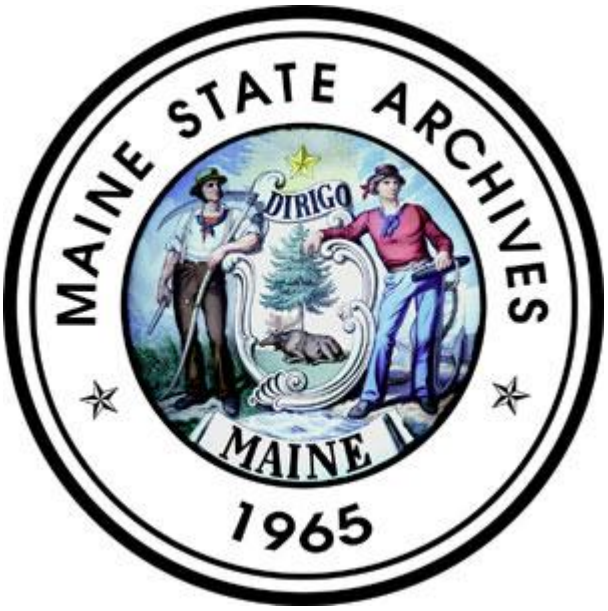
RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL



MAINE STATE ARCHIVES

Division of Records Management Services

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Records Management Procedure

Agency Head/Director
Establish and maintain an efficient and continuous records management program

Appoint agency Records Officers

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Records Officers
Create agency inventory (collaborate with entire agency)

Create and keep current agency Records Schedules

Create and update annually an office file plan (the office roadmap to records)

↓

All Employees
If the above procedures are followed, employees will know:

What records they are responsible for, how long records are to be retained,
in what format and where/how the records are to be filed/stored.

There will be no confusion as to what is or is not a record or what should or should not be kept.
It will all be mapped out in an in individual office file plan.

If there is anything which does not fit within the file plan, an employee
can then ask the agency Records Officer for assistance.

Basic Principles for All State Employees

Why Does the Records Management Program Exist?

The program was established under Title 5, Chp. 6, §95 and states:

7. The head of each state agency or local government agency shall establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of any records in compliance with the standards, procedures and regulations issued by the State Archivist.

8. Transfer of state records. To provide for the transfer to the archives of state records, disposed of under subsection 7, paragraph C, that have archival value;

9. Destruction of state records. To authorize and receive confirmation of the destruction of the state records of any state or local agency that, in the opinion of the head of the agency, are no longer of value to the state or local government agency, and that, in the opinion of the State Archivist and the Archives Advisory Board, have no archival value to the State.

What is Records Management?

Records management is the continuous and efficient program by which we identify and classify records, establish schedules and manage records throughout their lifecycle. In other words, what to keep, how long you keep it and whether or not it is destroyed or kept as Archival.

What are Your Responsibilities?

According to the Rules of Chapter 1 (Under APA Rule 29/255) it is the responsibility of the head of each agency to maintain an efficient and continuous records management program. It is also the responsibility of the head of each agency to appoint a Records Officer.

The appointed Records Officer will appoint Assistants as needed. The Records Officer will have a thorough knowledge of the agency, its records and functions. The Records Officer will create and maintain appropriate records schedules.

All state employees are responsible for creating records needed to do the business of their agency, and documenting activities for which they are responsible. As a government employee, you are responsible for managing any and all public records (including email) for which you are the custodian.

All state employees are responsible for maintaining records so that information can be found when needed. This means setting up good directories and files, and properly filing records in a manner that allows them to be stored and efficiently retrieved when necessary.

All employees are responsible for carrying out the disposition of records under their control in accordance with agency records schedules. All employees should be made aware of records schedules and which records they are responsible for keeping (custodian of the record).

Why Is Records Management Important?

Agencies produce records every day. They are the vital component to the functionality of the agency for administrative, fiscal, legal and historical purposes. Not knowing what to keep is not the answer to Records Management and neither is keeping everything. There are implications for both.

An effective records management program offers several benefits:

Promotes a positive reputation for State Agencies

In the height of public access, government agencies need to remain accountable for the records they create and maintain. Public records document agency business and with proper management agencies can show they are taking the correct action for the appropriate amount of time and for the right reasons. When an agency demonstrates proper public records organization, a management program where records are controlled, and destroyed in accordance to law, the state's reputation is improved as is the public's confidence in state government.

Helps the Agency Fulfill its Mission
It will help identify and protect the essential records of your agency; those records needed to keep the agency functional. Locating what you need, when you need it is a vital component to running an agency effectively.

Promotes Cost Effective Business Practice
A proper records management program will reduce the volume of records stored; improve storage and retrieval systems and help to get the right record to the right person effectively and efficiently. Records on current schedules will be destroyed when they should be, making the best use of physical and digital space (both which state agencies can pay for). An efficient records program will limit the risk and cost associated with FOAA requests and any possible litigation. Any penalties for the inability to produce requests could be avoided by having an organized program where employees can locate records.

What is a Record?

"Record" means all documentary material (books, papers, photographs, maps or other documentation, including digital records such as e-mail messages and attachments), made or received and maintained by an agency in accordance with law or rule or in the transaction of its official business; because they serve as evidence of the agency's functions, policies, decision, procedures, operations and other activities; or because of their informational value. Records can have varying purposes per agency. What are vital records to one agency, another agency may not even have or produce; different laws and statutes can mandate record retention periods for the different types of agencies. Therefore, it is very difficult to impose a "global" records program and give a tidy two column list of what to keep and what not to keep.

Examples of records:

- Board and Commission Minutes of Meetings
- Contracts
- Commissioner's Correspondence
- Project files
- Client Case Files
- Personnel files

Non-record examples:

- Personal Communications
- Employee non-work activities
- Meetings in which you participate, but are not assigned recordkeeping responsibility: convenience copies of meeting notices, agendas, minutes
- Other convenience copies of general notices
- Copies of records retained elsewhere
- Items not required to be retained by your assigned tasks or to document those tasks

How Do Agencies Manage Their Records?

Records are managed by creating agency schedules. Schedules provide the guidance necessary to prevent unneeded records from cluttering agency offices help preserve mid to long-term records until they have served their purpose. The purpose of the Records Management Division is to apply retention periods to ALL state government records and update them as changes occur.

Four Key Items Every Employee Needs to Know

- Records must be managed throughout their life cycle, according to their retention schedules
- All agency records should be on up-to-date retention schedules
- All agencies should have an active Records Officer
- There are General Schedules and Agency Specific Schedules

The Records Everyone Has - General Schedules
General Record Schedules are issued by the Maine State Archives to provide retention and disposition standards for records common to several or all State agencies. They are located on our website. Before an agency schedule is created, be sure a General Schedule does not already exist.

Determining Retention Periods
In order to dispose of records at the appropriate time, it is necessary to evaluate them in relation to their period of usefulness to the department.

Total Retention Period - Time kept in your agency **PLUS** Time kept in the Records Center **EQUALS Total Retention Period**

Some specific questions in determining how long records are retained:

- **Administrative use:** *What is the value of the records in carrying out the functions of your department? How long will you need to be able to retrieve them immediately?*
- **Legal requirements:** *Are there any State Statutes or Federal regulations involved?*
- **Fiscal requirements:** *How much time must you allow for the completion of fiscal activities such as audit or budget?*
- **Historical/Archival:** *Do these records document important events, or the history and development of your department?*

Disposition Archives or Destroy?
Five hundred years from now, may someone want or need to look at these records? Will they be needed that far in the future for any legal or historical reasons?

The Structure of the Archives
The **State Records Center**, located in Hallowell is for those records which have a disposition destroy. The **State Archives** is for permanent records with historical/archival value. All records in Records Center status, including pre-archival records, remain under legal control of the agency that created them. Records in the Records Center are released only to cardholders of the creating agency. Any records sent to the Records Center must first be on an approved records retention schedule before they will be accepted for transfer.

E-Mail Management & Retention

How Long Do I Keep My Email?
Remember…Email is a format, not a record. Retention is determined by the **content** of the email. E-mail is subject to the same retention requirements as is paper correspondence.

Organizing and managing e-mail (and other files) will:

- Save space and money
- Provide more efficient access
- Maintain confidentiality where needed

Legal Implications
Organizing and managing e-mail will reduce legal exposure in DISCOVERY proceedings on records that otherwise should have been destroyed. In other words, if it exists and someone asks to see it, the agency has to produce it. So, if you have records that are requested in discovery proceedings that were supposed to have been destroyed, but weren't, you must produce them regardless of when they were *supposed* to have been destroyed. It also limits your own liability for deleting records you shouldn't, and gives you authority to delete those files you should delete.

When Are My Emails Records?
If you are conducting government business in that email it is considered a record (communication sent or received in the transaction of state government business.) Keep in mind, if you are sending work emails using your personal email account, your account could become subject to Public Information Requests and legal discovery.

Email Public Records
E-mail received or created (incoming or outgoing), in the course of state business, can be an official public record. Depending on the topic, it may or may not be a *confidential* record under the Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). No official public records may be destroyed unless authorized. Clear authorization and a practical management system are essential to insure the proper disposition of official e-mail records.

Freedom of Access Act
The Freedom of Access Act defines a public record as "any written, printed or graphic matter or any mechanical or electronic data compilation from which information can be obtained…that is in the possession or custody or an agency or public official of this State or any of its political subdivisions" *with specific exceptions for confidentiality purposes* [1 MRSA 402 (3)].

Email Retention Periods
The vast majority of state employees will have little, if any, e-mail requiring permanent retention. Generally, senior administrators through the division director level have a greater proportion of permanently valuable e-mail, given its greater degree of policy content.

