

Why Records Management Matters



Training Objectives

This training is designed to help you:

- Know your records management (RM) responsibilities;
- Determine how to identify a Federal record;
- Understand fundamentals about how to manage Federal records; and
- Identify resources to help with RM.

Federal Records

"Includes all recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the United States Government or because of the informational value of data in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included." (44 U.S.C. 3301)



Why Records Management Matters

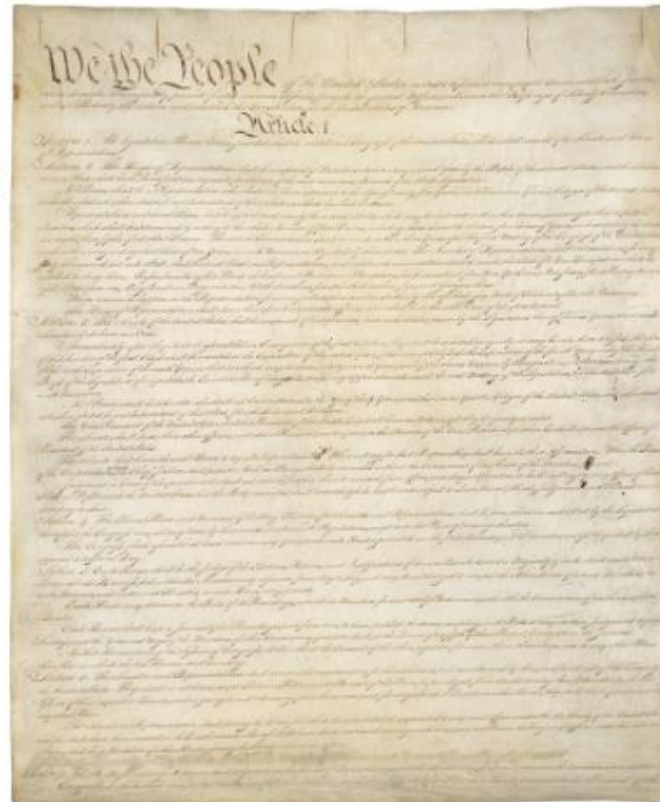


Telling the Nation's Story

The work you are doing today, captured in your Federal records, may be saved forever to allow historians to understand how your agency and your work contributed to the nation.

Federal records tell the story of the actions taken by the government and provide us with the history of the nation.

Federal records help citizens hold the government and government officials accountable for their actions. They enable us to accurately understand our past and who we are as a nation.



Why Records Management Matters



What is a Record?

The definition of a Federal record is:

"...all recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the United States Government or because of the informational value of [data](#) in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included." (44 U.S.C. 3301)

The short definition of a record is:

A record is information in any media, created or received while fulfilling the duties of your position or conducting official business, as evidence of Agency functions, organization, and activities.

What that means is:

All information created or received on behalf of USDA is a record of the United States Government.

What is Records Management?



Records Management is:

“The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved with respect to **records creation, records maintenance and use, and records disposition** in order to achieve adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the Federal government and effective and economical management of Agency operations.”

[36 CFR 1220.14 \(External Link\)](#) - [LINK](#)



What that really means is.....

We are required to **create and manage information** that documents our work, safeguard information that needs to be protected, and keep or dispose of Federal records according to an approved [records schedule](#).

A records schedule is a document that tells you how long to keep specific types of records and what should happen to those Federal records when you no longer need them.

What is Records Management?



- Contributes to the **smooth operation** of Agency programs by making readily available the information needed for decision-making and operational readiness;
- Facilitates the **effective performance** of program activities;
- **Protects the rights** of citizens, businesses, and the Agency;
- Provides **continuity** in the event of a disaster;
- **Protects information** from inappropriate and unauthorized access; and
- Helps the USDA meet **statutory and regulatory requirements**.



Roles and Responsibilities



In the past, most Federal records were created in print. Now, however, most government information is created and maintained electronically.

Regardless of format, the basic rules of records management are the same for all forms of media that contain Federal information.

Those rules are codified in the law and Federal regulations. USDA Departmental Regulation [LINK - DR 3080-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management, also defines your responsibilities for records management.

Roles and Responsibilities



It is the Law

[Title 44 USC, Chapter 31 \(External Link\)](#) § 3101 states: [- LINK](#)

The head of each Federal agency shall:

§ 3101 “Make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency’s activities.”

§ 3105 “Establish safeguards against the removal or loss of records they determine to be necessary and required by regulations of the Archivist. Safeguards shall include making it known to the officials and employees of the agency-

1. That records in the custody of the agency are not to be alienated or destroyed except in accordance with sections 3301-3314 of this title; and
2. The penalties provided by law for the unlawful removal or destruction of records.

Remember that if you are not taking care of your records properly, then you may be breaking the law!



Roles and Responsibilities

Dos and Don'ts

USDA Personnel (Employees, Contractors, Students, Volunteers, Interns, Fellows, and Political Appointees) **will, at a minimum:**

- Document and preserve the records and information created and received on behalf of USDA;
- Safeguard records and information, whether text, electronic, paper, social media, [email](#), or other physical form;
- Organize files in a manner that facilitates efficient and effective retrieval of information;
- Store records created during work and telework in an official, USDA-provided recordkeeping system, such as Shared Drives, and SharePoint;
 - One Drive files are not available to your team; and
 - One Drive files are deleted after you leave USDA;
- Coordinate with Agency Records Officers (AROs) regarding all aspects of RM, including schedules and disposition; and
- Request Agency Records Officer approval to dispose of, discard, shred, transfer, delete, or destroy records.

USDA Personnel **will NOT:**

- Remove or destroy Federal records from USDA without Agency Records Officer authorization and a NARA-approved schedule;
- Mix Federal records with contractor records, personal information, or [non-record materials](#); and
- Share or distribute Federal records and information with non-government entities without prior approval.

USDA Personnel are prohibited from destroying any unscheduled records.

Unscheduled Federal records are records that **are not** covered by an approved records schedule. They must be treated as PERMANENT Federal records until the National [Archives](#) and Records Administration (NARA) approves a retention schedule.

Office/Program Managers **must:**

- Perform reviews of RM activities to help ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements;
- Identify the official office of record;
- Contact Agency Records Officers when offices are realigned, or when new agency functions are being performed; and
- Ensure records and information being created and received are properly scheduled by working with Agency Records Officers.

[◀ Back](#)

Lesson 3 of 11

[Next ▶](#)

Roles and Responsibilities



Roles Specific to Records Management

- Records Custodians: Office staff who do Records Management at the lowest level (program/project/office) in your Agency.
- Records Liaisons: Staff who manage records at the division level (intermediate program/project/division/unit) in your Agency.
- Agency Records Officer (ARO): Person who heads an Agency's Records Management Program.

Roles and Responsibilities



Role: Records Custodians

These staff manage records at the office level. Records management is not usually part of the administrative staff's regular duties.



Records Custodians should be able to:

1. Apply a records/retention schedule;
2. Understand the agency RM staff structure;
3. Know and understand Agency RM policy and guidance;
4. Coordinate with Records Liaisons; and
5. Understand records storage operations regardless of record format.

Each program office at USDA should have a designated records custodian, and an alternate.

Roles and Responsibilities



Role: Records Liaisons



These staff manage records at the Division level. Records management is not usually part of the administrative staff's regular duties.

Records Liaisons should be able to:

1. Apply a records/retention schedule;
2. Know and understand Agency RM policy and guidance/evaluate implementation;
3. Control shared drives (If assigned);
4. Complete a records inventory (regardless of format);
5. Create [file](#) plans (regardless of format);
6. Communicate/Coordinate with Agency Records Officer;
7. Be familiar with NARA RM regulations; and
8. Conduct RM training for Agency staff.

