

# Inventorying & Scheduling Guidelines

For Agency  
Records Officers



Office of the Secretary of State  
Archives & Records Management Division  
Records Management Office

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# PART I: Guidelines for Conducting a Records Inventory

## Introduction

A records inventory is the foundation of sound records management and should be the first step in establishing a records management program. An inventory locates, identifies and describes all agency records, regardless of physical form (electronic, paper, microfilm, etc.). Records are inventoried at the *records series* level (a set of related records used and filed as a unit), rather than at the item or folder level.

Analysis of the completed *inventory, the needs assessment*, leads to the formation of a strong *records management program*. Moreover, agencies have a legal responsibility to create and maintain a records management program. Records management programs can assist in creating better government services at less cost to Washington taxpayers.

## Records Inventory Benefits

The records inventory is an essential first step in any agency's records management program. It will provide the Records Officer valuable information necessary to prepare agency records retention and disposition schedules. The inventory should:

- ✂✂ Provide an appraisal of the volume of records
- ✂✂ Identify a record series
- ✂✂ Determine location of a record series
- ✂✂ Identify record values: Administrative, Legal, Fiscal, Historical
- ✂✂ Identify essential, confidential, and obsolete records
- ✂✂ Determine storage needs for active and inactive records
- ✂✂ Establish reasonable retention and disposition periods
- ✂✂ Raise staff awareness of the importance of records management
- ✂✂ Determine the agency's need for automation and microfilming
- ✂✂ Provide an advantage in determining methods of increased efficiency and future storage cost
- ✂✂ Provide the foundation of a strong records management plan by assuring the agency's legal records management responsibilities

## Planning the Inventory

Before conducting the physical inventory, the Records Officer may wish to consider doing a preliminary overview of the records to be inventoried. This can provide an overall look at the agency's records situation. Start the overview with cooperative departments and offices to ensure a successful beginning. Just as in the physical inventory, make sure to contact offices ahead of time, and to acquaint the office heads with the purpose and timetable of the interview. *Support from agency executive officers is essential. They should authorize the inventory and write to all units asking for cooperation.* In addition, the Records Officer should direct the inventory project and ensure its completion. An organizational chart will help staff determine which units to inventory, the order in which to inventory them, and how they relate to one another.

## Conducting the Inventory

A logical first step would be visiting unit supervisors or those individual office records coordinators to explain the inventory process and how they will benefit. This will secure their cooperation and that of their staff. They should understand that inventory workers (preferably trained internal staff who are familiar with their records) will need access to all the office's records – electronic, microfilm, etc., and

that they will need to ask questions as they work. Supervisors and staff should also see that the purpose of the inventory is to help them manage their files and not to criticize current filing methods (the inventory is not an audit). While in each unit, inventory staff should draw a map (*see example, page 13*) of the physical layout of the area and number each storage device (file cabinet, shelf, box, etc.). They should also note on the map the location of all the record series (sequence of records systematically classified and filed or as a group of records created for a specific activity or function). Not only will this be helpful when completing inventory worksheets, but also when formulating a disaster plan.

If conditions are favorable, the inventory can start with active office files. These take up the costliest space and are usually housed in file cabinets making them more expensive to store than inactive records that may be stored on metal shelving. It is important to look at the records and to open every file drawer and box since labels may not be accurate. When removing folders, place markers to ensure returning records to the same file locations.

Inactive records often comprise a significant percentage of active file space and by separating them from active records at the outset agencies, will realize immediate savings. File cabinets will be freed for future active files, inactive records can be transferred to less expensive storage areas, and any obsolete records can be flagged for disposal. Inventory workers can then progress to storage areas, both in-house and off-site.

The number of records created and maintained by the agency in electronic form is increasing dramatically. Agencies need to use different methods to inventory these record series. Several relevant issues must be addressed before the inventory: naming these record series, describing where and how records are stored, identifying hardware and software required for intelligible access and whether these records are *hardware or software dependent*, identifying file size and format, describing access and use patterns, describing data and application migration, and describing retention and preservation requirements. Inventory staff will need information regarding these issues when carrying out their work.