Email Schedules

General Schedules
The Archives' General Schedules (covering records in all agencies) establish retention periods for correspondence, regardless of media. In the General Records Schedules, most general correspondence, and therefore most e-mail, has a retention period of 3 years. The only exceptions are:

- Commissioner or Agency head correspondence and e-mail is considered of historical value and to be kept permanently.
- Correspondence and e-mail related to the official state budget is to be kept for 4 years (two biennia) and then destroyed.
- Correspondence and e-mail related to equipment and property is to be kept for 5 years, and then destroyed.
- Transitory Correspondence (General Schedule #13, Item 2) - Correspondence received/created by a state agency that is purely informational in nature is considered transitory correspondence and should be kept for 60 days or until no longer needed. These include routine questions from the public, letters of thanks, etc.
- Junk mail such as advertisements and any personal e-mails an employee may have in their state e-mail accounts do not need to be preserved, since these are not official state government records.

In summary, most state agency correspondence and e-mail has a retention schedule of 3 to 5 years (unless for a commissioner or agency head, which is archival / permanent). Keep in mind this speaks to correspondence. There are also program records associated with your emails which would be filed with related records series according to their appropriate records schedules.

Main Categories of Email Records

- Correspondence
  - Administrative
  - General
  - Routine/transitory
- Records related to your specific responsibilities (Program Records)

When Are Emails NOT Correspondence?
Records, but not correspondence
- Reports
- Working papers
- Meeting minutes or agendas
- Work assignments or schedules
- Job applications

Non-records
- Copies
- Reference material
- Spam

Identify YOUR Records
The number of records on retention schedules can be overwhelming so identify only the records that apply to you. Generally, not more than 10 records series will apply to any employee.
- What types of email do you send?
- What types of email do you receive?

Think in terms of what your job functions are and ask yourself: "Is this email related to my job functions?"

What Emails Do I Keep?
- First, determine whether or not it is a record
- Second, determine if this email is related to your job or should go to someone else
- Third, decide if you are the custodian – the person who has the "record copy" of the email

First Step – Non Records
These can be deleted immediately because they are not records and subject to a retention schedule.
- **Personal Correspondence:** Any e-mail not received or created in the course of state business, may be deleted immediately, since it is not an official record: the "Let's do lunch" or "Can I catch a ride home" type of note.
- **Publications:** Promotional material from vendors, and similar materials that are "publicly available" to anyone, are not official records unless specifically incorporated into other official records.
- **CC's:** The responsibility would not be yours
- **Spam**

Second Step – Not Part of Your Job
Determine if the content of the email is directly related to your job or responsibilities as a state employee. Should it go to somebody else? If you can answer YES and either delete or forward the email, then it is not a record (you are not responsible for the record).

Third Step – Custodian of Record
If you have determined that the email is a record and is part of your job (step 1 and 2) the final step would be to determine if you in fact hold the "record copy." Are you the designated person in your agency responsible for retaining these records? If NO you can either delete or forward.
If YES this email is the official record copy and YOU must retain it according to your records retention schedule. This is where appropriate agency schedules and file plans are vital because employees would know what records they are responsible for keeping.

Managing Your Electronic Records
Any electronic record (word processing document, spreadsheet, e-mail message, etc.) should, if it's "record material" that requires retention and filing, be stored in a properly named directory/subdirectory.

Some Suggested Mailboxes...
Here are some mailbox suggestions:

- Personal e-mail (delete at will)
- Non-record material (delete at will)
- Transitory e-mail (delete after 60 days or until no longer needed)
- Commissioner correspondence (Archival)
- General Schedule correspondence (retain 3-5 years)
- Program Records (retain according to agency schedule)
- Permanent Program Records – such as board meeting minutes, corporate charters (Archival)

Email Tips
- Don't use personal email for professional business
- Don't delete emails indiscriminately
- Limit the use of "Reply All"
- Fill in/use meaningful subject lines

When Employees Leave a Position
When an employee leaves a position, computer files, including e-mail, may NOT be automatically deleted! Senior administrator should take action to ensure that the electronic records of employees are maintained as required, especially if an employee leaves a position.

Starting a Records Management Program

What are the benefits of having a well-planned, consistently followed records management program?
- Easy to locate information when it's needed
- Records are retained and destroyed accurately and efficiently
- Less need for storage of all types
- Identify and protect essential records

What are the dangers of having no program?
- Waste of resources to store records
- Waste of staff time to search records; unable to locate records when needed
- Possible liability
- Possible destruction of archival records or destroying records prematurely

To gain control of your agency's records, you need to find out what records exist and how to manage them.
- Determine what is and is not a record
- Establish an office Inventory for records
- Create/Manage Agency Schedules
- Create a File Plan

Things to Keep in Mind
- Not all business materials are records
- Part of a records management program is deciding what is and what is not a record
- Focus on material's content, not the format
- Most "non-record materials" do not document government business or are duplicates of evidence documented elsewhere and can be destroyed
- Records must be managed throughout their life cycle, according to their retention schedules

Creating a Records Inventory

An Inventory is a high level survey of all types of information created, received and stored by your agency. It will list the name of each Record Series, give a description and location of the records. To start the inventory, focus on different types or "families" of records – these are called Record Series.

A Records Inventory can tell you:

- Records Series (common collections)
- Format (paper, digital, etc.)
- Location
- Date range
- Volume of material

Purpose of the Inventory:

- Streamline the Records Management Program
- Plan for better access and security
- Identify needed improvements
- To help create file plans
- Identify essential records
- Help you to become familiar with schedules or create schedules

Steps in the Records Inventory Process

- Define the inventory's goals: starting a program, updating schedules, moving office, moving records to digital format
- Define the scope of the inventory: it should include all records and other materials
- Obtain top management's support: keep management and staff informed at all stages
- Decide on the information to be collected: (the elements of the inventory).
- Prepare an inventory form (or use an existing one – RM 59)
- Decide who will conduct the inventory (and train them properly)
- Learn where the agency's files are located (both physically and organizationally)
- Conduct the inventory
- Verify and analyze the results

What Should be Included

- Date prepared
- Office maintaining the files
- Person conducting the inventory
- Series location, title, description
- Inclusive dates
- Record Format (medium)
- Arrangement (filing system)
- Volume (in cubic feet)
- Annual accumulation
- Reference activity (how often are records referenced)
- Vital records status (would these be needed in an emergency)
- Duplication (indicate copies in other formats)
- Restrictions on access and use (confidentiality)
- Schedule (list schedule/series) or unscheduled

Records Schedules

A Records Schedule will tell you how long to keep specific types of records and what should happen to those records. A Records Schedule is a plan that plan helps identify, manage and retain records for the right amount of time.

A Records Schedule will:

- Establish how long to keep records to support agencies work
- Protect legal rights and interests
- Document history
- Make sure everyone in the agency is retaining records for the same amount of time

Two types of Record Schedules: General Schedules, Agency Specific Schedules

- General Schedules – those that would apply to most or all state agencies.
- Agency Specific Schedules – those created because of unique programs or activities within your agency.
- All records, regardless of format need to be managed under appropriate records schedule – general or agency specific.

Prior to submitting an Application for Records Retention Schedule, you should check to see if a General Schedule exists for the records and know what schedules currently exist for your agency.

Agency Schedules

Review your current agency schedules. Do they need to be revised? Are there any obsolete schedules? Any that need retention updates? Any that need description revisions? Any agency/unit names that need to be revised?

Basic elements of a Schedule:

- Title
- Description
- Retention Time/Disposition

Creating an Office File Plan

A file plan is a tool for you and others in your office to manage records. It is a roadmap to records, listing different types of records maintained by the office, where and how those records are stored and how long they are to be kept. A File Plan is like a smaller, specific version of agency records schedules that includes information on how and where the records are kept. A comprehensive office file plan provides a "location" for every record in an electronic or paper filing system. Understanding the file plan helps users know where to file their records and helps others know where to find the records they need to complete their tasks. File Plans only list those records held in a particular office.

Why Keep a File Plan

A file plan can help your agency:

- know what kinds of records your office has
- know where to go for information needed
- help with legal counsel
- simplify records retrieval and retention
- know what to keep and how long
- help the transfer to electronic media

File Plan Steps

1. Identify the types (series) of records in your office – what they are and where they're stored; note any central storage areas for paper records and shared drives for electronic records. (Note: If you have already done an Inventory, the File Plan will be fairly simple to create and follow much of the same information.)
2. Match those records to your agency records schedules.
3. Build your file plan listing records in your office along with filing and retention instructions and information on where and how to file and find records.
4. Have the plan reviewed and approved with everyone in your office so everyone understands and can use it – make sure the plan is accurate and complete; make the plan accessible for your office and review it annually.

File Plan Set-Up
Give the Who, What, Where and When of the Records

- Location – where paper or electronic files are physically maintained
- Custodian – person responsible for filing the records
- Content – description of the documents that should be filed
- Arrangement – how documents are organized within the folders
- Labels – instructions on how to identify folders
- Disposition – information from the records schedule

How to Schedule Records

Purpose of Records Schedules
Schedules provide the guidance necessary to prevent unneeded records from cluttering agency offices. They also help to maintain mid to long-term records until they have served the needs of the agency. Records retention schedules drive an agency's records management program. The purpose of the Records Management Division is to apply retention periods to ALL state government records and update them as changes occur.

Record Series
A group of identical or related records (a group of records created by the same business process that document the same type of transaction). Examples: case files of an institution; invoices; transitory correspondence. Documents in the same record series are normally filed as a unit, whether in a drawer of paper records, a computer subdirectory, or an e-mail folder. Series are kept together because they relate to the same topic, document the same type of transaction or are created by the same business process. It includes all formats – paper, electronic, etc. Several Series can be put on one Schedule.

Some characteristics of a record series are:

- Produced by the same activity;
- Documents a certain kind of transaction;
- Relates to a particular subject;
- Arranged under a single filing system;
- Retained for the same period of time.

The Schedule Process
Your agency needs to know how long to keep its records, and what to do with them afterward. Should they be destroyed, or should they be preserved permanently at the Maine State Archives? Records retention scheduling organizes your agency's records into series and sets a retention period for each series. It also establishes the correct disposition – destroy or transfer to Archives – for each series. The first step in gaining control of your agency's records is to find out what records exist!