Each Division at USDA should have a designated records liaison, and an alternate.

Roles and Responsibilities



Role: Mission Specialist

Each set of employees and personnel who perform a specific mission at your agency should have their own set of Records Management roles and responsibilities outlined for them.

These groups have records that specifically apply to them and may have specific training needs.



Examples:

- Lawyers;
- IT Staff;
- Engineers;
- Doctors;
- Historians;
- Budget analysts; and
- Scientists.

These mission specialists should be able to:

- Be aware of their RM responsibilities and how it applies to them;
- Apply the records retention schedule that covers their particular function;

Personal Papers?

Federal records are all recorded information:

- Regardless of form or characteristics;
- Made or received by a Federal agency under Federal law;
- Made or received by a Federal agency in connection with the transaction of public business; and
- Preserved or appropriate for preservation by a Federal agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the activities of the U.S. government or because of the informational value.



Records and information related to USDA and government business are the property of the United States Government.

Examples:

- Official correspondence;
- Grant requests;
- Performance appraisals;
- Contract files; and

Non-record materials are defined as:

“...Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents.”

44 U.S.C., 3301, Definition of a Federal Record

Keep in mind that non-record materials are the property of the United States Government. Therefore, the materials may have evidentiary value and still need to be turned over for Litigation or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. **Non-record materials must be managed as business assets.**

Examples:

- Duplicates of documents maintained in the official files and extra copies of correspondence;
- Rough notes, calculations, or non-substantive* versions of drafts assembled, created and used to prepare or analyze other documents, also called "[working papers](#)";
- Documents used only for reference or exhibition purpose;
- Catalogs, trade journals and other reference materials; and
- Stocks of publications.

*Substantive versions of drafts assembled, created and used to prepare or analyze other documents are **Federal records**. Contact your Agency Records Officer for assistance.

What are Federal Records, Non-Record Materials, and Personal Papers?



Recorded information is defined as:

“...all traditional forms of records, regardless of physical form or characteristics, including information created, manipulated, communicated, or stored in digital or electronic form.”

44 U.S.C., 3301, Definition of a Federal Record

What are Federal Records, Non-Record Materials, and Personal Papers?



Is it a Federal Record? Ask yourself...

1. Was it made or received for official business?
2. Does it provide evidentiary support for any of my agency's:
 - o Policies;
 - o Functions;
 - o Decisions;
 - o Procedures;
 - o Missions;
 - o Programs; and
 - o Projects or activities?

What are Federal Records, Non-Record Materials, and Personal Papers?



Personal Papers

Personal papers, or files, are documentary materials owned by an official or staff member that are not used in the transaction of agency business, but may be in a government office.

Personal papers are:

- Related solely to an individual's private affairs;
- Not used for agency business;
- Kept separate from Federal records and non-record materials; and
- Labeled as personal files.

Examples:

- Employee copies of your performance appraisal and personnel actions;
- Non-work-related email to a friend; and
- Magazine article you brought to the office.

How do I identify Federal Records?

You have a Federal Record

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, you have a **Federal record**:

- Did you create it or receive it as part of your Federal work?
- Are you or your office the creator of the record? Did you generate or receive the information to use for your technical/administrative work in conducting business?
- Does it contain informational value as evidence of your organization's functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operation, mission, programs, projects, or activities?
- Does it document business actions, such as: what happened, what was decided, what advice was given, who was involved, when it happened, the order of events, and decisions?
- Does it document what you knew, and when you knew it?
- Did it contribute to decisions made in your work or office?
- Is it an original document related to agency business that does not exist elsewhere?
- Is it a draft or interim document that has not been circulated to others, or does it contain substantive comments, and for which there is a final version being maintained?
- Is it received from another entity and used to justify an action, compliance, or work being conducted, such as an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum?

Note: Federal records may be found in any format, including but not limited to: electronic documents, data systems, text, social media, electronic messaging applications, and email messages. Think content, not format.

What are Federal Records, Non-Record Materials, and Personal Papers?



How do I identify Non-Records?

You May Have a Non-Record

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, you may have a **non-record**:

- Is it published or processed information that you received and use as reference, such as a dictionary?
- Is it a copy of a document or correspondence kept only for convenience or reference on which no action is taken, such as a poster detailing the cafeteria office hours?
- Is it information which is accumulated and maintained at the workplace, but which does not affect or reflect the transaction of your program business, such as take-out food menus?
- Is it junk mail or documentation that has no work-related informational or evidentiary value, such as a spam message trying to sell you a product?

To determine if you have non-record information, consult your Agency Records Officer for assistance.

What are Federal Records, Non-Record Materials, and Personal Papers?



Quick Review

- **Federal records** - Related to official business. They document work done, decisions made, correspondence sent and received, transactions, what events took place, who was involved, and other related topics. Assume it's a record and contact your Agency Records Officer for assistance in managing and preserving it.
- **Non-records** - Extra copies kept only for reference, reference materials, library materials, commercially published books, journals and magazines, office supply catalogs, blank forms, junk mail, artifacts and **copies** of records used in museum exhibits. Non-substantive drafts or working papers are usually considered non-records once you have a final version.
- **Personal files** - Not related to work. Personal medical appointment reminder notes, grocery lists, your child's sports team practice schedule, and other information not connected to your job or USDA.

Records Lifecycle



Records managers often use a model called the [Records Lifecycle](#) to describe how a Federal record is handled throughout its lifespan.

The records lifecycle has three main phases:

- Create or Receive;
- Maintenance and Use; and
- Disposition.

Records Lifecycle



Create or Receive (Step 1 of 3)

This includes the capture of Federal records in order to provide adequate and proper documentation of government activities. This includes:

- Capturing information about the record;
- Connecting related records; and
- Identifying the correct records schedule for the record.

Records Lifecycle



Maintenance and Use (Step 2 of 3)

This includes:

- Storing and retrieving Federal records;
- Using records for daily business;
- Securing Federal records and backing up electronic files;
- Choosing good on-site and off-site storage;
- Protecting the accuracy and authenticity of the information; and
- Ensuring electronic Federal records are migrated to readable formats when a system of software becomes outdated.

Records Lifecycle



Disposition (Step 3 of 3)

This includes:

- Following the disposition instructions on the records schedule for both paper and electronic records including shared drives, SharePoint or any other electronic platform;
- Transferring inactive Federal records to NARA approved, off-site storage;
- Destruction of temporary Federal records; and
- Accessioning of permanent Federal records into the National Archives.

Disposition of Records

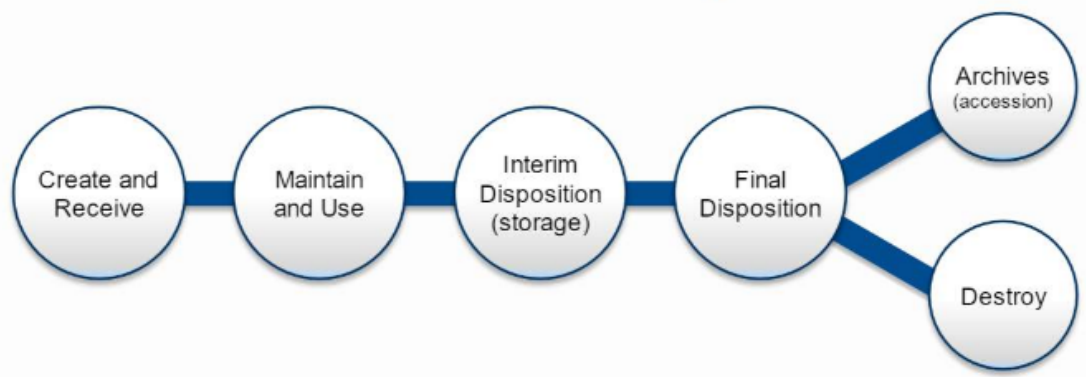


Records Lifecycle

What happens to a Federal record at the end of the lifecycle is determined by how valuable the record is to preserving history or the rights and interests of citizens.

