



MAINE STATE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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2024 Annual Report

Chapter 717– An Act to Promote Equity in Policy Making by Enhancing the State's Ability to Collect, Analyze and Apply Data

March 15, 2024

The Honorable Tim Nangle, Senate Chair
The Honorable Holly Stover, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Dear Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and Members of the Committee,

Public Law Chapter 717 requires that “the Secretary of State, or the secretary's designee, the Chief Information Officer and the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Tribal Populations established by Title 5, section 12004-J, subsection 19 shall jointly report on the status of the program and the consultations under subsection 3 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local government matters annually by February 15.” An extension has been requested and granted for this report to be submitted by March 15, 2024.

Executive Summary

The report covers the participation and progress of the Secretary of State’s agency and its staff during the period from 02/15/2023 through 03/15/2024 in the planning and development thus far for Maine’s Data Governance Program Law, Chapter 14-B. This work encompasses Maine State Archives (MSA), SOS Information Services (IS), and policy staff within the SOS agency. Actions that have been taken to date include:

- **Data Governance Working Group**
Active participation in the Data Governance Working Group beginning in March and throughout 2023.

- **Scope of Initiative**
Research activities both inside Maine State Government as well as understanding approaches that have taken place in other states to understand the current state of data collection and the need to collectively develop a quality data program.
- **State of Maine Agency Meetings**
MSA and SOS IS staff began the process of meeting with agencies individually to understand digital records and digitization of services that would ultimately be transferred to the custody of MSA for archival storage. This work began during the spring of 2023 and remains ongoing to understand digital records, their relationship to data governance, staffing, and systems required for permanent preservation.
- **Outreach and Education Planning**
Evaluation of the educational and outreach requirements that are needed for a successful data governance program in Maine was conducted. The result of this was an initial plan to educate data teams across agencies with basic data literacy, understanding of best practices, security and privacy needs, and the importance of staffing assigned to data practices and collaboration as the program is defined and evolves.

Detailed Secretary of State Progress

Data Governance Working Group

The Data Governance Program Working Group began meeting early in 2023 and continued periodically meeting throughout the year with the intent to collaborate, evaluate, and assess the best approach to moving forward with Data Governance in the State of Maine. Its participants grew and evolved as new staff were hired for functions within the legislation and respective organizations. These additions included:

- Executive director and research staff for the Permanent Commission for Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations;
- Research and policy staff for the State Economist's office;
- New staff within DAFS, its operations, and Maine IT;
- Data and policy staff within MSA, SOS IS, and the Secretary of State's office.

Consistent participation within this working group included the following representation:

- Secretary of State, Shenna Bellows;
- State Archivist, Katherine McBrien;
- Deputy SOS Policy Advisor, Joann Bautista;
- SOS Director of Digital Data Records, Lisa Erickson-Harris;
- Deputy SOS Information Services, Chris Johnson;

- Deputy SOS Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Lelia DeAndrade
- DAFS Director of Operations, Michael Cornwell;
- Chief Data Officer, Ken L. Boykin;
- State Economist, Amanda K. Rector;
- Data Communications Specialist for the State Economist, Laura Yeitz;
- Executive Director, Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations, Ariel Ricci;
- Communications Manager for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations, Morgan E. Urquhart;
- Research Coordinator for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations, Dr. Leeann Sullivan.

The discussions and meetings among this group have been robust. They have included considerations about size and scope of the data governance program; the roles of each of the participants in the working group; the state of data management within various agencies; data elements that are most important within the program and to related legislation such as racial impact statements; and exploration and planning for educational and relational components of the data governance program.

Scope Research

Independently, the Secretary of State’s agency researched to understand the scope of any data governance program within state government. This work was an effort to understand how other states are embracing the increasing importance of all data collection and how non-personally identifiable data can inform decisions across government from the legislature to policy decisions that are made within any given state agency.

Learning was gathered from the State of Oregon in dialog with its Chief Data Officer who met with our team and discussed “starting from scratch” to build a data governance program. She put us in touch with agencies as well since the State of Oregon required not only a statewide effort, but also leaders that would be identified and tasked with defining their own data governance requirements that would fit together with statewide policy.

The greatest learnings from this research were:

- A strategy needed to be developed and buy-in from a key stakeholder group was required. That group became the advisory board for the Oregon-data governance policy moving forward.
- Education to ensure data literacy exists across all state agencies was a very early priority for the State of Oregon. Staff would be expected to participate and comply with data policies and standards. To be effective participants, a base level

of education was required. An education component was part of the rollout of the program itself.

- Agency data strategies were needed in Oregon, and analysts were then assigned to assist with the program rollout to help the agencies with their data strategies. For both agencies and statewide, key stakeholders had a voice in the process.
- The process is ongoing with regular adjustments and changes for the program.