Title 5 §95 requires that all state government records be covered by retention schedules. This includes records that never leave the creating agency's custody.
Retention schedules for digital records work about the same way as for paper, microfilm, and other "traditional format" records. The most important principle to remember is this: Content, not format, determines retention. **In other words, regardless of media or whether or not records come to the Records Center or Archives, they need to be on a current schedule, under the appropriate agency, division, etc.**

Determining Retention Periods
In order to dispose of records at the appropriate time, it is necessary to evaluate them in relation to their period of usefulness to the department.

- How long will the records be needed for business purposes, as far as the creating agency is concerned? When do the records become "closed?"
- What is the frequency of use?
- What is the record's value?

Location of Records

- In office records retention (CURRENT records) - Only records requiring frequent reference (more than once a month per file drawer) should be kept in your office.
- Records Center retention (SEMI-CURRENT) - Records which your agency references less than once per month, that still need to be retained should be kept in the Records Center.

The Structure of the Archives

- The State Records Center – located in Hallowell – for records that have a disposition destroy
- The State Archives – for permanent records with historical/archival value

What About Archival Records

MRS Title 5, Chapter 6: STATE ARCHIVIST [1995, c. 148, §6 (AMD) .] 3. Rules. To adopt such rules as are necessary to effectuate the purposes of this chapter. No restrictions or limitations may be imposed on the use of records that are defined by law as state and local government records or as records open to public inspection, unless necessary to protect and preserve them from deterioration, mutilation, loss or destruction. Restrictions or limitations imposed by law on the examination and use of records transferred to the archives under subsection 7, paragraph C and subsection 8 remain in effect until the records have been in existence for 50 years, unless removed or relaxed by the State Archivist with the concurrence in writing of the head of the agency from which the records were transferred or the successor in function, if any.

Retention Periods **(for further information see page)**

Total Retention Period = Time retained in agency + Time retained in Records Center

Determining the appropriate retention period for records requires taking a look at their value to the creating agency, and their long term value to researchers.

Some specific questions to ask when deciding how long to retain your records:

- **Administrative use:** What is the value of the records in carrying out the functions of your department? How long will you need to be able to retrieve them immediately? Day to day business operation; correspondence, memos, reports – typically need for these records is short lived
- **Legal requirements:** Are there any State Statutes or Federal regulations involved? Records mandated by law or regulation; may be needed as evidence in legal cases or leases, titles, contracts, court case files
- **Fiscal requirements:** How much time must you allow for the completion of fiscal activities such as audit or budget? (Typically 7 years) Document an agency's fiscal responsibilities; invoices, receipts, purchase orders
- **Historical/Archival:** Do these records document important events, or the history and development of your department? Document history of the agency; board minutes, agency policy decisions, Commissioner's correspondence

Record Disposition *(This also applies to email records.)*

- **Non-archival (non-permanent)** retention is based completely on the record's time-value to the business functions of the agency, including audit or other statutory requirements, and reasonable access by interested parties.
- **Archival (Permanent)** retention is based on the record's value after it no longer serves the agency's business. (Do these records have historical value? 500 years from now, is someone going to want to look at these records? Keep in mind the purpose of archival records in regards to confidential material. Also be aware of the statute which makes records held by the Maine State Archives available for public inspection after 50 years.

About 5% of Maine state government records have enduring value sufficient to justify transferring them to the Maine State Archives.

In order to dispose of records at the appropriate time, it is necessary to evaluate them in relation to their period of usefulness to the department.

General Schedules - The Records Everyone Has
General Record Schedules are issued by the Maine State Archives to provide retention and disposition standards for records common to several or all State agencies. General Record Schedules provide disposition standards for records common to several or all state agencies. Each includes:

- Record series numbers
- Record series descriptions
- Which agency holds the record copy, and the record copy's required retention period and disposition
- The retention period for agency copies of the same record

The record copy is a single copy of a record retained by its assigned custodian as the official record of a government transaction.

The agency copy is kept by the agency that initiates the transaction. Agency copies are not convenience copies which may be destroyed when no longer useful, because they may not be exact duplicates of the record copies that the creating agency has sent for processing. The General Schedules require agency copies to be retained for specific time periods.

Examples:
The Bureau of Human Resources maintains the record copies of employee personnel records. Each agency also maintains its own copies of these records and must do so according to the requirements of General Schedule 10.

The Division of Purchases maintains record copies of contracts with vendors. Each agency that sends contracts to Purchases for processing and approval also maintains its own copies of these contracts, which must be kept for the retention period required by General Schedule 1.

Before submitting a new Application for Records Retention Schedule, please check to see if a General Schedule exists for the records. The General Records Schedules may be viewed or downloaded from the Archives website.

General Schedules

- Schedule 1, Vendor Series
- Schedule 2, Accounting Series
- Schedule 3, Payrolls and Authorizations
- Schedule 4, Income Series
- Schedule 5, Budget Series
- Schedule 6, Financial Order Series
- Schedule 7, Attorney General Opinions Series
- Schedule 8, Inventory Series
- Schedule 9, Records Management Series
- Schedule 10, Personnel Series
- Schedule 11,MFASIS Reports (comprised of Human Resources – Personnel, Payroll, Position Control, Benefits Administration)
- Schedule 12, Minutes of Meetings
- Schedule 13, State Agency Correspondence
- Schedule 14, Rules Adopted by State Agencies
- Schedule 15, Quality Management Records
- Schedule 16, State Employee Charitable Programs

Creating New/Amending Existing Schedules

Your Agency Records Officer signs and submits an Application for Records Retention Schedule and Inventory Form. Forms can be found on the Maine State Archives web site. The application provides general information about each series to be scheduled and the Inventory provides detailed information. Records are managed as a Schedule and Series. (Think of it as related files within a folder on your computer – that's how the Schedule and Series function.)

Application for Records Retention Schedule
The first step in creating a new schedule is completing an Application for Records Retention Schedule (MSA/RM 22). This form can be downloaded from the Maine State Archives website. You cannot fill it out on line – you must save the form to your computer and then complete it. The application provides general information about the records you want to schedule, such as the creating agency, series title, and proposed retention period. It serves as a cover or "batch" sheet for the Records Series Inventory form (or forms) to follow.

The Records Series Inventory
Complete a separate Record Series Inventory (MSA/RM 59) for each series listed on the Application for Records Retention Schedule. The Record Series Inventory form can be downloaded from the Maine State Archives website. This form supplies detailed information about each series to be scheduled (description, cubic feet of hard copy records that exist and require storage, justification for proposed retention period, proposed disposition of Archives or destroy). The Record Series Inventory form must be accompanied by "live" samples, which means no blank forms. It is acceptable with sensitive records for the agency to black out (redact) confidential information, or to submit a form completed with fictional data; but there must be samples, to show what is in the series.

Amending an Existing Schedule
After a retention schedule has been approved by the Archives Advisory Board, your agency may need to change it. You might need to do this because of a change in statute, in a Federal regulation, in your agency's policies, in your business needs, or simply because experience with the records tells you that they are being accessed more or less frequently than you expected when writing the current schedule.

Download the Application for Records Retention Schedule form. Mark the application "amendment" and fill in the following information: series number; series title; new retention periods; schedule number. Be sure to check "change in retention" as the reason for the amendment.

We do not require an amendment for a change of media if it is an in agency retention only. However, if it is a change of media which will impact the Records Center retention or if the series has a disposition of Archives, an amendment to the existing schedule needs to be created.

When changing a record series description, you need to submit the Application for Record Retention Schedule (marked "amendment"), and the Record Series Inventory updated to reflect the change of description.

Also, please include samples of any added documents. You may need to file such an amendment if the documents the series includes have changed, which usually happens when the program itself has changed. You do not need to change the description for minor alterations in the documents the series includes.

Review and Approval

Any new schedules or amendments are submitted to the Records Management Analyst for initial review. If there are any basic questions or retention justifications that need to be made, the Analyst will send a request back for further information or clarification. If the Analyst is in agreement with the submitted schedule or amendment, it will move on to the State Archivist for final approval, signature and adoption. A signed copy will be returned. This is considered an agreed to contract between the submitting agency and the State Archives.

The State Records Center

Records which your agency references less than once per month, that still need to be maintained for legal, administrative or referencing reasons should be kept at the State Records Center. (Pre-archival records are shelved at the Archives, but held in "Records Center status" until they become due for transfer to the State Archivist's holdings.) All Records in the Records Center and all pre-archival records belong to the agencies that created them.

Before any records are sent to the State Records Center, they must be on an approved Records Schedule. You must know the Schedule and Series number for the records you are transferring.

Be certain you aren't sending records too soon or that records have not already met their full retention times before boxing up records to send them to the Records Center. See examples:

Agency Schedule:
5 years in agency; 5 years in Records Center
Total Retention Period – 10 years; Disposition = Destroy

Questions:
When do the Records come to the Records Center? When are Records scheduled for destruction?

Example #1
Your records close in the year 2008
You would then keep the records in your agency until the year 2013
They could then be sent to the Records Center where they would be kept until the year 2018
We will send you a disposition notice to sign (notice to destroy the Records because they have met their 10 year retention)

Example #2
You find records in your office from the year 2000 (closed files).
You would NOT send these to the Records Center because they have already met their 10 year retention period (2000 + 10 years = 2010 – that year has been surpassed).
These records may be destroyed.