Inventory worksheets should be filled out per record series - per location. There may be additional records in basement storage areas that are part of the same series filed in an office. However, a separate inventory worksheet should be filled out for EACH location. This will ensure efficient access and retrieval of all records after the inventory and when it is time for transfer and disposition. Worksheets from the same record series but different locations should be cross-referenced. Inventory staff should **avoid abbreviations** to eliminate misinterpretations when later analyzing the information. *Publications created outside the agency and blank forms should be excluded from the inventory, since these are not records.*

An extremely beneficial product of the inventory can be a database containing information recorded to the inventory worksheets. This will allow agencies to identify all locations of a fragmented record series, and maintain an up-to-date inventory with a minimum of effort. They should consider automating the inventory process and/or the data as an option during the planning phase of the inventory.

## **Records Appraisal**

Once you know what records the agency has, the next step is to decide how long each records series should be kept in the office and in storage before being destroyed. To do this you must determine the immediate and future usefulness of the records to the agency. In general, records should be retained in office areas as long as they serve the immediate administrative, legal and fiscal purposes for which they were created. When records no longer serve these purposes, they should be destroyed, transferred to a records center or, if flagged on an approved records retention schedule, deposited in the State Archives. A realistic appraisal of the record series in relation to their period of usefulness and value to the agency reiterates a sound records management program. Evaluating the records inventory enables the Records Officer to:

- ☒ Establish reasonable retention periods
- ☒ Identify records that can be destroyed immediately
- ☒ Identify records that can be transferred to a records center
- ☒ Identify essential records
- ☒ Identify confidential records
- ☒ Classify records as Official Public Records, or Office Files & Memorandum (RCW 40.14.010) or non-records as defined in General Schedule 50

## **Analyzing the Inventory: Needs Assessment**

The needs assessment is in essence a list of records management needs and difficulties within the agency. It should be based on data gathered from the inventory, discussions with supervisors and employees of divisions, and observations and experiences gained while conducting the inventory. It should also involve analysis and information gathering after the inventory and appraisal process. Consider the following items when determining records management needs.

- ☒ Staffing and training needs
- ☒ Space requirements
- ☒ Facility options: in-house/offsite
- ☒ Environmental and physical conditions appropriate for records
- ☒ Consolidation of record series
- ☒ Transfer of inactive records
- ☒ Disposal of obsolete records
- ☒ Policy and procedures documentation and review
- ☒ Security of records
- ☒ Technological options: appropriate and affordable?
- ☒ Accessibility of records
- ☒ Reference needs
- ☒ Establish security of essential records and disaster recovery
- ☒ Record Management program support

# INVENTORY CHECKLIST

- ☒☒ Contact departments or unit/offices to be inventoried to explain the project<sup>1</sup>
- ☒☒ Determine the order in which to inventory them  
departments or unit/offices
- ☒☒ Visit departments or unit/offices to conduct a preliminary overview of the  
records to be inventoried
- ☒☒ Have each department unit/office head appoint a staff member  
to work with the inventory supervisor and serve as liaison
- ☒☒ Appoint Inventory Staff
- ☒☒ Write a work plan with a timeline
- ☒☒ Meet with and train department unit/office liaisons: explain  
inventory worksheets, distribute reference materials and work  
plan
- ☒☒ Draw maps of each area and include storage units
- ☒☒ Duplicate worksheets after filling in repetitive sections
- ☒☒ Procure supplies: worksheets, pencils, marking pens, and tape  
Measure, etc
- ☒☒ Assign a folder to each area with a map attached inside
- ☒☒ Complete one worksheet per record series per location

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<sup>1</sup> Obtain authority signature from the department director, manager, etc. to conduct the inventory.

# RECORD SERIES INVENTORY WORKSHEET



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<b>1. a. Agency</b>	<b>b. Department/Division</b>	<b>c. Office/Unit</b>
---------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------

**2. Record Series Title:**

**3. Record Series Disposition Authority Number (DAN):**  
 Agency assigned Unique DAN (list number as assigned on approved schedule): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Using General Schedule     NOT Scheduled