Most records are considered temporary. Those records are destroyed after they are no longer needed for agency business in accordance with an approved records schedule. A very small percentage of records are considered permanent and are transferred to the National Archives to be kept forever.

Records in the Lifecycle



Disposition of Records



Types of Federal Records

The following sections will provide general guidance on the disposition of 3 types of records:

- Temporary;
- Permanent; and
- Unscheduled.

Disposition of Records



Temporary Federal Records:

- Are destroyed/deleted after a NARA-approved retention period;
- Require Agency Records Officer approval for destruction/deletion/disposal;
- Often require off-site storage when inactive; and
- May be kept past the destruction date because of a legal hold or other valid business need.

Examples:

- Time and attendance files;
- Employee travel documents;
- Procurement files;
- Budget and general accounting files; and
- Grant files.

Disposition of Records



Permanent Federal Records:

- Have historical value or other value that warrants permanent preservation;
- Require special care and handling;
- Are eventually transferred to the National Archives; and
- Are stored as part of our nation's history.

Examples:

- Executive correspondence of high-level senior officials;
- Directives and policy documents;
- Official USDA reports, decisions, press releases;
- High-level committee files; and
- Operating Administration organizational charts.

Disposition of Records



Unscheduled Federal Records:

- **Are not** covered by an approved records schedule;
- **Do not** have an approved disposition; and
- Must be treated as **permanent** records until a disposition is approved by NARA.

Disposition of Records



Litigation Holds and Preservation Holds:

Litigation and preservation holds can be implemented for a variety of reasons, for example: current or anticipated litigation, audit, Federal government investigation, Congressional inquiry, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, Privacy Act (PA) request, civil rights complaint, or similar action.

- Litigation and preservation holds can affect how long a record should be retained.
- Litigation and preservation holds are sometimes referred to as hold orders, freeze notices, preservation orders, or suspension orders.
- Agency Records Officers can assist in determining if records are under a hold by working with the Office of General Counsel and other stakeholders.
- Records subject to a litigation or preservation hold must be preserved and not moved until the hold is lifted.
- USDA's Directive outlining our litigation retention policy is Departmental Regulation [DR 3090-001](#), Litigation Retention Policy for Documentary Materials including Electronically Stored Information. [- LINK](#)

Records Schedules and Storage

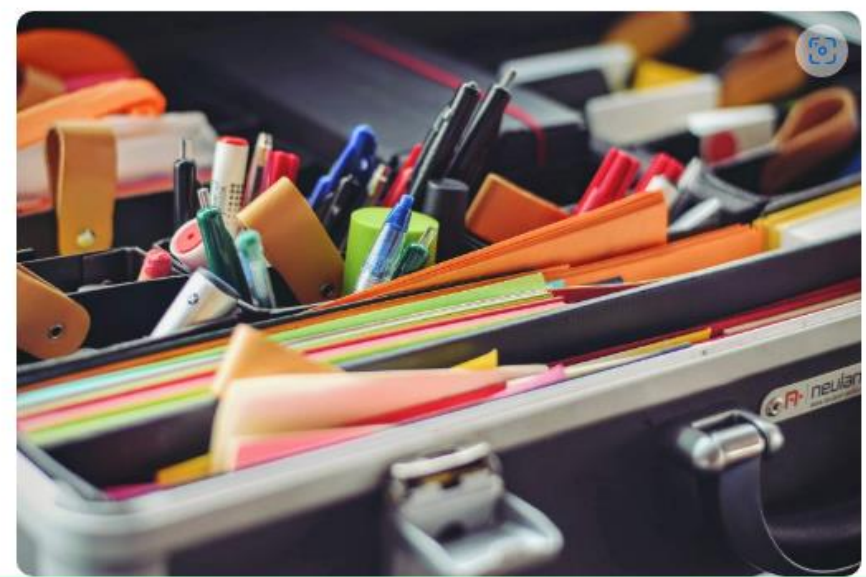


The National Archives and Records Administration is the legal authority for what gets saved and what gets destroyed. Contrary to popular belief, only the Archivist of the United States can designate a Federal record.

Our NARA approved records schedules describe our Federal records, how long to keep the records and what to do when we no longer need them.

In this lesson, you'll learn a little about records schedules and the file plans that we use at USDA to guide how we organize and maintain our records.

Use the BACK and NEXT controls on the following pages to learn more about records schedules.



What is a Records Schedule?



Records of Animal and Plant Life



Documentation of Individual animal and plant species studies and observations.

PERMANENT.
Transfer to National Archives when 30 years old.

What is a Records Schedule?



What do approved schedules do?

Financial transaction records related to procuring goods and services, paying bills, collecting debts, and accounting.

TEMPORARY.

Destroy 6 years after final payment or cancellation.



What is a Records Schedule?



Why have record schedules?

Agricultural Trade Policy Files

Proposed bills on agriculture and trade-related issues, hearings, position papers, updates, negotiations and related correspondence.

PERMANENT.

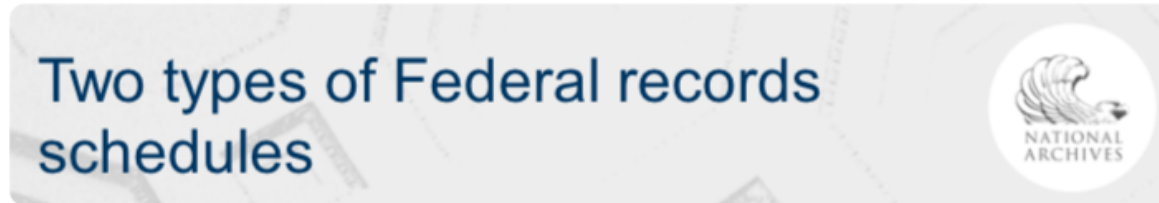
Transfer to the National Archives when 30 years old.



What is a Records Schedule?



There are two types of Federal schedules.



General Records Schedules (GRS) - [Administrative records](#) common across the Government.

Agency-specific records schedules - Unique records documenting agency mission and programs.

What is a Records Schedule?



General Records Schedules

Records common across agencies:

1. Financial Management Reporting;
2. Human Resources;
3. Technology;
4. Information Management;
5. General Operations Support; and
6. Mission Support.



What is a Records Schedule?



Example schedule: RM Program Records



GRS 4.1 / 020
Records management program records.

Records related to the policies, procedures, and management of agency business records from creation to eventual disposition.

TEMPORARY.
Destroy no sooner than 6 years after the project, activity, or transaction is suspended or completed.

What is a Records Schedule?



Example schedule: Continuity Planning

GRS 5.3 / 010

Continuity planning and related emergency planning files.

TEMPORARY.

Destroy when 3 years old or 3 years after superseded or obsolete, whichever is applicable.



What is a Records Schedule?



Agency-specific schedules for program/mission records



What is a Records Schedule?



Example schedule: Education



Presidential Scholars Program Records

Lists of Scholars and Distinguished Teachers, representative copies of award certificates, lists of sponsors, and records pertaining to related/partner organizations.

PERMANENT.

Cut off annually upon close of program awards cycle. Transfer to NARA after [cutoff](#).

What is a Records Schedule?



Example schedule: Weather models

Water, Weather and Climate Prediction and Verification Models Files.

Computer-based simulations used to provide guidance in developing and verifying forecasts, and issuing public dissemination announcements.

TEMPORARY.

Destroy 3 years after model is eliminated and new version is successfully implemented.



What is a Records Schedule?