Transferring Records to the State Records Center

Materials Required

- Records Center Boxes (we cannot accept records packed in other containers). Records Center Boxes can be ordered from WB Mason (Paige Company #801 archive boxes - PAIG801). You must have a state account.
- Transmittal of Records Form (MSA 33) and Packing List. Available by request or on the Maine State Archives website: http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/

Requirements for Packing Boxes

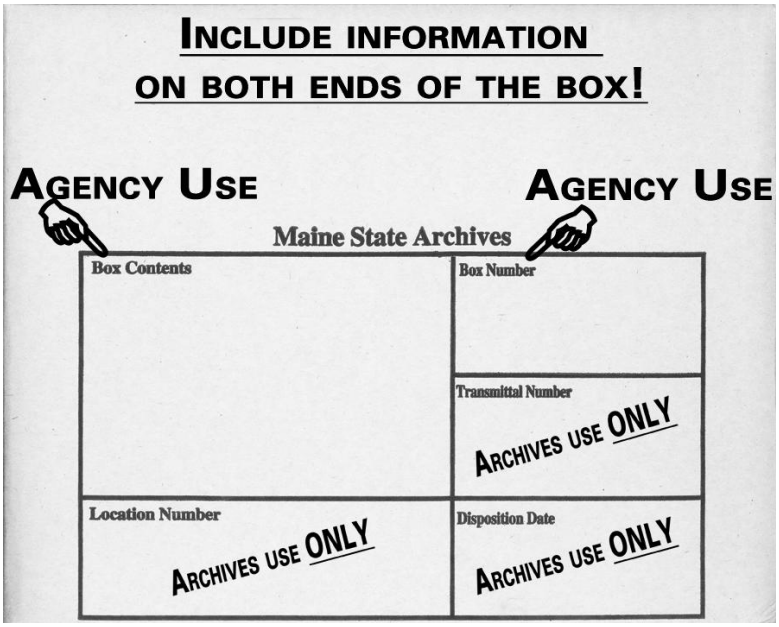
1. Use new Records Center boxes. Recycling and reusing can be wonderful for some things, but not for cardboard containers that must be marked clearly and must stand up to years of handling.
2. Arrange files first by the year's closing date, then alphabetically or numerically within that year. Only one fiscal or calendar year per box, please. The Records Center Supervisor must receive a corresponding transmittal in advance, with enough time to review it and contact you if there are questions before delivery or pick up. Please do not add boxes to a transmittal without the Records Center Supervisor's approval.
3. Do not overstuff boxes.
4. Place an itemized packing list in the box.
5. Do not mix different record series in the same box.
6. Number your boxes consecutively, with no duplicate box numbers. If you use the same box numbers on different transmittals, it will be harder for our staff to shelve the boxes; and it will also make retrieval more difficult.
7. On the outside of the box, list the first and last file inside it.
8. Unacceptable boxes include those containing hanging folders or three ring binders; reused, old, improperly marked boxes; overstuffed boxes; boxes with broken handles. Records Center staff will be referencing this material; and the easier it is for us to handle your boxes, the better they will protect your records. This also helps keep our staff members safe.

Marking Boxes
Using a black marker, write the following on each box (on the long side):

- Box number
- Arrangement (this is simply the first and last file in the box)

Record Center staff will add the agency number, retention date, and assigned location number.

We STRONGLY recommend that you place an itemized list in each box and keep a copy for your own records. This helps us retrieve what you request, and it leaves no doubt as to whether or not a record was in the box when it came to us.



The Records Center will accept only boxes that meet the criteria just listed. We may refuse pickup or delivery if these requirements are not met. This helps us to provide the best possible service to our customer agencies.
If you have questions, please call 287-5792 (Records Center Supervisor).

Table of Equivalents
Standard Record Center Box = 1 Cubic Foot

Type	Size	Volume	Cubic Feet
Standard File Cabinet	Letter 8 1/2" x 11" Legal 8 1/2" x 14"	1 full drawer 1 full drawer	1.50 2.00
Lateral File Cabinet (39" drawers)	Letter 8 1/2" x 11" Legal 8 1/2" x 14"	1 full drawer 1 full drawer	2.50 3.00
Shelf Files (15" x 36")	Letter 8 1/2" x 11" Legal 8 1/2" x 14"	1 full shelf 1 full shelf	3.00 3.40
Index Cards	3" x 5" 4" x 6" 5" x 8"	12,000 cards 6,000 cards 4,800 cards	1.00 1.00 1.00
Microfilm	16mm x 100' 35mm x 100'	90 reels 44 reels	1.00 1.00

Packing Boxes – Dos and Don’ts

- Do label folders in sequential order, which may be alphabetical or numerical.
- Do use archival boxes.
- Do mark the boxes with box number and first and last file date
- Don’t overload or stuff records into boxes. (You should be able to insert 2 finger widths into the box.)
- Don’t mix different record series in the same box. We need to track the retention period for each box on our database, and we cannot do this efficiently if the box contains more than one series.
- Don’t use hanging (“pendaflex”) folders in the box. This wastes space as well as supplies, and it also makes the boxes heavier for your staff and ours to handle.
- Don’t use three-ring binders. Not archival material.

Completing the Transfer - From your office to the State Records Center or Archives
The Records Center Supervisor will process your transmittal, and will contact you to arrange pick up or delivery. *(We pick up boxes only in the Augusta and Gardiner area)*

After the Records Center has received your boxes, we will complete the Transmittal of Records Form with box locations and return it through the Records Officer to the contact person listed.

The contact person should then attach the itemized list of box contents to the Transmittal of Records Form. This will create a complete record of what is in the boxes and where they are located in the Records Center!

Guidelines for Safe Transport of State Records

Use a covered vehicle!
It's amazing, and frightening, what can happen to records in the bed of an open pickup truck. The boxes can come open – the vehicle can drive through an unexpected rain shower – someone can decide to open a box and rummage through it, if the driver has to stop and leave the vehicle unattended. A tarp and tie-downs are better than nothing, but transporting State records in an open vehicle is always an invitation to trouble.

Handle boxes carefully, and make sure anyone else who will be handling them knows you expect this, too.
Why would anyone stand on a box filled with State records, in order to reach something else on the truck? Without thinking that the box might collapse and that wouldn't do much for the records inside it? This has happened before, and we don't want it (or anything similar) to happen again. Take a moment to make sure the people who will be performing the transfer know that the boxes contain official State documents, and must be handled with reasonable care.

Make sure you know what will happen if a hired carrier can't pick up the boxes from you, and deliver them to us, all in the same day.
Your contract with the moving company should specify how they will secure your records if they have to hold them overnight. Ideally, this shouldn't happen at all; but experience tells us that it can. And sometimes will.

Make sure your contract with a hired carrier specifies that the vehicle's cargo compartment must be kept locked at all times, except during loading and unloading (and will not be left unattended, even briefly, during the loading and unloading processes).

Specify that the boxes will be stacked no more than three high.
This will avoid collapsed boxes and crushed, damaged records.

Palletized boxes should be shrink wrapped to keep them from shifting during transport.
Another way to avoid crushing, bursting open of boxes, and the resulting damage. Loads do shift, even when carefully packed. If you're using a commercial shipper, the company should be able to protect your records by doing this.

Access to the State Records Center/Retrieving Your Records

You can request retrieval of your records from the Records Center on any work day between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The Records Center provides its customer agencies with centralized, economical storage for their inactive (sometimes called semi-current) and pre-archival government records.

Only those persons who have been issued an *Authorization for Records Center Use Card* (MSA/RM 32) may order records retrieved.

Records Officers should use the Application for Authorization for Records Center Use Cards, available for download on the Archives website to order cards.

We do not issue photo IDs. Please have both your access card number and your driver's license, security badge, or other photo ID ready if you want to pick up files in person. We will need to make sure we are giving the files only to someone authorized to have them.

Access cards are not transferable. Do not assume that you can use a colleague's card, and do not lend your card to anyone else.

Records Officers are responsible for notifying us of all changes in access authorizations. When a cardholder leaves the agency, the Records Officer must tell us so we can cancel the card. We also need to know if a cardholder whose duties have changed should no longer be allowed to order records, or should have different access restrictions.

You may request records by e-mail, fax, telephone, or mail. If *we receive correct and complete referencing information*, we will put the requested records in our outgoing mail within 24 hours – excluding days when state offices are closed – or notify you that they are ready for pickup, if you prefer.

Please use *Request for Reference Service Form* (MSA/RM 70) to order records in writing. You can find this form on the Maine State Archives website.

We **prefer** e-mail requests whenever possible!(RecordsCenter.Archives@maine.gov) E-mail requests prevent transcribing errors. They also save time that we must otherwise spend writing down what we think we hear in a telephone message.

The Legal Destruction of Records

When Records Management Destroys Records
We destroy records stored in the Records Center only after:

1. The Records Center Supervisor sends a *Records Center Disposition Notice* (MSA/RM 72) to the agency of record;
2. The Records Officer approves the disposition;
3. The Records Officer returns the form to the Records Center Supervisor;
4. Maine State Archives reserves the right to destroy records that have passed (by 10 months) their expired retention date. The need for Archives involvement occurs when the generating agency refuses to sign off on the destruction of the records. (Warehouse space is always at a premium)

This is the Records Officer's opportunity to double check and make sure the records are not needed for an uncompleted audit, anticipated litigation, or other need that the retention schedule did not anticipate.

When Your Agency Destroys Records

- Agencies may destroy records according to approved retention schedules.
- Records should be destroyed in a confidential manner (preferably by shredding). The State of Maine's contractor for waste paper provides shredding as part of its routine service. That was not true with past

recycling contractors, though; and it may not always be true in the future. If in doubt, you must check. It is your agency's responsibility to make sure its records are destroyed without breach of confidentiality.

- The key to confidential destruction is keeping your records secure until they are picked up or processed by the contractor. Do NOT store them to wait for pickup in an area accessible to the public, such as a loading dock, hallway, or conference room.
- Even if the files are not confidential in the legal sense, no agency wants to be the subject of a news story about records that were supposed to be picked up for destruction — but instead wound up intact and outside of the State of Maine's possession. We have all read accounts of documents found in dumpsters, scattered along roadsides, or even picked from landfills by concerned citizens.

Frequently Asked Questions

Records Center and Archives

Who can use the Records Center (Records Management Services)?
Maine State Agencies, Courts, Legislature - The State Records Center stores records for Maine State agencies once they have met their in agency retention. The records must be listed on an approved records retention schedule.

What is the difference between the State Records Center and the State Archives?
They are at separate locations and have two entirely separate purposes. The Records Center provides off-site storage to state agencies--the agencies retain legal custody until the time the records meet their retention period, at which time a notice is sent for the records to be destroyed. When records have met agency retention requirements and are designated "Archival," agencies transfer legal custody of the record to the State Archives for historical preservation and public research. Confidential records should not be deemed as "Archival" for the purposes of this agency. If an agency needs to retain confidential records permanently, they should be kept within the agency or the confidential information should be redacted. According to State Statute, all records transferred to the Maine State Archives are available for public examination after 50 years.

