email. No Hard Copy to Follow.

June 5, 2023

Kim Tart
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Enterprise Records Service (005R1B)
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Kim Tart,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has been notified of a potential unauthorized disposition of records at the Department of Veterans Affairs. A member of the public has alleged that VA staff failed to preserve text messages, Skype messages, email messages, and a list of alternative email addresses for VA executives who were assigned more than one government email address from 2014 to the present.

In accordance with 36 CFR 1230.14(a), NARA requests that VA respond within 30 calendar days to this allegation. If it is determined that an unauthorized disposition of records has occurred, the response should include the following information:

- A complete description of the records with volume and dates if known;
- The office maintaining the records;
- A statement of the exact circumstances surrounding the removal, defacing, alteration, or destruction of records;
- A statement of the safeguards established to prevent further loss of documentation; and
- Details of the actions taken to salvage, retrieve, or reconstruct the records.

If it is determined that there has been no unauthorized disposition, please provide us with sufficient documentation to support that finding. I appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please contact me at laurence.brewer@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

LAURENCE BREWER
Chief Records Officer
for the U.S. Government



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July 26, 2023

Kim Tart
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Enterprise Records Service (005R1B)
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Kim Tart,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) acknowledges receipt of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) report regarding an alleged unauthorized disposition of email, text, and Skype messages of VA executives.

We understand that the VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) researched the matter and determined that VA did not have a legacy email system prior to adopting the Capstone approach in 2019. Prior to 2019, VA had a print and file policy and any emails created and/or received by VA executives in the course of business were printed and filed with associated records.

We understand that VA verifies that all email accounts of senior executives, current and former VA secretaries, and current and former Deputy secretaries (2014 -2021) are managed and preserved in accordance with NARA General Records Schedule (GRS) 6.1, *Email and Other Electronic Messages Managed Under a Capstone Approach*. We understand that text and Skype messages are also captured and retained in accordance with GRS 6.1.

We further understand that since no evidence was found to suggest that records were destroyed, VA does not believe the reporting requirements as set forth in 36 CFR 1230.14(a) are applicable.

Based on this information, NARA is satisfied with the actions VA has taken and considers this matter closed. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at laurence.brewer@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurence R. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'B'.

LAURENCE BREWER
Chief Records Officer
for the U.S. Government