Elements of a records schedule: Introduction

While the content of each records schedule will vary from agency to agency and from one group of records to another, most schedules share the same basic components.

Elements of a schedule: Title and description

(Series title) Project History Files

(Series description) Records documenting the development and implementation of agency projects. Includes project charter, plan, reports, and project close-out documentation.

TEMPORARY.

Cut off when project is completed or discontinued.

Destroy 10 years after cutoff.

Elements of a schedule: Cutoff

Project History Files

Records documenting the development and implementation of agency projects. Includes project charter, plan, reports, and project close-out documentation.

TEMPORARY.

Cut off when project is completed or discontinued.

Destroy 10 years after **cutoff**.

What is a Records Schedule?



Elements of a schedule: Retention and disposition

Project History Files

Federal records documenting the development and implementation of agency projects. Includes project charter, plan, reports, and project close-out documentation.

TEMPORARY.

Cut off when project is completed or discontinued.

(Retention) Destroy 10 years after cutoff.

Elements of a schedule: Transfer Instructions

Program Policy Files

Documents related to the creation, approval, and implementation of agency-wide policies.

PERMANENT.

Cut off at the end of the Fiscal Year in which the policy was approved.

(Transfer instructions)

Transfer to the Federal Records Center 2 years after cutoff.

Transfer to the National Archives 10 years after cutoff.

What is a Records Schedule?



Find your records schedules:

- Agency intranet or website;
- Agency policies or directives;
- Agency Records Officer and Records Management team; or
- Archives.gov.

What is a Records Schedule?



File Plan

A [file plan](#) provides similar information as the record schedules and is designed to provide instructions for how to handle the Federal records in an office or agency. A file plan serves as a roadmap for an office to locate their files. A file plan describes the organization that has custody of records, file location information and the specific types of records and non-records maintained in an office.

At USDA, the information about how long to keep records is in the file plans for each office.

File plans contain:

- A description of the records;
- Location information (physical or electronic);
- The retention period;
- The records schedule disposition authority for the records; and
- Whether the records are temporary or permanent.

What is a Records Schedule?



What is the Difference Between a File Plan and a Records Schedule?

A file plan will contain information in the records schedule, tailored to a unit of your office, and contains information beyond that of the records schedule.

For example, it may also contain special storage requirements, filing organization instructions, non-records and essential records information.

Category	File Plan	Records Schedule
Record Series Title	X	X
Series Description	X	X
Records Status: Permanent or Temporary	X	X
Retention Period	X	X
Cutoff Instructions	X	X
Disposition Instructions	X	X
Legal Disposition Authority	X	X
Requires NARA Approval		X
Requires Agency Records Officer Approval	X	
Office/Unit Specific Information	X	
Location of Records (Physical or Electronic)	X	
Records Organization / Filing Instructions	X	
Special Storage / Security Requirements	X	
Essential Records Status	X	
Nonrecord Information	X	
Requires Annual Review	X	X

Records Storage at USDA



Our Federal records are initially maintained in USDA offices for one year after the fiscal year is over. After that, we store the [temporary records](#) at a NARA Federal Records Center (FRC) or NARA approved storage facility for the duration of the retention period.

At the end of the retention period, USDA staff work with Agency Records Officers (AROs) to ensure that:

- Appropriate, secure disposition activities occur with ARO approval;
- Records subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests are maintained and available;
- Records subject to litigation hold or freeze, or other preservation hold are maintained and accessible to the USDA Office of General Counsel and other stakeholders;
- [Permanent records](#) are transferred to NARA for preservation in the National Archives; and
- Temporary records are destroyed or deleted.

At USDA, records may be found in several formats, such as: paper, photograph, electronic, video, blueprints, slides, transparencies, bound books, and in a number of other formats. When in doubt, assume it is a record, preserve it as if permanent, and contact your Agency Records Officer for assistance.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Capstone Approach to the Management of Email Records

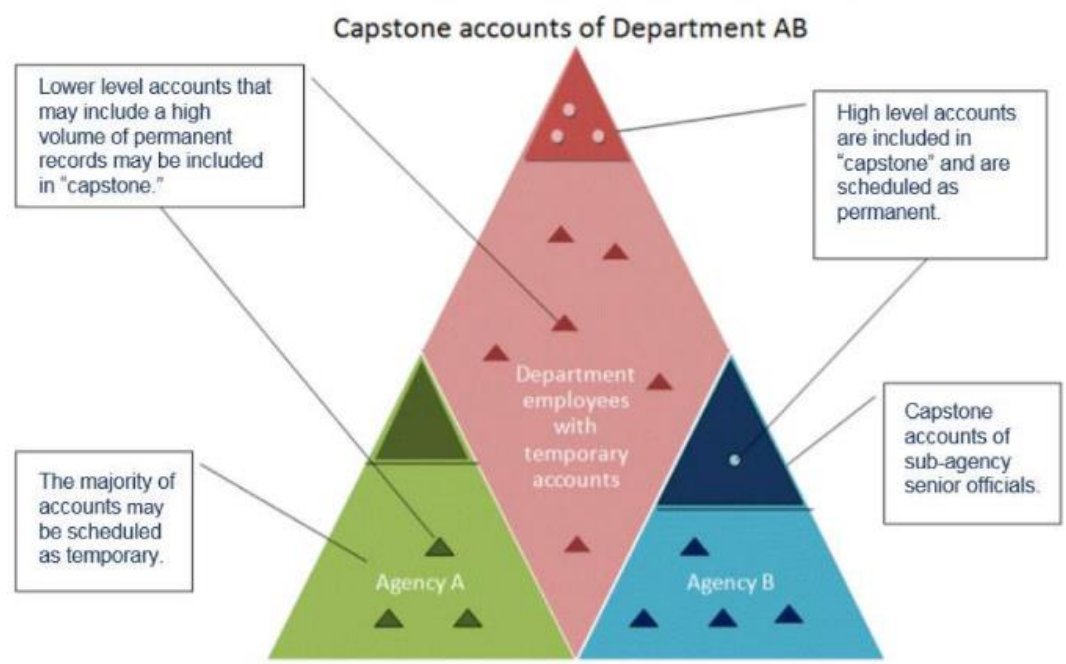


Capstone is a simplified approach to managing email records. It is based on the position or role of the email account owner and applies to all official email accounts of those positions.

What is the Capstone Approach to the Management of Email Records?

USDA uses the Capstone approach to manage email for the agency. The Capstone approach includes high level officials, whose email is a permanent record, as well as all other email accounts, which are scheduled by the role of the person according to GRS 6.1. Capstone applies to anyone who creates, receives, and handles federal records, including contractors and sub-contractors.

Example: Capstone implementation at a Department with two sub-agencies



Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Capstone Officials vs. Non-Capstone Accounts

To meet business needs, USDA has implemented Capstone using two retentions:

- A permanent retention for High Level/Capstone Officials; and
- A 7-year, temporary retention for all other email accounts.

Capstone Officials are generally responsible for agency, program policy and mission-related actions. These email records will eventually be [accessioned](#) to NARA for permanent preservation.