Who has access to our agency records?
All records created or maintained by state agencies are the property of the State of Maine and the public that paid for their creation. However, the agency that creates or maintains the records is the legal custodian of the records. Records transferred to the Records Center remain in the legal custody of the agency of origin. This means that the Records Center only takes physical custody of the records. The Records Center is responsible for protecting the records from unauthorized access, damage, and deterioration. Both legal control and control of access to the records is retained by the agency until the records are either transferred to the Archives or destroyed. The Records Center will not release records to another agency or to the public. (Only agency card holders have access.)

Records Management Process

How do I become an Agency Records Officer?
Review this within your agency. Your Commissioner or head of each department should appoint Records Officers. Complete the form for State Agency Records Officer Designation. Have it signed by the appropriate authority and send it to the Records Management Analyst.

How do I get records out of my office?
Select the records to be stored. The records must have an approved records retention schedule or General Schedule and have reached their in agency retention, but not their disposition date. Place the records in order in Records Center boxes and complete appropriate transmittal form. Include a packing list and mark the boxes appropriately (box number, first and last file date). Contact the Records Center.

How do I find out what our agency schedules are?
You can find the Schedules listed on the State Archives website or can request a copy by contacting the Records Management Analyst.

How do I update my Schedules?
Complete the Application for Records Retention Schedule and mark it as an amendment and justify the changes.

Where do I get boxes for storage at the Records Center?
Records Center Boxes can be ordered from WB Mason (Paige Company #801 Archive Boxes - PAIG801).

How quickly can I get a file?
An agency card holder can request retrieval of their agencies records from the Records Center on any Maine State working day from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Telephone, e-mail or written requests will be mailed to the requesting agency or may be picked up (normally within 24 hours - IF we have received correct and complete referencing information).

Records and Schedules

How do I know when to send records to the Records Center?
Know your agency schedules.
Example Agency Schedule: 5 years in agency; 5 years in Records Center; Total Retention Period - 10 years; Disposition = Destroy

Example #1: Your records close in the year 2008. You would then keep the records in your agency until the year 2013. They could then be sent to the Records Center where they would be kept until the year 2018. We will send you a disposition notice to sign (notice to destroy the Records because they have met their 10 year retention)

Example #2: You find records in your office from the year 2000 (closed files). You would NOT send these to the Records Center because they have already met their 10 year retention period (2000 + 10 years = 2010 - that year has been surpassed). These records may be destroyed.

Is our office notified before records are destroyed?
Yes! Notices of disposition to destroy records are sent to the Agency Records Officer to obtain a signature from the originating department authorizing their destruction. This is required before the Records Center disposes of any records. This process can be delayed if justification is given for documenting legal, audit or program need.

Is there any recording of deleted documents that needs to be made when our office completes a deletion of records?
First of all, any and all records must be on an approved Records Schedule and the records must meet their retentions in order for the agency to destroy them. If the records have met their retention and can be destroyed, it would be advisable to document this procedure. You are not required to send anything to Archives. From a digital perspective there is nothing that is recorded when documents are deleted. Again, this would be up to the agency to decide; it may prove to be valuable later on.

Records and Retention

Why can't I be given a list so I know exactly what to keep and what not to keep?
In a sense, you are. That's the purpose of Records Management trainings and why it is vital for agencies to have Records Schedules in place and have an active Records Officer. It would seem convenient if we could create a master list, specifically naming records you keep in one column (including retention times) and listing records you destroy at will in the other column. We have tried to do this with the General Schedules, which are meant to provide guidance for those records common to all or most state agencies. The problem with us coming up with a clear-cut list is that state government is not a single entity but is comprised of several, varied agencies and every agency has different records which are unique to the function and purpose of the agency. What may be important for "Agency A" to retain for 5 years might not have the same scope to "Agency B" who retains the record for 1 year or "Agency C" who doesn't have that type of record at all. Records Management is here to help YOU manage YOUR records and to create schedules so your staff knows what they should be keeping as records and what they can destroy as a non-record. Keep in mind that we are here to assist state agencies in managing their records but ownership and legal authority remains with the agency.

What is the consequence for holding documents longer than the prescribed retention period?
Keeping documents longer than needed take up space that could be used for other material that has just begun its retention period. If it is digital material, you are paying for server storage on 'expired' material. It is not good practice and leads to poor management of an agencies records. Discovery - if it exists and someone asks to see it, the agency has to produce it.

Is there any recording of deleted documents that needs to be made when our office completes a deletion of records?
First of all, any and all records must be on an approved Records Schedule and the records must meet their retentions in order for the agency to destroy them. If the records have met their retention and can be destroyed, it would be advisable to document this procedure. You are not required to send anything to Archives. From a digital perspective there is nothing that is recorded when documents are deleted. Again, this would be up to the agency to decide; it may prove to be valuable later on.

What about draft documents that undergo several revisions? (This includes paper and/or email)
Draft documents or working papers that:
- are circulated via e-mail
- propose or evaluate high-level policies or decisions and
- provide unique information that contributes to the understanding of major decisions of the agency

SHOULD BE PRESERVED PERMANENTLY

- Other drafts circulated for comment, which demonstrate significant revisions in the view of the author, should be scheduled, as is the final product.
- Uncirculated drafts may be destroyed at will by the author.

What about multiple copies of the same document? (This includes paper and/or email)
If another agency has responsibility for keeping a record copy, and if you have no business need to retain it, the document is simply a duplicate and subject to deletion/destruction at will.

Email Retention

When employees leave, who is responsible to catalog and store information?
It is the responsibility of Agency managers and supervisors to secure and archive records of former employees. For steps on how to archive e-mail, see the instructions on the State internal website at: http://inet.state.me.us/foaa/archiving.aspx.

If there are several people attached to a particular e-mail, who is actually responsible to retain?
The person who started the email officially started the 'record copy' which is considered the original. The only records that should be archived are those that are made or received in connection with the transaction of official government business; and maintained as evidence of the agency's functions, policies, decision, procedures, operations and other activities; or because of informational value. There are often many more copies, because it is so easy to "cc" others and to forward messages. Generally the person who originates the message holds the record copy, which is the one that must be kept for the full retention period. Those who receive other copies should delete them as soon as they have served their purpose. However, if the recipient is required to do something after receiving the message that may mean an additional record copy has been created. Example #1: Your boss assigns work to you by sending you an e-mail. You will be held responsible for completing the assignment, so reading this e-mail and then following its instructions is part of your job. You must therefore treat it as an official record. Example #2: The Governor's Office sends out an e-mail reminding all employees to use public transportation whenever possible. This message has only one record copy, held by the person whose job it was to send it. Everyone else can and should delete the message after reading it.

If each employee is required to maintain their own e-mail records, will there be sanctions against the employee that fails to maintain their records properly, and if so, to what extent?
There aren't sanctions in place if an employee fails to maintain their records properly, but the Records Officer may be asked why they didn't provide assistance in doing this and the employee's supervisor may be asked to explain

why the employee didn't follow the policy protocol. If employees are prematurely deleting records/emails then this practice prevents fulfilling the legal requirements of FOAA.

If the same information is kept on electronic records and paper, do both mediums have to be archived?
If paper and electronic make up the records together, then yes, they both need to be kept under Record X schedule, but if the paper is a "copy" of the electronic version then it does not need to be "archived" - it is duplicate information and what we are trying to get agencies to move away from - saving an electronic version in their agency and sending paper copies of the same material to the Records Center.

Is it better to just keep all my email messages?
There are several reasons why keeping all e-mails indefinitely is not a proper management solution. First, storage of digital records is not free and can get unnecessarily expensive if records are not managed efficiently and effectively. Second, the more messages stored, the longer and more complicated a task search and retrieval becomes. Third, records kept beyond their retention date are a liability for the organization retaining them. What is there must be searched for and produced if requested; and costs of doing this otherwise needless work can be enormous.

Is everything on my computer a public record?
Whether or not it is an official record, anything that is stored on a State of Maine computer is a public record legally speaking unless a privacy statute protects all or part of it from disclosure.

Is it okay to just save the last email in a string or print out emails and save them in paper format?
Although it may seem adequate for the retention of the record to delete email messages after the content has been saved in another program or has been printed for paper filing, when a FOAA search or legal discovery proceeding includes review of a state employee's e-mails, missing messages can create two problems. First, it is apparent to the person performing the review that certain messages are no longer there. This can be confusing to the reviewer, and it may be viewed by the requestor as an attempt by the State of Maine to conceal records instead of releasing them. Second, every e-mail message has metadata attached. This "data about data" is invisible to the e-mail user, but it is often exactly what most interests a FOAA or legal discovery requestor. So destroying it by deleting the original message, even after saving the text to another format (paper included), can be treated by the courts as a deliberate act of bad faith. Deleting the individual messages in "threads" creates the same problems as saving them in other formats. A FOAA requestor may not get the information actually sought, and a court may rule that the State of Maine's response to a discovery proceeding is deliberately inadequate because original messages cannot be produced with all their metadata attached.

Should e-mails that go back and forth between sections dealing with routine daily operations be archived?
The only records that should be archived are those that are made or received in connection with the transaction of official government business; and maintained as evidence of the agency's functions, policies, decision, procedures, operations and other activities; or because of informational value.

What do I do with attachments I receive with e-mail?
File them with other electronic documents on your PC or network and apply the appropriate retention schedule. Your PC files should be organized similar to your e-mail. Attachments can then be filed in the PC folder that corresponds with the e-mail folder.

Records Management Definitions

Accession: To transfer physical and legal custody of documentary materials to an archival institution.

Active Records: Records that are referred to more than once a month per file drawer. They are normally maintained within the agency of record.

Administrative Value: That usefulness of a record which is determined by the minimum length of time required to have the record or record series available in the agency office for the conduct of day-to-day operations; generally, administrative value is inherent through program or project completion or the completion of a business transaction.

Agency of Record: The office responsible for maintenance and disposal of the records it creates and receives in performing its official functions.

Archives: When used as a noun and capitalized, it is the facility designated as the repository for the preservation of permanent records of the State of Maine. When used as a verb, to denote the disposition of a record, it means "save for permanent retention by the Maine State Archives."