In addition, the SOS staff also reviewed professional associations related to archival records. The goal here was to consider the connection between data governance and its eventual impact on archival records that must be retained by law. The link between data and records is tightly connected. Data begins within agencies and is collected into state records. The usefulness of that information relies on a definition of data policy and management of that data to ensure records are available and useful when they become part of the permanent record of the State of Maine. Many records will be available through a public access system and the ability to find those records will depend on data policy that is broad enough to be able to capture the metadata and content for future research purposes by Maine State employees and the public.

Agency Data Gathering and Planning

The Secretary of State's agency is undertaking two large data and records-related initiatives. During 2023, MSA purchased a digital preservation system (DPS) and is working on its implementation. The DPS will serve as a digital warehouse for archival Maine records. As Maine State Government moves to digitize its programs and services, the ability to store archival digital records has become important. As MSA and SOS IS implement this solution, it is defining a new approach for collecting, digitally packaging, and moving digital records to MSA for archival storage. This work entails the review of existing data and records systems that store archival records, definition of a workflow process that will move archival records to the DPS, and definition of metadata that defines standards around records.

To prepare for this effort, MSA and SOS IS staff are meeting with agencies across state government to work through the details for moving records from agencies to MSA's DPS system. To date, MSA has met with fourteen different agencies/subagencies. Multiple meetings are required to understand the status of digital records, expected future status of these records, staffing that is available to support the transition to digital records, education related to the transition to a DPS and increasing data focus, and to begin the process to provide and test the preservation workflows that will be finalized for use across agencies.

As data and data governance directly impacts the permanent records of the State of Maine, we have discussed data within the agencies, work that is being done to manage

that data, policies that are either defined or under discussion, and staffing levels assigned to data. This information will inform the work of MSA. To date, there is a mix of data understanding, planning, and staffing. Our findings are:

- **Department of Transportation (DOT)**

DOT has staff that leads the data initiative within the agency in addition to its records management staff. Staff have educated themselves about data management practices for more than a decade. The leader of this effort oversees both data management and records management for the agency. It has defined data policies and practices, developed data sharing agreements where appropriate, created guidelines on its own internal intranet, and most recently has started an advisory group across DOT to inform policy and change.

This agency has moved through an iterative process over a lengthy timeframe first recognizing that it needed standards for data, informally defining a policy and process, and later gaining insight through collaboration with other state DOT that are also grappling with the importance of data management in their state agencies. Maine DOT follows the guidance of the Data Management Association (DAMA) independently and has educated itself on these best practices, an approach that will align with that of the DAFS and the Chief Data Officer's plans.

Finally, DOT is prioritizing data literacy training and supports the recommendations of Gartner that entails conducting a skills assessment and identifying core competencies, defining an approach to data literacy training is most appropriate for the organization, mapping roles to necessary proficiency levels and assessing current skill levels, and finally designing training curriculum to close any gaps in data-related skills that exist.

- **Department of Education (DOE)**

DOE has staff assigned to records management as well as data management within the agency. It has not begun to define a data governance policy in a formal way. However, the agency is engaged in efforts that will support both the digital records system and data management over the long term. These efforts include updating agency retention schedules to include digital records, identifying all of its current and planned systems that involve digital records that will need to extract records for archival retention, establishing a working group to evaluate file systems, and planning for the migration of digital records which will place data in MSA's digital warehouse.

- **Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adult and Disability Services (OADS)**

SOS IS and MSA met with records officers and data analytics staff within OADS, a sub-agency within DHHS. This sub-agency has many programs to support Maine citizens and captures data in delivering these services. Its leadership has identified the importance of defining and implementing a data governance policy for its work and has recently established an advisory group within the agency to begin evaluating needs and defining data policy. It understands the sensitivity of data that is being collected and is moving forward with a policy to define standards for itself.

While the agency does not have years of planning behind its data management efforts, it has recognized the need to move ahead with the definition of policies and management for data. The agency is seeking guidance and assistance in moving this effort forward to inform its process with best practices and state-level standards. It will move at its own pace until such time as this guidance is in place working in partnership with its data and analytics team along with the agency's leadership.

- **Department of Marine Resources (DMR)**

This department is organized in a similar way as the DOE. It has staff assigned to records management and data and analytics management within the agency. DMR manages data and its policies within the agency according to specific agency needs. It has not yet begun to define a data governance policy. Our work with the DMR is currently focused on records schedules to ensure they consider and include digital records that are destined for the MSA's DPS for archival storage.