Capstone is flexible; it allows for various implementation approaches, such as:

- The systematic transfer of email accounts scheduled as permanent to the National Archives.
- The systematic disposal of entire email accounts scheduled as temporary.
- Individual emails to be categorized as permanent, **regardless of Capstone status.**

All USDA Personnel should read the [Capstone guidance \(External Link\)](#) from the Customer Experience Center. [- LINK](#)

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Managing Email and Electronic Messaging as a Capstone Official

Things to know:

1. Email is a form of government communication and may contain official records that the Department is obligated to retain. If you have questions about identifying Federal Records, please contact your Agency Records Officer.
2. As a Capstone Official, your email records will be kept permanently. We will automatically hold them at the Department for 15 years, then their ownership will be transferred from USDA to NARA in a process called accessioning.
3. Federal Records – including those contained in your emails – are the property of the Department. We rely on you to identify personal emails, so they are not accessioned to NARA.
4. Even if you choose to delete an email, a copy will remain in the system. It is not really deleted.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Managing Email and Electronic Messaging as a Capstone Official

Things to know:

5. Do not use the regular email system for classified information. There are special systems set up for classified discussions. Your Security Office and IT department can assist you with access to classified systems.
6. Only use official accounts to conduct agency business. If extenuating circumstances require the use of a personal account then you **must carbon copy or forward to your official account in the Department's infrastructure within 20 days** ([Public Law 113-187 \(External Link\)](#)). - [LINK](#)
Departmental Regulation DR 3080-001, Records Management, Appendix C, provides more information.
7. Use official agency messaging accounts (such as the official Twitter account) when using electronic messaging applications to create or send a Federal record, in accordance with the Departmental Regulation [DR 3080-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management, Appendix C. - [LINK](#)



Electronic Messages

The Federal Records Act was amended in November 2014 and added a new definition for electronic messages in 44 U.S.C. 2911.

The law states, “The term ‘electronic messages’ means electronic mail and other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals.”

USDA Personnel (Employees, Contractors, Students, Volunteers, Interns, Fellows, and Political Appointees) **should use official accounts to conduct agency business.** However, if an [electronic message](#) that meets the definition of a Federal record is created or received in a personal account, **the message must be carbon copied or forwarded to an official electronic messaging account within 20 days.**

The statutory definition of electronic messages includes email, text messages, and social media posts that are official business.

In other words, **if it is related to agency business, it must be captured and maintained as a record whether it is text, messaging on third-party applications, or social media.**

Disposition of electronic records follows the same rules as paper records, as long as there is: Agency Records Officer approval **and** a valid disposition authority provided by NARA.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email

When are Text and Electronic Messages Considered Records?

To determine if text and electronic messages, such as social media, are records, ask yourself:

- Was it created and/or received, and acted upon?
- Does it contain evidence of an agency's policies, business or activities?
- Is the information only available on that messaging platform or site?
- Does the message convey official agency information?
- Is there a business need for the information?

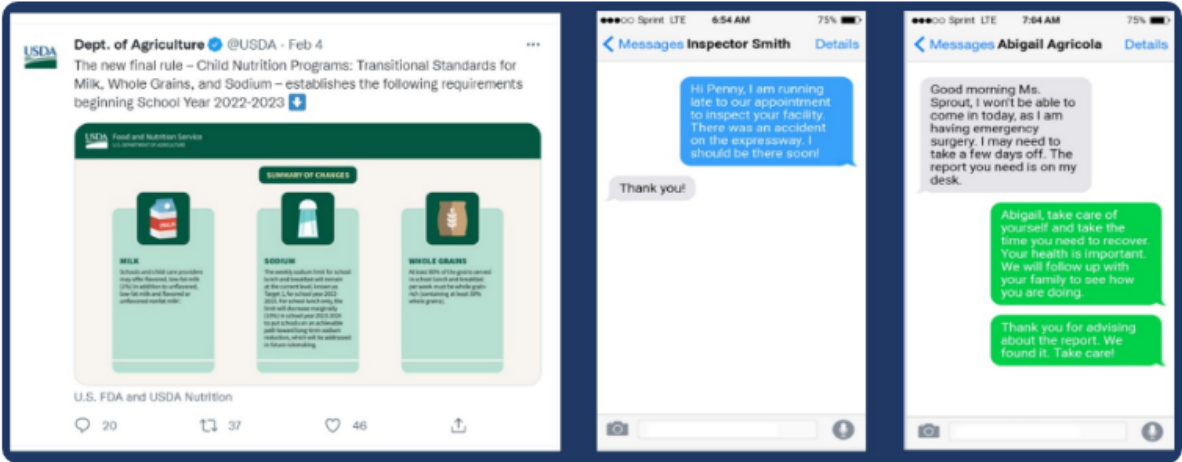


Managing Electronic Messages and Email

Examples of Text, Social Media, and Electronic Messages

Here are some examples of Text, and Social Media Records.

For each example, think about why these are records.



Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Capture Text and Electronic Messages

To comply with Departmental Regulation [DR-3080-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management, you must ensure that you capture any text and electronic messages not held in the official recordkeeping system.

The table provides an overview of the steps needed to capture information.

Capture Text and Electronic Messages Outside of Official Recordkeeping Systems			
No.	Step	Android	iPhone
1	Take Screen Shots of SMS / Text Messages, or other applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press Power and Volume Down buttons at the same time. To view photos, open Photos, then go to Albums or Documents > Screenshots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Touch ID and a Side Button: Press Side button and Home button at the same time. Quickly release both buttons. A thumbnail will be saved to your Photo Library. Using Touch ID and a Top Button: Press Top button and Home button at the same time. Quickly release both buttons. A thumbnail will be saved to your Photo Library. To view photos, open Photos, then go to Albums > Media Types > Screenshots.
2	Capture all official business content and preserve the date and contact information in the messages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all apps that are non-official apps from which you may have sent messages, and capture screen shots of those as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all apps that are non-official apps from which you may have sent messages, and capture screen shots of those as well.
3	Email screen captures to Official Account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Email application or Outlook. Compose a Message. Enter official USDA email address as the Recipient. Tap Paperclip icon to attach file. Select "Choose from Photo Library." Also choose videos from the Library during this step. Select all business-related photos that are required for retention, then tap "Done." Tap "Send" to send the message to yourself. Repeat the above steps until each of the photos and screen captures are sent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Outlook. Compose a Message. Enter official USDA email address as the Recipient. Tap Paperclip icon to attach file. Select "Choose Photo from Library." Also choose videos from the Library during this step. Select all business-related photos that are required for retention, then tap "Add." Tap "Send" to send the message to yourself. Repeat the above steps until each of the photos and screen captures are sent.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



The Electronic Message Preservation Act (EMPA) of 2021



Records and information related to USDA and government business are the property of the United States Government.

In 2021, NARA amended the Federal Records Act to include regulations for governing Federal agency preservation of electronic messages that are records. The law, called the “Electronic Message Preservation Act (EMPA) of 2021,” states that agencies are required to electronically capture, manage, and preserve electronic message records, and must readily access such records through electronic searches.

We capture text and electronic messaging, as well as any messages outside USDA official systems because it's the law, **and** because:

USDA records and information, including electronic messaging, must be readily available and searchable for ease of business, discovery, litigation, decision-making, and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

36 C.F.R. 1222.26 (b) states: Agencies must capture, manage, and preserve electronic records with appropriate [metadata](#) and must be able to readily access and retrieve electronic records, including electronic messages, through electronic searches.

This includes text, electronic messaging, email, social media, and electronic records and information.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email

Electronic Message Preservation Act (EMPA) of 2021 (Cont'd)

All records and information, regardless of format (such as paper, electronic or other physical form), must be captured, managed, preserved with metadata, and be readily accessible and retrievable by the agency.



DR 3080-001, Records Management, requires USDA information and documents to be readily retrievable, as does DR 3090-001, Litigation Retention Policy for Documentary Materials Including Electronically Stored Information.

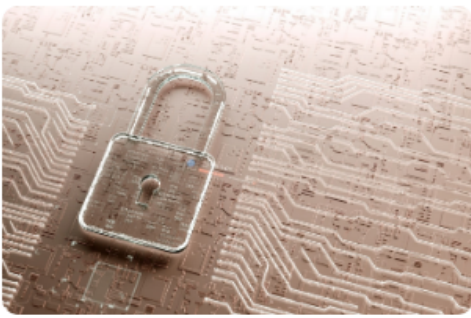
Failure to comply with USDA policy in preserving and making documents accessible can result in:

- Unfavorable discovery orders;
- Sanctions against the Government;
- Disadvantage to the government's position in litigation or judgment against the Government; Monetary or other contempt sanctions against individuals who failed to take appropriate steps; and
- In extreme cases, agency performance-based action or disciplinary sanction may be warranted under 5 U.S.C. 4301, et seq. or 5 U.S.C. 7501, et seq.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) and Official Accounts



USDA records and information must be created, received, managed and preserved on USDA networks, in USDA official systems.