Archiving: The off line storage of digital records, including e-mail messages, before disposition action is taken.

Assistant Records Officers: Individuals, appointed and supervised by a records officer, who are responsible for records management within subdivisions of Maine state departments or agencies, such as bureaus or divisions.

Attachments: All files that can be joined to an e-mail message, and transmitted with it from sender to recipient. Types may include, but are not limited to: Word processing documents; spreadsheets; databases and "snapshots" from databases; images.

Born Digital: A record that is created in a digital format, and printed (if at all) only to create convenience copies.

Confidential Records: Those records which are not generally available for examination by the public as stipulated by state or federal legislation or regulations.

Convenience Copies: Additional copies, created for informational purposes only, that may be destroyed when they are no longer useful. Convenience copies should never be kept longer than the record copy, as this can create confusion and resulting legal issues.

Cubic Foot: A standard measure of volume for records, 12 inches high, 12 inches thick. The volume of records that will fill a standard records storage box.

Delete: The process of permanently removing, erasing, or obliterating recorded information from a medium, especially a reusable magnetic disk or tape.

Destruction: In records management, the primary type of disposal action. Methods of destroying records include selling or salvaging the record medium and burning, pulping, shredding, macerating, or discarding it with other waste.

Digital Records: Records created using computer hardware and software, that can only be retrieved and read by using a hardware/software combination.

Disposition: Those actions taken regarding state records after they are no longer required to conduct current agency business. These actions include transfer to the State Records Center for temporary storage, transfer to the State Archives for permanent preservation, and destruction.

Document: Information set down in any physical form or characteristic. A document may or may not meet the definition of a record.

Drafts: Support documents, working files for reports, special studies, memorandums, and correspondence that may support major program policy development. These support documents may be needed to fully understand the alternatives and options considered for high-level program initiatives, and the basis for deciding on a course of action. Some drafts contain unique information in substantive annotations or comments added during circulation for comment or approval. Agencies should maintain such drafts, with the file copy of the final document..

Email: Formally, it is a document created or received on an electronic mail system including brief notes, more formal or substantive narrative documents, and any attachments, such as word processing and other electronic documents, which

may be transmitted with the message. Attachments are considered to be part of the message.

Electronic Records: Records that cannot be read without the use of electronic equipment. Electronic records include both digital (computer) records, and analog records such as nondigital audio and video recordings.

Evidential Value: The usefulness of records which document the history of an agency's organization and function. It may also describe data necessary for legal purposes.

File Arrangement: The manner in which a record series is organized in a file, e.g. alphabetically, numerically, chronologically.

Fiscal Value: That value of a record which is determined by state and/or federal audit requirements or by the informational value relating to financial transactions and obligations of the agency.

Forms Management: The function that establishes standards for the creation, design, analysis, and revision of all forms within an organization and assures that they are designed, produced, and distributed economically and efficiently

Freedom of Access Act: The Freedom of Access Act is the State of Maine statute defining the rights of the public to have access to, and copies of, non-confidential public records held by the State of Maine, its counties, municipalities, and other public entities. See 1 M.R.S.A., Chapter 13.

Frequency of Referral: The number of times a record series is referenced during normal business activities. Daily? Weekly? Once a month? Once a year, or rarely if at all?

General Retention Schedules: Disposition schedules which apply to all offices within a particular branch of state government. They are prepared for records which are common to most agencies.

Historical Value: The long-term value of a record to scholars or to posterity, as determined by the Archives Advisory Board and the State Archivist.

Inactive Records: Records which are no longer referred to in the conduct of current business. They are normally transferred to the Archives if permanently valuable, or destroyed if no longer of value to the State of Maine.

Informational Value: The value of a record that provides unique and permanent information for purposes of research; relates to archival record analysis.

Lawful Custodian of Records: The head of a state department, office commission, board, or other unit of state government, or his/her authorized deputy, or the custodian to whom the records were transferred pursuant to law.

Legal Discovery (or Discovery): Legal discovery is a formal investigation, governed by court rules, that is conducted before trial. Discovery allows one party to question other parties, and sometimes witnesses. It also allows one party to force the others to produce requested documents or other physical evidence.

Legal Value: That value of a record which is determined by statutory provisions of Maine State Statutes, Federal Code of Regulations, and any other applicable provisions or the value inherent in records that provide legal proof of a business transaction.

Metadata: Data about data. Specifically, for the purposes of State of Maine electronic records management, data concerning an electronic record's creation (creator and date of creation), transmission, editing, viewing, and any other details captured by the particular system being used to create, transmit, and store that record.

Microfilm: A high resolution film containing an image greatly reduced in size from the original; the recording of microphotographs on film.

Non-Record: Material that does not meet the definition of a record and thus is not subject to a retention period. Convenience copies such as a reading file, unofficial copies kept for reference, stocks of publications, blank forms, and non-government related publications. Also, personal records such as e-mail messages unrelated to State of Maine business.

Permanent Record: Records considered to be so valuable or unique in documenting the history of an agency that they are designated for preservation in the Maine State Archives.

Pre-Archival Records: Records scheduled for preservation in the Maine State Archives, but currently stored in Records Center status.

Public Records: "The FOAA defines "public record" as "any written, printed or graphic matter or any mechanical or electronic data compilation from which information can be obtained, directly or after translation into a form susceptible of visual or aural comprehension, that is in the possession or custody of an agency or public official of this State or any of its political subdivisions, or is in the possession or custody of an association, the membership of which is composed exclusively of one or more of any of these entities, and has been received or prepared for use in connection with the transaction of public or governmental business or contains information relating to the transaction of public or governmental business". A number of exceptions are specified. 1 M.R.S. § 402(3)

Purging: Removal of individual papers, folders, or groups of folders from a larger group of records, usually to permit disposal of parts of the group and retention of the selected portions. Eliminating material before it is stored.

Record Copy: The copy of a record that must be retained for the term indicated by its related records disposition schedule.

Records: All books, papers, photographs, maps, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received in connection with the transaction of public business, which are maintained because they serve as evidence of the functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations and other activities of state organizations or because of informational value contained therein.

Records Inventory: An identification and description of all of the records possessed by an organization.

Records Management: That function of administrative management and business operations concerned with the creation, protection, retention, retrieval, and preservation of records and recorded information required for the continuance of operations.

Records Officer: An employee appointed by the director or administrator of a state agency to represent the agency in records management matters and to function as a liaison between the agency and the Division of Records Management Services of the Maine State Archives.

Records Retention Schedule: A timetable that identifies the length of time that a record must be retained in active and Records Center status before final disposition, either through destruction of transfer to Archives.

Records Retrieval: The process of locating and delivering records for agency use.

Records Series: A group of identical or related records that are normally used and filed as a unit.

Scheduled Records: Records whose final disposition has been approved by the Maine State Archives and, for records whose disposition is "destroy," by the Archives Advisory Board.

Security Microfilming: The process of filming documents while continuing to retain the original documents. The film serves as a back up to the original. This procedure is usually applied to records judged to be vital to an agency's operation.

Semicurrent Records: Records that, on average per cubic foot, are referred to only once or twice a month. These records should be sent to the State Records Center.

Shredding: The destruction of documents and microfilm by mechanical shredding, pulping, or beating to render them illegible and beyond reconstruction.

Social Media: World Wide Web applications such as Twitter, FaceBook, YouTube, and others designed for social networking purposes, which government agencies may use a means of communicating with citizens.

State Records Center: The facility designed for the organized storage of inactive (semicurrent) records retained for administrative or legal purposes.

State Records Management Standards: Requirements included in the Archives and Records Management Law (Title 5, Chapter 6, §95); in rules adopted by the Maine State Archives under the Administrative Procedures Act; and in retention schedules approved by the State Archivist.

Transfer: The movement of records from one location or custodian to another, usually moving records from the active files to inactive files or from agency office space to a records center or an archival establishment. Physical transfer does not relieve the owning organization of legal and management responsibilities for non-permanent records. Accessioning permanent records to the Maine State

Archives, however, transfers both legal ownership and responsibility for the records to the Maine State Archives.

Unscheduled Records: Records or record series for which no decision on disposition has been made and which must be preserved until legal authority on disposition has been approved.

Vital Records: Records which are absolutely essential to continue and/or reconstruct the operations of a state agency or office subsequent to an emergency arising from enemy action or a natural or man-made disaster such as flood, fire, tornado, riot, explosion, etc.; those records which are necessary to recreate the agency's legal and financial position and to preserve the rights of the agency, its employees, and the general public.

Working Papers: Documents such as rough notes, calculations, or drafts assembled or created and used in the preparation or analysis of other documents. Working papers and drafts can be records.

Records Management Forms

Records Management Forms Policy

This policy provides the procedures for submitting Records Management forms, and identifies who has the authority to approve/sign for the following actions. Every agency must have an appointed Records Officer who will follow the Records Management forms policy. Except for the Request for Reference Services form, all Records Management forms, including transmittal forms, require the signature of a Records Officer/Assistant (or Commissioner/Agency Head). Any agency seeking to send boxes to the Records Center must have the authorization from the agency Records Officer before the material can be accepted.

State Agency Responsibility
The head of each agency will appoint a Records Officer. The Records Officer will be responsible for the efficient management of records for that agency, including digital records, in compliance with the policies of the State Archivist. The person chosen as Records Officer should have a thorough knowledge of the organization and its functions. The Records Officer will appoint Assistant Records Officer(s) for each unit within the agency.

Who has Authorization?

- **Request for Reference Services** –Agency cardholders can sign this form and request records from the Records Center. Anyone seeking to retrieve records must have an access number. Records Officers and Assistants can also sign this form and request records.
- **Application for Records Retention Schedule and Records Series Inventory** –any inventory may list a specific contact person, but the forms must be signed by an Agency Records Officer or Agency Head.
- **Transmittal of Records** –the packing of boxes for transfer to the Records Center needs an oversight process and final approval by a Records Officer/Assistant or Agency Head before records are accepted, even though boxes are often packed by agency cardholders.
- **Records Officer/Cardholder Form** – Records Officers need approval from the Commissioner or Agency Head. Cardholders and/or Assistants can be added by the Agency Records Officer.
- **Disposition Notice** – this form needs to be authorized by a Records Officer/Assistant or Agency Head.

