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A Refresher on Meaning & Best Practices

What are the characteristics of Trustworthy Records?

Reliability: One whose content can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities or facts to which it attests and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities.

Authenticity: One that is proven to be what it purports to be and to have been created or sent by the person who purports to have created and sent it.

Integrity: One that is complete and unaltered.

Usability: One which can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.

Source: U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

What is a signature?

Sig • na • ture

1. The name of one as written by oneself.
2. A distinctive mark, characteristic, modus operandi, or sound effect indicating identity.
3. The act of signing one's name.
4. The part of a physician's prescription containing directions to the patient.

Source: Webster's Dictionary

What is a contract?

It encompasses documents that are called something else, like agreements, memoranda of understanding, licenses, leases, rentals, sales of used property, purchases, intergovernmental agreements, grants, educational services agreements, and donations. It also includes proposals USF submits to get contracts. It represents a legally binding agreement or promise and, upon signing, you agree to what it says, not what you think or hope it says. It may impose both legal and financial obligations, or requirements on the part of the individuals signing.

What is the primary function of a signature?

- It identifies the actor and shows the authority to act;
- It documents the terms of the action in a manner that is legally binding and cannot be repudiated;
- It creates a record traceable during investigations and admissible in court.