

**SAM – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(California Technology Agency)**

**STATE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

**4800**

(Revised 03/11)

The California Technology Agency (Technology Agency) has broad responsibility and authority to guide the application of information technology (IT) in California State Government. The Technology Agency's areas of responsibility include policy making, interagency coordination, IT budget and procurement review, technical assistance, and advocacy. In view of the scope of these activities and their potential impact on state government, the Technology Agency has articulated the fundamental principles, policies, and procedures to govern the use of information technology in Sections 4800 through 5180 of the State Administrative Manual (SAM).

**Note that any and all project approvals or conditions made by the Technology Agency's predecessor organizations, the Office of the State Chief Information Officer (OCIO) prior to January 1, 2011, or the Department of Finance (Finance) prior to January 1, 2011, remain in effect unless otherwise notified.**

**Priority of Information Technology.**

Information technology is an indispensable tool of modern government. Accordingly, each state agency is expected to seek opportunities to use this technology to increase the quality of the services it provides and reduce the overall cost of government.

**Authority and Responsibility.**

Each agency director should be knowledgeable about the information requirements and information management practices of the agency and should provide active leadership in the exploration of new opportunities to use information technology. Each agency should establish clear lines of authority and responsibility for information management.

**Management of Information.**

Each agency shall establish and maintain an information management function consistent with its own operational needs and organizational structure. This function shall serve to ensure the agency's ability to identify the information it collects, maintain the integrity and security of the information, and provide for appropriate access to the information.

**Management Methods.**

Each state agency shall employ proven management methodologies to guide and control the planning, acquisition, development, operation, maintenance, and evaluation of information management applications. Pilot projects and/or independent oversight shall be required for larger, more complex applications.

**Basis for Decisions.**

Decisions regarding the application of information technology shall be based on analysis of overall costs and benefits to the people of California over the life of the application. Each agency shall plan far enough into the future to ensure that adequate time is available for analysis of alternatives, for obtaining necessary management approvals, and for the administration of procurements. Agencies shall determine the impact of their decisions across departmental and agency lines and give priority to alternatives that provide the greatest benefit from a statewide perspective.

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**Record of Decisions.**

Each agency shall maintain records of management decisions concerning the use of information technology. These records must be sufficiently detailed to satisfy the requirements of oversight agencies as well as internal management. The records must address such topics as:

1. Identification of information technology needs;
2. Setting of priorities for applications of information technology;
3. Evaluation of application alternatives;
4. Project management and control;
5. Contingency planning and risk management; and,
6. Operational controls and maintenance provisions.

**Agency Personnel.**

Agency managerial, technical, and user personnel should possess the knowledge and skills necessary to use information technology to the best advantage for the state. Each agency should regularly assess the information technology skills and knowledge of its personnel in relation to job requirements, identify and document training needs, and provide suitable training within the limits of available resources.

**Compatibility.**

In selecting or developing applications of information technology, each agency shall consider the benefits and costs of maintaining compatibility with other planned and existing applications within the agency and in other state agencies. Such consideration of compatibility shall include computer languages, applications and system software, computer hardware and telecommunications equipment, data formats, and the specific knowledge and skills required of state personnel.

**Procurement.**

In acquiring equipment, software, and services involving information technology, agencies shall seek maximum economic advantage to the state. Procurements shall normally be competitive, in conformance with the applicable sections of the Public Contract Code and SAM. Agencies shall use master contracts whenever the functional requirements for which the contract was awarded are substantially the same as the agency's requirements.

**Cost Allocation.**

Each agency shall adopt policies and establish procedures for assignment of costs associated with information technology by program or operational unit within the agency, as well as for the assignment and recovery of the costs of services provided to other agencies, private individuals, and organizations.

**Risk Management.**

Each state agency shall adopt and maintain a risk management program for the purpose of identifying and avoiding or minimizing threats to the security of information it maintains and the operational integrity of its information systems, telecommunications systems, and data bases.

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**Documentation.**

Applications of information technology shall be fully documented with respect to the needs of (1) non-technical users; (2) technical personnel; (3) agency measurement; and (4) outside auditors. The adequacy of documentation shall be an evaluation criterion in all procurements involving information technology (equipment, software, services and telecommunications facilities). Project plans shall include specific provision for the creation of suitable documentation.

**Provision for Emergencies.**

In planning for the use of automated information systems and telecommunications facilities, agencies shall develop policies and procedures to be followed in times of emergency; when systems are preempted to preserve the public health, welfare or safety; and when other events occur which prevent reliance on automated systems for extended periods of time.

**Individual Rights.**

Information management policies and procedures shall be consistent with the California Constitution, the Public Records Act, the Information Practices Act, and other applicable laws. Each state agency shall safeguard the right to privacy of individuals who are the subjects of the records it maintains.

**Ethics.**

In the conduct of their operations and in the accomplishment of the policies stated above, state agencies and their employees shall employ information technology in a legal and ethical manner consistent with government statutes, rules and regulations. Information technology shall not be used for purposes that are unrelated to the agency's mission or that violate state or federal law. Contract provisions, including software licensing agreements, shall be strictly followed.