Maine State Archives
84 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0084
Phone: (207) 287-5790

APPLICATION FOR RECORDS CENTER USE CARDS
State Agency Records Officer Designation

Pursuant to MRSA Title V, §95: The head of each agency will appoint a Records Officer. The Records Officer will be responsible for the economical and efficient management of all records for that agency, including digital records, in compliance with the policies of the State Archivist.

Instructions: State agencies must use this form to notify our office of an addition, deletion, or change of designation of an individual as Records Officer or Assistant RO, or to add or delete agency cardholders. Records Officers must be appointed by Commissioner or equivalent agency head. Fill out one form completely and submit a hard copy with the original signature to the above listed address.

Department:	**Bureau and Division:**
Mailing Address:	**Phone/Fax:**

ACTION:
❑Add as RO ❑Add as Assistant RO ❑Update contact information
❑Remove as RO ❑Remove as Assistant RO ❑Add/Remove Cardholders below

Title:	Name:	Work Unit (Division):
Mailing Address (include physical location):		
Phone:	Fax:	Email:

Name of Commissioner/Agency Head: _____ Signature: _____

Additional Agency Cardholders

Name*	Work Unit (Bureau)	Mailing Address (include physical address)	Phone/Email	Check Add/ Remove
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R
				❑A ❑R

*Please do not request a card for an employee against the immediate supervisor's wishes. Verifying the supervisor's approval is the requesting Records Officer's responsibility, not that of Records Management.

MSA/RM 32S/Rev. 072012

Maine State Archives
84 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0084
Tel. (207)287-5792 Fax (207)287-6035

Application for Records Retention Schedule

Department	Bureau/Division	Date
Agency Records Officer	Mailing Address	Telephone Number

Certificate of Agency Representative:
I hereby certify that I am authorized to act for this agency in matters relating to the disposal of its record series as described in this Records Retention Schedule. These records will not be needed for current business after the retention period(s) specified.

Date	**Signature of Agency Records Officer**

☐ New Schedule ☐ Amendment to Exiting Schedule

If amendment, please indicate reason:
☐ Change in retention (please give justification)

☐ Other (describe)

Series No. *(If Amended)*	**Series Title**	**Media Type***	**Retain in Agency****	**Retain in Center****	**Total Retention Period**	**Destroy or Archives**	**Action Taken** *(Leave Blank)*

*See Inventory Form for media examples. **Give amount of time in agency and in Records Center (i.e. no. of years, contingent upon event, less than one year, permanent, etc.)

Maine State Archives Use Only

Notification to Agency:
This Records Retention Schedule is approved except as noted in the "Action Taken" column.

Agency No.	Schedule No.
Date	**Signature of State Archivist**

MSA/RM 22/Rev. 062012

Maine State Archives **RECORD SERIES INVENTORY**	For Maine State Archives Use Only		
	Agency No.	Schedule No.	Series No./Media

Department	Bureau/Division		Date
Person to Contact	Telephone No.	Location of Records	
Contact person's mailing address			
Series title			

Why does the agency keep these records—what program or programs do they support? How are the records used, and by whom? What might be found in a typical file? ***(Please include samples with inventory form; you may black out identifiable personal information if this raises confidentiality concerns. Also, please spell out all acronyms.)***

Frequency of Use
☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually For how long _____

At what point does each file become "closed" as far as your business needs are concerned? Possible examples: When client is discharged; when fiscal year ends; when case has been inactive for six consecutive months.

Arrangement	**These records are retained by**	**Media Type**
☐ Alphabetically ☐ Chronologically ☐ Geographically ☐ Case number ☐ Other _____	☐ Calendar Year (1/1 – 12/31) ☐ State Fiscal Year (7/1 – 6/30) ☐ Federal Fiscal Year (10/1 – 9/30)	☐ Paper ☐ Microfilm ☐ Microfiche ☐ Audio Tape ☐ Digital File ☐ CD ☐ Photograph ☐ DVD/Video ☐ Other _____

Date of Oldest File	Volume in Cubic Feet if Applicable	Annual Rate of Accumulation if Applicable	Filing and Storage Equipment *(How are records stored)*

Can the same information be found in other records? *(If yes, please explain. We are asking this because it's important to know where the State would go to reconstruct the records, in case of disaster.)*

Are records confidential? ☐no ☐yes If yes, which statutes or regulations apply?

Retention determined by ☐Statute ☐Agency Policy ☐Other ***(Please give statutory citation or identity of person who determines policy)***

How long do you need to store these records (total for paper files should not exceed 20 years):

In Your Agency	In the Records Center	Archives or Destroy *(your recommendation)*

Signature of Agency Records Officer or Assistant Records Officer	Date

MSA/RM 59/Rev. 072012

Maine State Archives
84 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0084
Tel. (207)287-5792 Fax (207)287-6035

TRANSMITTAL OF RECORDS

For Maine State Archives Use Only	
Agency No.	Transmittal No.

Page 1 of

No of boxes

Department	Bureau	Division

Person to contact	Telephone	Location (building, floor, room)

Mailing address	Retention Schedule *(to be inserted by RM staff)*		
	In Agency	In Records Center	Destroy/Archival
Restrictions on access / Authority			

Schedule No.	Series No.	Media	Series Title (See Records Disposition Schedule – use same title)	Are all records included closed and inactive?

Location *(leave blank for RM use)*	Agency Box Identifier	First Item	Last Item	Closed File Dates		RC Retention & Final Dispo. *(leave blank for RM use)*
				FIRST Date/ Year	LAST Date/ Year	
Records Officer Name		Access Code #				

Signature of Records Officer *(if e-mailed from a State address, typed name will be sufficient):*	Date	Received by *(Maine State Archives):*	Date

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Packing List for Box No.:
Page __ of __

File Name	File Number	Dates Covered by File

RM 34.0705

MAINE STATE ARCHIVES
Records Center
84 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0084
Tel. (207)287-5792 Fax (207)287-6035
RecordsCenter.Archives@Maine.gov

REQUEST FOR REFERENCE SERVICE

Title of Agency or Court			Date of Request	
Files Requested (file name and/or file number):			**Box No.**	**Location No.**
Name of Requestor	Access Card No.	Telephone	FAX	E-Mail
☐ Mail file requested to the address listed here:				
☐ Hold for pickup and call this number when file becomes available:				
File requested by: ☐ Fax ☐ Visit ☐ Mail ☐ E-mail ☐ Telephone				
Type of Record: ☐ Paper ☐ Magnetic Tape ☐ Microfilm ☐ Microfiche ☐ Other (please specify)				

MSA/RM RRS/Rev. 072013

Other Information from the National Archives

Disposition of Records – Record Values for Non-Permanent Records

Please keep in mind the information below is only meant to be used as informational guidance and many of these guidelines are specific to Federal Government records. Includes information on Administrative, Fiscal and Legal Values.

Excerpts from the NARA Disposition of Federal Records: A Records Management Handbook Web Edition

All agency records have value to the agency, but only a small percentage have permanent value. Records with temporary value should be identified and scheduled for disposal.

Records fall into three categories—those easy to appraise because they are obviously permanent, those easy to appraise because they are clearly temporary, and those in between that are difficult to appraise. Some records, such as treaties, laws, executive orders, and Supreme Court decisions, obviously have permanent value. Likewise, records of an administrative, or housekeeping, nature clearly have only temporary value and are disposable after a suitable retention period.

Between these two extremes fall many modern program records. Such program records are difficult to appraise because they document diverse agency functions, reflect differing record systems and practices, have various physical forms and characteristics, and contain a broad range of unique information. They require considerable attention in the appraisal and scheduling process.

Record Values
All records have value to the agency creating or receiving them or to oversight or other agencies. A few also have permanent value and warrant preservation by the Archives once the agency no longer needs them to conduct regular current business.

Records have value to an agency because:

- They are the basic administrative tool by which the agency conducts its business.
- They document the agency's organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions.
- They furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities.

Agency record values fall into three overlapping categories: (1) administrative, (2) fiscal, and (3) legal.

Administrative Value
All records have administrative value because they are necessary to conduct the agency's current business. The duration of this value may be long or short. Some records, such as program directives, have long-term administrative value. Others, such as messenger service files, have short-term administrative value. Many records at operating levels have short-term administrative value because they are correspondence duplicated elsewhere, reports summarized at higher agency levels, or logs serving as temporary controls.

Fiscal Value
Along with general administrative value, some records may have fiscal value. Records with fiscal value document the agency's financial transactions and obligations. They include budget records, which show how expenditures were planned; voucher or expenditure records, which indicate the purposes for which funds were spent; and accounting records, which classify and summarize agency expenditures. Such agencies as the Office of Management and Budget, the General Accounting Office, and the Treasury Department prescribe the form and content of many fiscal records. In most instances, only the data on the forms differ from agency to agency. Consequently the General Records Schedules provide disposition authorities for many temporary fiscal records.

Legal Value

Besides administrative and fiscal value, records may also have legal value. Some legal values relate to records that the law requires the Government to create and maintain in the course of its operations. Others, however, are quite broad and do not necessarily involve an agency's operations. Instead they are intended to protect the rights of individuals and organizations. Such records are useful in documenting legally enforceable rights or obligations, both those of the Government and those of persons directly affected by an agency's activities.

Records with legal value contain information that may be used to support rights based on the provisions of statute or regulation. These provisions may be general, such as the statute of limitations on claims or fraud; or they may be specific, such as those providing benefits to persons who have been discharged from the military.

Legal value has long been associated with records documenting such matters as benefits and property ownership. More recently, however, it has also been identified with records documenting environmental and potential health concerns, such as the handling or regulation of chemical and nuclear materials.

