

# Memoranda 00-10 -- OMB Procedures and Guidance on Implementing the Government

April 25, 2000

**M-00-10**

## **MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

FROM: Jacob J. Lew  
Director

SUBJECT: OMB Procedures and Guidance on Implementing the Government Paperwork Elimination Act

This document provides Executive agencies with the guidance required under Sections 1703 and 1705 the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), P. L. 105-277, Title XVII. GPEA requires agencies, by October 21, 2003, to provide for the (1) option of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information, when practicable as a substitute for paper; and (2) use and acceptance of electronic signatures, when practicable. GPEA specifically states that electronic records and their related electronic signatures are not to be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability merely because they are in electronic form

GPEA is an important tool in fulfilling the vision of improved customer service and governmental efficiency through the use of information technology. This vision contemplates widespread use of the Internet and its World Wide Web, with Federal agencies transacting business electronically as commercial enterprises are doing. Members of the public who wish to do business this way may avoid traveling to government offices, waiting in line, or mailing paper forms. The Federal government can also save time and money transacting business electronically.

This guidance also implements part of the President's memorandum of December 17, 1999, "Electronic Government," which calls on Federal agencies to use information technology in ensuring that governmental services and information are easily accessible to the American people. Among other things, the President charged the Administrator of General Services, in coordination with appropriate agencies and organizations, to assist agencies in developing private, secure, and effective communication across agencies and with the public through the use of digital signature technology.

Creating more accessible and efficient government requires public confidence in the security of the government's electronic information communication and information technology systems. Electronic commerce, electronic mail, and electronic benefits transfer can involve the exchange of sensitive information within government, between government and private industry or individuals, and among governments. Electronic systems must be able to protect the confidentiality of citizens' information, authenticate the identity of the transacting parties to the degree required by the transaction, guarantee that the information is not altered in an unauthorized way, and provide access when needed.

To reach these goals, agencies must meet objectives outlined by GPEA guidance. First, each agency must build on their existing efforts to implement electronic government by developing a plan and schedule that implement, by the end of Fiscal Year 2003, optional electronic maintenance, submission, or transactions of information, when practicable as a substitute for paper, including through the use of electronic signatures when practicable. Agencies must submit a copy of the plan to OMB by October 2000 and coordinate the plan and schedule with their strategic IT planning activities that support program responsibilities consistent with the budget process (as required by OMB Circular A-11).