You must conduct all USDA business on Government Furnished Equipment (GFE) and maintain records and information in official USDA systems.

Use of a personal device or account may result in the device being confiscated and forfeited, or the personal account being accessed by USDA Personnel for discovery, litigation, or any official business use.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts



What does this mean for you when:

Teleworking?

- Use only your GFE to conduct USDA business, including USDA-provided laptops, mobile devices and cellular phones.
- Bring any physical records to the office.
- Work with your supervisor to safeguard records and information that you are handling, which may include personally identifiable information (PII), business sensitive and proprietary information.
- Do not remove documents containing personally identifiable information from the office. This information should always be handled according to the USDA DR 3515-002, Privacy Policy and Compliance for Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts

Working at a Partner Organization, University, or other Facility?



- Use only your GFE to conduct USDA business, including USDA-provided laptops, mobile devices and cellular phones. Do NOT use non-USDA owned devices to conduct USDA business.
- Use only your official USDA email account to conduct USDA business.
- ONLY copy your university/partner email account if needed for university/partner business.
- Bring any physical records to the office.
- Work with your supervisor to safeguard records and information that you are handling, which may include personally identifiable information (PII), business sensitive and proprietary information.
- Do not handle USDA PII outside of USDA environments.
- Do not remove documents containing personally identifiable information from the office. This information should always be handled according to the USDA DR 3515-002, Privacy Policy and Compliance for Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts

Using Social Media?

- Use only official USDA email accounts to conduct social media activities on behalf of USDA.

- Preserve USDA social media accounts in accordance with USDA policies, including at the change of leadership or administration.



Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts

Sending text or electronic messages?

- Use only your GFE to send text or other electronic messages in accordance with the USDA Information Security Rules of Behavior.
- Carbon copy or forward messages sent via text or electronic messaging to your official email account within 20 days as outlined in the capture instructions.
- You must preserve text and electronic messages sent and received while conducting USDA business.

NOTE: Microsoft Teams messages are already captured.



Managing Electronic Messages and Email

Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts



Using a personal or non-USDA device?

In extenuating circumstances, it is sometimes necessary to send a text or message from your personal device – not as a regular part of your duties, but only occasionally.

For example:

- When calling out sick to your supervisor and you can't log in to a USDA computer.
- When reporting a computer issue to IT by calling in on your personal device.
- When your USDA equipment stops working and you need to advise your supervisor/team.

In these circumstances, you must:

Carbon copy your USDA email account, or forward the text to your USDA email account within 20 days.

Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on GFE and Official Accounts

Potential Repercussions

Once again, use of a personal device or account may result in the device being confiscated and forfeited, or the personal account being accessed by USDA Personnel for discovery, litigation, or any official business use.



Managing Electronic Messages and Email



Conduct USDA Business on Government Furnished (GFE) and Official Accounts

You have likely made an investment in your personal mobile, device, or laptop. You may have irreplaceable photos, files, or private information you don't wish to share publicly.

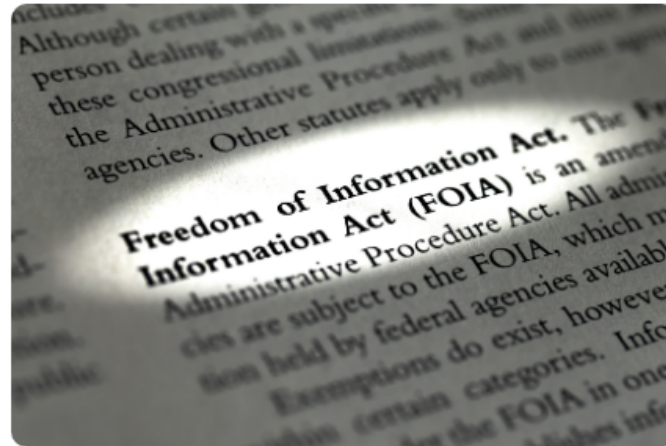
You are required to conduct USDA business on the USDA network, using USDA furnished equipment and accounts. Don't use your personal devices or accounts to conduct USDA business!

As a reminder:

- You are required to comply with USDA information technology use policies and the USDA Information Security Rules of Behavior.
- There are civil and criminal penalties for the unauthorized destruction, deletion, disposal, alienation and falsification of Federal records, and the unauthorized disclosure of National Security Information. 18 U.S.C. § 2071.



Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)



The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides any person with the statutory right, enforceable in court, to obtain access to government records in the Executive Branch. The FOIA keeps citizens “in the know” about what the government is doing. FOIA gives members of the public such as students, academics, writers, the right to request access to Federal agency records.

This right to access is limited when such information is protected from disclosure by one or more of FOIA’s nine statutory exemptions or three exclusions, which protect interests such as personal privacy, national security, law enforcement and proprietary business information.

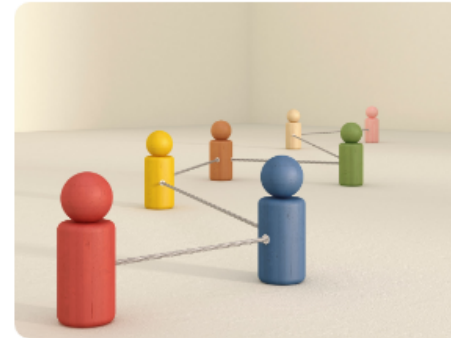
The FOIA also requires agencies to proactively post online certain categories of information, including frequently requested records. As Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court have all recognized, the FOIA is a vital part of our democracy.

Key Concepts



Records and FOIA are Connected

Proper records management is key to ensuring we can satisfy our FOIA obligations. Records schedules, File Plans, and records management policies for the maintenance of USDA records and information help ensure that USDA can produce records for FOIA requests and litigation.



USDA Personnel compliance with the Federal Records Act is critical to ensuring the success of the USDA FOIA programs.

For example:

- Records schedules describing the types of records USDA maintains and the length of time they must be kept, greatly assist FOIA offices working with requesters to better scope records requests; and
- File plans can help FOIA offices identify where and how records for a specific office or program are stored.

Key Concepts



USDA Personnel FOIA Records Responsibilities

When contacted regarding a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request:

- Prioritize FOIA requests – USDA has a limited amount of time to respond to the request, and your assistance is critical in ensuring that your agency is not assessed fees!
- Identify where records searches need to be conducted within an agency program.
- Clarify the request for search - Make sure you have a clear understanding of the request so you can search.
- Work with FOIA Professionals to learn how to conduct a search
- Search all locations that are likely to contain responsive records, including: paper, analog and electronic files, such as a cell phone, and other mobile device and locations such as, but not limited to:
 - Shared Drives;
 - Computer desktops; Filing cabinets; and
 - File storage areas.
- Provide all records located for FOIA Professionals to conduct document review and redaction.
- Document your search – you are creating a record of how faithfully USDA responded to this FOIA request, that may later be needed in litigation.
- Contact a FOIA Professional if you have any questions.

For questions about USDA FOIA policies and Offices, refer to the FOIA Points of Contact on the [USDA FOIA \(External Link\)](#) page. - [LINK](#)

Key Concepts



Federal Advisory Committees

NARA has designated most records of Federal Advisory Committees as permanent.

Often, Federal Advisory Committees are created to advise the highest level of the agency leadership, such as Capstone Officials, on a particular subject matter.