Examples of records with legal value include formal decisions and legal opinions; documents containing evidence of actions in particular cases, such as claims papers and legal dockets; and documents involving legal agreements, such as leases, titles, and contracts. They also include records relating to criminal investigations, workers' compensation, exposure to hazardous material, and the issuance of licenses and permits. Still other examples include records relating to loans, subsidies, and grants; entitlement programs such as food stamps and social security; and survivor benefits in Government pension and other programs.

Special concern for legal value applies only to temporary records, because if records are permanent they will always be available to protect legal rights. The General Schedules designates as temporary many records with legal value, such as those relating to contracts, claims, property disposal, payroll, and civilian personnel.

The duration of legal value varies with the matter at hand. For example, the legal value of contracts and claims records diminishes rapidly after final settlement, and it ends when relevant statutes of limitations expire. Based on statutes of limitation and fraud, other statutory provisions, and practical considerations such as lifespan, records with legal value may be disposable, although they may require a long retention period.

Before recommending retention periods for records that may have legal value, agencies should seek the advice of their general counsel. Factors to be considered in determining retention periods include applicable statutes of limitation, regulatory limits for claims or prosecution, the potential for fraud, and litigation trends involving procedural or substantive rights. They also include particular statutes or regulations granting or limiting a specific legal right as well as the availability of the same information in other record series or systems.

Agencies should retain documentation adequate to establish that they have fully considered legal rights in proposing retention periods for temporary records.

Appraisal Guidelines for Permanent Records

Please keep in mind the information below is only meant to be used as informational guidance and many of these guidelines are specific to Federal Government records. For example, records below related to correspondence and public relations for State Government records would most likely only apply at the Governor or Commissioner level.

Excerpts from the NARA Disposition of Federal Records: A Records Management Handbook Web Edition

These appraisal guidelines take the form of 15 general series and system descriptions intended to illustrate the types of records normally appraised by NARA for permanent, or archival, retention. Records officers should use these descriptions as guides to help identify permanent records, regardless of physical form or characteristics. Because of the wide variety of records accumulated by the Government and because of differences in agency organizations, functions, and recordkeeping systems, these guidelines cannot include all the records that may be eligible for permanent retention.

1. Records on Organization and Functions

- **Organizational charts and reorganization studies** - Organizational charts are graphic illustrations providing a detailed description of the arrangement and administrative structure of the functional units of an agency. Reorganization studies, conducted to design an efficient organizational framework to carry out the agency's programs, include materials such as final recommendations, proposals, and staff evaluations. These files also usually contain administrative maps showing regional boundaries and headquarters of decentralized agencies, or the geographic extent or limits of an agency's programs and projects.
- **Functional statements** - These are formally prepared descriptions of the responsibilities assigned to agency officials at the division level and above.

2. Formal Minutes of Boards and Commissions - These document substantive policy and procedural decisions, especially when a board or commission rather than an individual appointee gives an agency executive direction. Typically, these agencies are regulatory bodies. Minutes may be literal transcriptions or edited summaries. Audio or video recordings of the meetings also should be preserved.

3. Records of Internal Agency, Interagency, and NonFederal Committees - Included are minutes, agenda, proposals submitted for review, and final recommendations of meetings of ad hoc committees as well as more formally established councils, conferences, and task forces and study groups attended by senior agency officials.

4. Legal Opinions and Comments on Legislation - These are memorandums prepared by an agency's legal counsel or program officials on interpretations of existing laws and regulations, or the effects of proposed laws and regulations governing the agency or having a direct effect on its operations. Records selected concern the agency's primary missions and normally exclude general opinions and comments relating to other Federal agencies. Most of these records are permanent when created in the offices of general counsels of departments and independent agencies. Excluded are copies of bills, hearings, and statutes held for convenient reference.

5. Formal Directives, Procedural Issuances, and Operating Manuals Relating to Program Functions - Formal directives are distributed as orders, circulars, or manuals announcing major changes in the agency's policies and procedures. Normally these are issued by authority of the agency's head. Extensive procedures are frequently detailed in lengthy operating manuals. NARA generally designates as permanent those formal directives, procedural issuances, and operating manuals relating to program functions, but generally not those relating to routine administrative, or housekeeping, functions.

6. Selected Evaluations of Internal Operations - These are studies conducted to determine the effectiveness of the procedures adopted to achieve established policy goals. Audit case files are generally excluded. The studies may include evaluations of both program and administrative operations and may be made by the agency itself (inspectors general) or by outside oversight agencies (e.g., General Accounting Office). Only those studies recommending significant changes in policies and procedures merit preservation. Studies prepared by outside oversight agencies

should be proposed as permanent by the creating agency. All other copies that have not been annotated or integrated into operational files are disposable.

7. Analytical Research Studies and Periodic Reports - This category includes analytical research studies and periodic reports prepared by the agency, or by private organizations or individuals under contract to the agency or in receipt of a grant from the agency. Studies and reports selected for permanent retention may be statistical or narrative and may be recorded on paper, electronic, audiovisual, or other media. Regional reports prepared by field offices and forwarded to the agency's headquarters are frequently permanent because they contain information on ethnic, social, economic, or other aspects of specific localities. Sometimes only selected studies and reports are designated as permanent. Excluded from selection are published studies and reports included elsewhere in the agency's record set of publications.

8. Agency Histories and Selected Background Materials - This category consists mainly of narrative agency histories and histories of agency programs, including oral history projects completed by agency historians, public affairs officers, or private historians under agency contract. Some background materials, such as interviews with past and present personnel, generated during the research stage may also be selected for permanent retention.

9. Briefing Materials - These consist of statistical and narrative reports and other summaries, including audiovisual materials, created to inform agency heads and their senior advisers of the agency's current status or of major issues confronting the agency. They may be used to prepare such officials for hearings, press conferences, or major addresses.

10. Public Relations Records

- Speeches, addresses, and comments - These include remarks made at formal ceremonies and during interviews by agency heads or their senior assistants concerning agency programs and activities.
- **News releases -** These consist of one copy of each prepared statement or announcement issued by the agency's public affairs office for distribution to the news media regarding such significant events as the adoption of new agency programs, the termination of old programs, major shifts in policy, and changes in senior agency personnel. The medium selected may be paper, audiovisual, microform, or electronic. Excluded are news releases that provide only transitory or routine information.

11. Publications - This category consists of formal publications prepared to furnish information on agency policies or to promote agency programs and operations.

12. Selected Audiovisual and Graphic Records - These consist of agency originated motion pictures, still photographs, posters, audio and video recordings, cartographic materials, and architectural drawings created to record substantive events or information that cannot be or normally is not recorded in written form, along with related records needed to identify and facilitate the use of such records. Examples include maps recording topographic information for specific geographic areas as well as architectural or engineering drawings of significant Federal buildings and other structures.

13. General Correspondence, or Subject, Files Documenting Substantive Agency Programs – (for State Government) Governor/Commissioner/Agency Head

14. Selected Case Files - Individual case files may be chosen because the case meets one or more of the following criteria:

a) It establishes a precedent and results in a major policy or procedural change.
b) It is involved in extensive litigation.
c) It receives widespread attention from the news media.
d) It is widely recognized for its uniqueness by specialists or authorities outside the Government.
e) It is reviewed at length in the agency's annual report to the Congress.
f) It constitutes a significant accumulation of documentary material and information on a particular subject
g) It is selected to document agency procedures rather than capture information on the subject of the individual file.

Criteria "a" through "f" indicate the exceptional nature of particular case files, whereas criterion "g" relates to routine files chosen because they illustrate the agency's procedures. Individual case files selected as permanent under these criteria may include, but are not limited to, research grants awarded for studies; research and development projects; investigative, enforcement, and litigation case files; social service and welfare case files; labor relations case files; case files related to developing natural resources and preserving historic sites; and public works case files.

15. Selected Data

- **Scientific and technical data** - These data result from observations of natural events or phenomena or from controlled laboratory or field experiments. They generally are created at project or operating levels rather than at higher office levels. They may be found in laboratory notebooks, completed forms, tabulations and computations, graphs, microforms, and electronic files. Generally data selected for permanent retention are unique, accurate, comprehensive, and complete, and they are actually or potentially applicable to a wide variety of research problems.
- **Social and economic microdata** - These are unsummarized data collected for input into periodic and onetime studies and statistical reports including information filed to comply with Government regulations. The information may be on such subjects as economic conditions, taxes, health care, demographic trends, education, discrimination, and other social science areas. It may also consist of data on natural resources including their use, condition, and ownership; emergency operations including military actions and civil strife; political and judicial proceedings; national security activities; and international relations. Although agency reports and studies, briefing materials, and official releases often summarize these data, the unsummarized information, usually in the form of electronic records, may have permanent value.

Drafts and Working Files

Excerpts from Agency Recordkeeping Requirements: A Management Guide
National Archives and Records Administration Management Guide Series

Although records of Federal agencies usually contain high-level policies and decisions, policy formulation and execution may be poorly documented. Support documents such as drafts and working files for reports, special studies, memorandums, and correspondence that support major program policy development may not be incorporated into office files. These support documents may be needed to fully understand the alternatives and options considered for high-level program initiatives, and the basis for deciding on a course of action. Some drafts contain unique information in substantive annotations or comments added during circulation for comment or approval. Agencies should maintain such drafts, with the file copy of the final document, if any, when the drafts relate to formulation and execution of high-level policies, decisions, actions, or responsibilities.

In addition to drafts, working files and background materials may be needed to adequately document agency activities. Agencies should evaluate the documentation practices of senior officials and staff, engineers, scientists, and other professionals and specialists, particularly those who manage unique agency programs and major contracts, and provide guidance for ensuring adequate documentation. Special attention should be given to notebooks, notes, calculations, and other background materials that may contain information needed to supplement formal records. Drafts and working papers or files that propose and evaluate options or alternatives and their implications in the development of high-level policies and decisions or that document findings or support recommendations should be preserved.

Background materials or drafts that are records according to agency recordkeeping guidelines should be maintained in agency recordkeeping systems. Senior officials or their staff members should not keep such Federal records as personal papers. (See "personal papers/files" below.) Drafts and working papers or files that relate to routine program or administrative operations or that contain only corrections or editorial or stylistic changes may be disposed of as nonrecord materials.