- **Other Agencies**

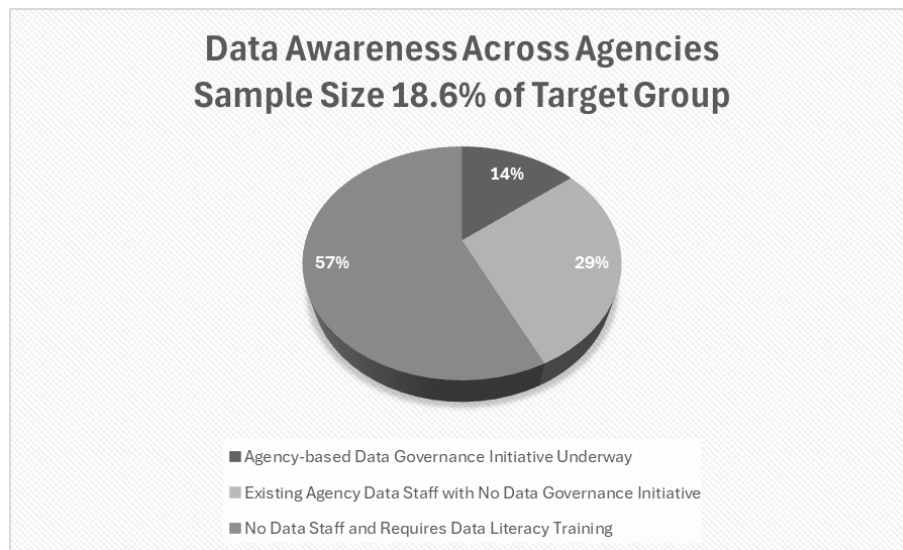
MSA and SOS IS has met with many other agencies and sub-agencies and will continue to meet with agencies to prepare for its move to a digital preservation system for archival records. There are currently seventy-five of these agencies that are targeted for this work as many sub-agencies have unique processes and archival records. In addition to examples provided above, meetings have been held with the Department of Corrections, Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor (several sub-agencies), the Department of Public Safety, Department of Transportation (multiple sub-groups), Maine Health Data Organization, the Department of Office of Policy and Legal Analysis (OPLA), the Bureau of General Services, Department of Labor (multiple sub-agencies). To prepare for digital records and their role in data governance, periodic meetings are established to continue progress to identify and resolve technical and process considerations.

Most sub-agencies within this group are not yet prepared to address data

governance. They have limited staff for records management that typically have other agency-specific responsibilities. Many have data or analytics staff to address the tracking and reporting needs of the agency. That staff is largely not pursuing data policies and governance holistically. Rather, they are defining the data needs that support the transactional services that are being delivered. For both digital records and data governance, agencies require data literacy training as noted by the DOT and learnings from the State of Oregon. The staff available to support data efforts currently are serving multiple functions within the agency.

Staff are at the very beginning of the process when it comes to data governance for their respective agencies. That is to say that they are aware of the need and have a sense of the value. However, education is needed so that all can have a basic understanding of data governance and the agency's role in the process as well as the connection between data governance and archival records management.

These are examples of agency progress with some that are further along in the path of data governance in their own domains. Many, however, are at the point of identifying and assigning data staff, evaluating their systems, and recognizing that this work must move forward within the constraints of their operations. The following chart illustrates the current distribution of agency data governance policies and practices within the fourteen state agencies that have discussed their records with MSA juxtaposed against the digital records management as of March 2024.



Outreach and Educational Planning

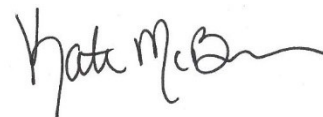
The Secretary of State’s agency worked collaboratively with the Permanent Commission on Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations Staff and the Deputy Secretary of State for Equity and Inclusion to plan a workshop program for agency engagement and education for data governance. This work was then expanded to include the entire Data Governance Working Group. Collectively, this group identified the need to engage a group that would discuss the purpose of data governance, its role in equity within the State of Maine, security and privacy as it relates to data, and to identify those most involved with data management at the agency level.

In closing, the Secretary of State’s agency has engaged, learned, and taken steps to prepare for its role in the Data Governance program and legislation. We have found that a small percentage of agencies have begun the process of standardizing and “governing” data within their own agencies, and they stand ready to work together with overarching State of Maine efforts to collect, protect, and preserve data. At the same time, much learning is needed across agencies that are either less data-centric or simply do not have the staff and expertise to advance data practices along with their service to Maine citizens. Education around data and its importance is a necessary and early step in the process. Equally clear is the need to ensure data policies will support the legal requirements for archiving state records. We look forward to supporting and actively participating in this process.

Sincerely,



Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State



Kate McBrien
Maine State Archivist