

For the Record...

NAMING CONVENTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC FILES AND FOLDERS

Naming conventions are rules which enable consistent titling of electronic files and folders in a logical way. Applying consistent naming practices will distinguish similar files from one another at a glance, and doing so will ensure that the correct files can be located, identified, retrieved and purged (if needed) in a timely fashion.

The following are suggested file and folder naming conventions:

- Keep file and folder names short, but meaningful and relevant.
- Do NOT use non-alphanumeric characters [] { } () . , ! ; : " ' * ? < > \ / | & \$ in file and folder names.
- Separate dates with a dash ‘-’.
- Separate words with dashes ‘-’, underscores ‘_’ or upper-case letters.
- Do NOT use spaces to separate words in a file or folder name if files will be stored in SharePoint or accessed using a hyperlink since spaces will appear as ‘%20’ in the hyperlink. In addition, some software packages have difficulty recognizing file names with spaces.
- Unless otherwise stated, do NOT use ALL CAPS.
- When using a date in a file/folder name, always use the format Year-Month-Day (YYYY-MM-DD).
- Order the elements in a file name according to the way the file will be retrieved. The most ‘searched by’ element should come first.
- Do not include confidential information in the folder or file name.
- When including a number in a file name, always use a leading zero for numbers one to nine, i.e. ‘01,’ ‘02,’ ‘03,’ etc.
- When including a personal name, use the Sir/family name first, followed by the initials.
- Avoid using terms such as ‘DRAFT’ or ‘FINAL’ at the start of file names. Instead use them at the end of the file name in all caps.
- Folders/subdirectories should be named according to function or service based on the work being done rather than who is doing the work.
- Folder titles should not be repeated in the hierarchy.
- The version number and/or letter of a document should be indicated at the end of its file name by the inclusion of ‘v’ followed by the version number, i.e., v01, v02, etc.
 - If a new version includes major changes, increment the whole number by one, i.e., v01 becomes v02.
 - If a new version has only minor changes, increment the decimal number by one, i.e., v01.1, v01.2, etc.