Federal Advisory Committees may consist of a mixture of Federal employees and members of the public. Unless special measures are taken to preserve the records of a Federal Advisory Committee, records may exist in the personal email boxes of members of the public.

To properly safeguard and preserve records being created by Federal Advisory Committees:

- Federal officials in charge of Federal Advisory Committees must ensure that all records of committee business are filed in the official recordkeeping system;
- Ensure Federal Advisory committees are using a group mailbox to manage all Federal records (these records are permanent); and
- Consult with your Agency Records Officer to ensure appropriate access controls and file structures are in place to properly safeguard and document Committee business.

Key Concepts



Controlled Unclassified Information

Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) is information that, by law, Federal agencies are permitted to create or possess via special safeguarding, or dissemination controls. This type of information may be sensitive, and must be protected at all times, by law, regulation, or government-wide policy. ([Executive Order 13556 \(External Link\)](#) and [32 C.F.R. 2002 \(External Link\)](#)) - [LINK](#)

Some examples of CUI include:

- Personnel Files;
- Health Information;
- Patent applications; and
- Federal Taxpayer information.

CUI does not include classified information.

CUI replaces legacy document markings such as Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) and For Official Use Only (FOUO), etc.

Key Concepts

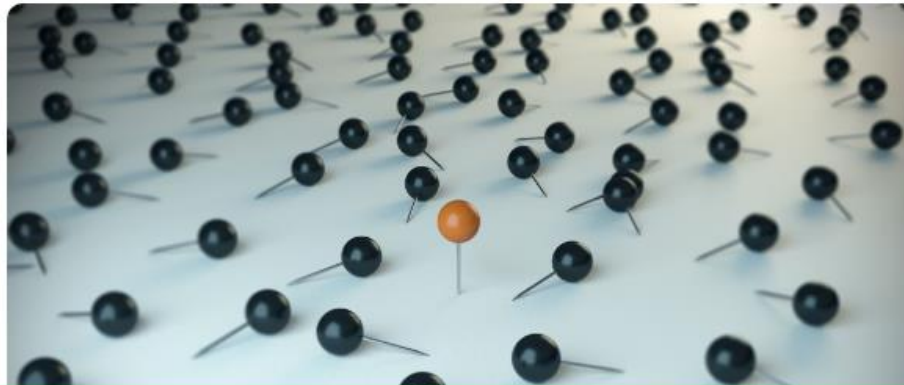


Identifying CUI

In the near future, your agency CUI Point of Contact (POC) will work with you to make the determination as to whether or not information is CUI.

- [LINK](#)

- The CUI categories can be found on the [CUI Registry \(External Link\)](#) which is an online repository for Federal-level guidance regarding CUI policy and practice.
- USDA employees who create and manage such data should be very familiar with the CUI categories and CUI policies, complete all training and know how the information should be handled.
- For more information about the CUI Registry and the CUI program, please visit:
 - <https://www.archives.gov/cui> ([External Link](#)) - [LINK](#)



Key Concepts



Essential Records Management

Essential Records Management is:

The identification, protection, and ready availability of information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and records needed to support essential functions during a continuity event, or emergency.



USDA's Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan includes essential records information specific to USDA.

Questions about your agency's or office's essential records program should be directed to your agency/office COOP Coordinator or to the USDA Office of Homeland Security, Continuity and Planning Division, at cpd@usda.gov.

Key Concepts



What are Essential Records?

Essential Records are the information systems and applications, electronic and hardcopy documents, references, and those records needed to support essential functions during a continuity event.

NARA defines essential records as:

“Records an agency needs to meet operational responsibilities under national security emergencies or other emergency conditions ([emergency operating records](#)) or to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and those affected by Government activities (legal and financial rights records).” ([36 C.F.R. 1223 \(External - LINK Link\)](#))



Key Concepts



Major Categories of Essential Records

Major Categories of Essential Records include:

- Emergency Operating Records: Records essential to an organization's continued functioning or reconstitution during and after an emergency.
- Legal and Financial Rights Records: Records essential to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and individuals directly affected by its activities.

Some examples include:

- Accounts receivable;
- Social security;
- Payroll;
- Retirement; and
- Insurance records.

Key Concepts



Essential Records Examples

Here are typical examples of Essential Records:

- Emergency/Continuity Plan;
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP);
- Staff contact and assignment information, such as names, addresses, and phone numbers;
- Orders of succession and delegations of authority;
- Policies, procedures, directives, and systems manuals;
- List of credit cardholders to purchase supplies;
- Maps and building plans;
- Personnel and payroll records;
- Contracts and vendor agreements; and
- Licenses and long-term permits.



Key Concepts



Employee Departures:

Prior to departing an agency, retirement, transferring to a new position, or promotion:

- Transition Federal records to a new responsible person;
- Ensure the records are identified and organized;
- Ensure someone can access all electronic files that are records (emails, password protected or encrypted files);
- Ensure the employee does not remove, delete, or destroy any records; and
- Complete Documentary Materials Removal/Non-Removal Certification and Non-Disclosure Agreement (Form #[AD-3001 \(External Link\)](#)) in accordance with [- LINK](#) Departmental Regulation [DR-3099-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management [- LINK](#) Policy for Departing Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Political Appointees.

Key Concepts



Lost or Destroyed Records:

If you believe that Federal records have been removed, lost, or destroyed without authorization, you must follow agency procedures for reporting to the appropriate authority.

- Notify your immediate supervisor and/or RM staff.

An investigation is usually conducted to determine whether the incident needs to be reported to NARA.

Agencies must report to NARA the:

- Complete description of records, with volume and dates, if known;
- Office of origin;
- Explanation of exact circumstances surrounding the unauthorized action;
- Details, when appropriate, of actions taken to salvage, retrieve, or reconstruct the records; and
- Safeguards established to prevent further losses.

Key Concepts



Disposing of Records

USDA Personnel must request Agency Records Officer (ARO) approval to dispose of, destroy, discard, delete, offsite transfer, or accession USDA records and information.

Why is Agency Records Officer approval needed?

USDA records and information must be retained according to NARA-approved records schedules and NARA guidance, which can change frequently, often before Agency copies of records schedules may be disseminated to agency staff, potentially leading to unauthorized disposition.

USDA records and information is subject to litigation, FOIA and other preservation holds, which the typical USDA Personnel do not have access to check. Records subject to litigation hold may not be moved without coordination with the Office of General Counsel.

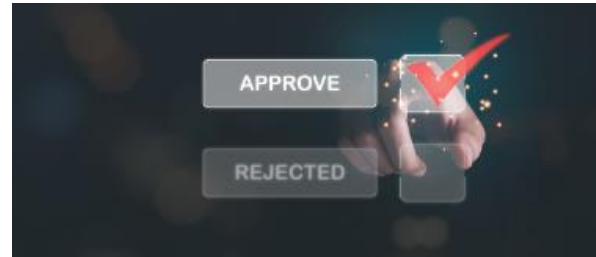
USDA records disposition requires a check against active FOIA and litigation, completed by Agency Records Officers and records management staff, attorneys, and other offices.

When records subject to litigation, FOIA and other preservation holds are not located, USDA is accountable, and your agency can face serious financial and related penalties.

Key Concepts



Agency Records Officer Approval



Agency Records Officer Approval

When records have met their in-house retention as required by NARA, Agency Records Officers approve disposition after consulting NARA schedules, guidance and policies.

Agency Records Officers must use a NARA-approved disposition authority, not an Agency-created File Code, to approve disposition.

Agency Records Officers keep logs of records disposition and transfer. When records are not located, USDA consults these logs for the approved disposal activities to present as evidence of why records are not found.

If you destroy, discard, delete, transfer, shred, or dispose of records in any way, shape or form without Agency Records Officer approval, you leave USDA exposed to legal and other penalties.

As a reminder, there are civil and criminal penalties for the unauthorized destruction, deletion, disposal, alienation and falsification of Federal records, and the unauthorized disclosure of National Security Information. 18 U.S.C. § 2071.

USDA Personnel must request Agency Records Officer (ARO) approval to dispose of, destroy, discard, delete, transfer, or accession USDA records and information.

Records Management Resources



Records Management Program Staff



Senior Agency Official for Records Management

The Senior Agency Official for Records Management (SAORM) acts on behalf of the agency head to ensure the agency efficiently and appropriately complies with all applicable records management statutes, regulations, NARA policies, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) policies.

The SAORM bridges the gap between the agency head and the Agency Records Officers in order to provide strategic direction for the agency's records management program.

At USDA, the [General Counsel \(External Link\)](#) has been designated as the SAORM.

The USDA [Departmental Records Management Program \(External Link\)](#) is under the General Counsel's [Office of Information Affairs \(External Link\)](#).

Records Management Resources



Records Management Program Staff

Records Management Champions

The Secretary of Agriculture has designated Records Management Champions to support records management programs.

Records Management Champions are responsible for:

- Supporting records management programs by ensuring adequate, trained staff and resources;
- Ensuring records management is part of planning, and changes to agency mission and organization;
- Ensuring records management is part of the planning, acquisition, migration, and decommissioning of systems and hardware;
- Creating records management partnerships and accountability with human resources, procurement, budget offices, personnel security and other stakeholders to ensure that Agency Records Officers are timely notified of staff and contractor onboarding and departures;
- Ensuring that organizations that create statements of work are including appropriate records management requirements; and
- Supporting records management operations and initiatives.

Records Management Resources



Records Management Program Staff

Agency Records Officers

The Agency Records Officers are responsible for:

- Managing the records management program;
- Onboarding and offboarding agency personnel and political appointees;
- Establishing records management polices, training and procedures in accordance with the Federal Records Act;
- Documenting agency compliance with records management regulations, policies, training, procedures, and best practices;
- Approving and tracking records management disposition throughout the agency;
- Reviewing, writing and submitting records schedules to the National Archives; and
- Coordinating records management matters with various USDA offices, stakeholders, and NARA.

The list of USDA [Agency Records Officers \(External Link\)](#) is available on the NARA website.

[- LINK](#)

Records Management Resources



Records Management Program Staff



Records Custodians

Records Custodians have the day-to-day responsibility for managing the records in a particular office. They ensure that:

- Records are organized and filed based on the records schedule and file plan;
- Records are transferred or disposed of on time; and
- Office personnel understand how to follow records management procedures.

Each program office at USDA should have a designated records custodian, and an alternate.

Records Management Resources



All USDA
Personnel are
responsible for
Records
Management!



For Assistance

To handle your records properly:

Contact your [Agency Records Officer \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

Visit the [USDA Departmental Records Management Program \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

Read more about the [USDA Office of Information Affairs \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

To understand USDA Records Management Regulations and Directives:

USDA Departmental Regulation [DR 3080-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management. - [LINK](#)

USDA Departmental Regulation [DR 3090-001 \(External Link\)](#), Litigation Retention Policy for Documentary Materials including Electronically Stored Information. - [LINK](#)

USDA Departmental Regulation [DR 3099-001 \(External Link\)](#), Records Management Policy for Departing Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Political Appointees. - [LINK](#)

To learn about Federal Records Management:

Visit the [NARA website - https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

To review Federal Regulations:

Title 36 (36 C.F.R., Chapter XII) - [https://www.archives.gov/about/regulations/regulations.html \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

To read the law:

Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended, codified at 44 U.S.C chapters 29, 31, and 33 - [https://www.archives.gov/about/laws \(External Link\)](#). - [LINK](#)

Summary and Review



What is a Federal Record?

Information in any format or medium created or received while fulfilling the duties of your position or conducting official business that evidences agency functions, organization, and activities.

Why is Records Management important?

- Access to government records strengthens democracy by allowing Americans of all backgrounds to claim their rights of citizenship, and hold their government accountable;
- Allows the public to access and understand their history so they can fully participate in their government;
- It contributes to the smooth operation of agency programs;
- It protects the rights of citizens and the agency; and
- There are legal consequences for non-compliance.

Who is Responsible?

All USDA Personnel are responsible for the records they create, receive and use.

You are responsible for the records you create, receive and use.

Summary and Review

USDA Personnel Records Management Responsibilities

USDA Personnel (Employees, Contractors, Students, Volunteers, Interns, Fellows, and Political Appointees) – You - must:

- Complete mandatory annual Records Management training;
- Document the work that you create and receive to conduct USDA business;
- Safeguard information that needs to be protected, including sensitive business information and personally identifiable information (PII);
- Retain, store, and maintain physical records in USDA offices;
- Store records created during work and telework in an official, USDA-provided recordkeeping system, such as Shared Drives, and SharePoint;
 - One Drive files are not available to your team; and
 - One Drive files are deleted after you leave USDA;
- Store information containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in locked cabinets or limited access electronic folders;
- Store information about your employees, if a supervisor, in a locked, limited access cabinet, and if held electronically, only available to the supervisor in the supervisor's protected Drive;
- Contact your IT Administrator if you do not have a Shared Drive or Share Point site;
- If you see something, say something, to your supervisor, and your Agency Records Officer:
 - When records are left unattended;
 - When records are in a dumpster;
 - When records are in trash bins outside of an office;
- Follow Departmental policies for maintaining, protecting, preserving and using records and information;
- Separate personal files from official Federal records;
- Use official accounts to conduct agency business, including official electronic messaging accounts;

- Carbon copy or forward any text, SMS, and electronic messages created or received from a personal account to your official email account within 20 days;
 - When in doubt, contact your Agency Records Officer for assistance.
- Ensure USDA records and information are accessible to USDA and your team:
 - Print record emails to PDF and file them with the rest of your program records, if the information needs to be shared and does not exist elsewhere; or
 - Drag and drop to put emails into shared access program repositories, such as SharePoint, or the Shared Drive.
- Retain, preserve and safeguard records and non-records subject to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Privacy Act (PA), Inspector General (IG) investigation, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) investigation, or litigation hold;
- Ensure that USDA can meet its FOIA responsibilities by responding to USDA FOIA Offices in a timely manner and assisting to locate records requested under the FOIA, for processing by FOIA Professionals;
- Participate in records management activities, such as, but not limited to: updating File Plans, records inventories, official clean up days, and working with your Agency Records Officer (ARO) on records schedules;
- Report unscheduled records to your Agency Records Officer and preserve them as if permanent until there is an approved, legal records schedule;
- Report unauthorized destruction or inadvertent loss to your supervisor and [Agency Records Officer \(External Link\)](#);
- Work with your [Agency Records Officer \(External Link\)](#) to maintain and preserve USDA records and information according to an approved records schedule;
- Request Agency Records Officer approval for all disposal, deletion, destruction, shredding, discarding, and transfer of records;
- Use only NARA-approved disposition authorities to dispose of records, **not** agency-created file codes;
- Work with your Agency Records Officer for the acquisition and decommissioning of any systems that contain records; and

- Coordinate with Records Management **before transferring or leaving a position**, to comply with [DR-3099-001 \(External Link\)](#), *Records Management Policy for Departing Employees, Contractors, Volunteers, and Political Appointees*.
 - Complete the AD-3001, Documentary Materials Removal/Non-Removal Certification and Non-Disclosure Agreement with the Agency Records Officer.



Summary and Review



Quiz

You're are almost done!

You will need to score at least 80% on this short quiz in order to finish the course.

[LINK to Records Management Quiz](#)