<p><b>4. Record Series Retention:</b> (indicate if totals are in years/months/days)  <input type="checkbox"/> From Schedule, In office: _____ at Record Center: _____ Total: _____  <input type="checkbox"/> From General Schedule: _____  <input type="checkbox"/> No retention established</p>	<p><b>5. Cut-Off (When the Retention Begins):</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly    <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar Year    <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal Year  <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify _____</p>
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<b>6. Location of Records (a-e):</b>	<b>a. Building</b>	<b>b. Floor</b>	<b>c. Room</b>	<b>d. Cabinet/Shelf</b>	<b>e. Drawer/Box</b>
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<p><b>7. Record Series:</b>  <b>a. Date Span</b> (From) _____ (To) _____  <b>b. Bulk Dates:</b> (From) _____ (To) _____</p>	<p><b>8. Record Series Filing Arrangement:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabetical    <input type="checkbox"/> Numerical    <input type="checkbox"/> Chronological  <input type="checkbox"/> Alphanumeric    <input type="checkbox"/> Other          (specify) _____</p>
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**9. Media Type (✓ all items a-d that apply):**

a. Paper	b. Audio-Visual	c. Microfilm	d. Electronic
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter Size <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Size <input type="checkbox"/> Bound Volumes <input type="checkbox"/> Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Printout <input type="checkbox"/> Maps, Drawings, Plans <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Audio Tape <input type="checkbox"/> Video Tape <input type="checkbox"/> Motion Picture <input type="checkbox"/> Photo Prints <input type="checkbox"/> Film Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Photo-color Slides <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 16mm Role Film <input type="checkbox"/> 35mm Roll Film <input type="checkbox"/> Microfiche <input type="checkbox"/> Aperture Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Tape <input type="checkbox"/> Hard Disk <input type="checkbox"/> Diskette (Floppy Disk) <input type="checkbox"/> Optical Disk <input type="checkbox"/> CD ROM <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ _____ _____

**10. Total Quantity (Complete same media types as selected in no.9a-d):**

a. Paper (Cubic Feet)	b. Audio-Visual (Number of Items)	c. Microfilm (Rolls/Items)	d. Electronic (Bytes/No. of Items)

**11. Annual Accumulation (Complete same media types as selected from no 9a-d and 10 a-d):**

a. Paper (Cubic Feet)	b. Audio-visual (Number of Items)	c. Microfilm (Rolls/Items)	d. Electronic (Bytes/No. of Items)

**12 Record Series Type:**

<p><b>a. Primary copy:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No          In no, location of primary copy: _____</p>	<p><b>b. Other Copies:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No          If yes, location of other copies: _____</p>
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**13. Reference Frequency:**     Daily     Weekly     Monthly     Seldom     Never

<b>14. Condition of Records</b> <i>(check all that apply or known):</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Good, no visible problems <input type="checkbox"/> Severely torn or stained, causing loss of text <input type="checkbox"/> Mold or mildew present <input type="checkbox"/> Brittle <input type="checkbox"/> Discolored, some text lost <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot be flattened without damaging the record <input type="checkbox"/> Ink or other recording media is fading or flaking <input type="checkbox"/> Mounted on a highly acidic backing <input type="checkbox"/> Early electronic records not retrievable with current equipment	<b>15. Legal Restrictions:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Confidential Restrictions:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  <i>List any statutory basis for these restrictions:</i>
<b>16. Description of Record Series</b> <i>(complete items a-e):</i>	
<b>a. Informational Content</b>	<b>b. Who creates and/or uses the records and for what purpose</b>
<b>c. Primary Purpose of Record Series</b> <i>(Check one):</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal <input type="checkbox"/> Research <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	
<b>d. Are these Records Essential</b> <i>(vital to resume governmental operations after a disaster to protect the financial interests of the government or the public per RCW 40.10 )?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<b>e. Are these Records Potentially Archival</b> <i>(the record series may have a long-term historical/research value)?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<b>17. ELECTRONIC RECORDS ONLY</b> <i>(complete items a-g only if this media type was indicated in number 9):</i>	
<b>a. Media Characteristics</b> <i>(includes brand name, physical size, capacity/density, etc. Example: Brand "X" 3.5 inch double-sided, high-density diskette):</i> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>b. Name and Version of Software Used to Create These Records:</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>c. Programmer's Name &amp; Programming Language:</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>d. List Further Documentation or Supporting Files</b> <i>(Such as indexes required to access this series-indicate names, location &amp; media type):</i> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>e. Access Requirements &amp; Migration Issues</b> <i>(list hardware, memory requirements, special peripherals and operating software name &amp; version number. Also, document how continued readability for the records retention if software &amp;/or hardware evolves &amp; can no longer read the electronic record.):</i> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>f. How Often is a Back-up Performed:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify:	
<b>g. Is there a Security Back-up?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If yes, location of security back-up: _____ How often is the security backup cycled? <input type="checkbox"/> 2 backup cycles <input type="checkbox"/> 3 backup cycles <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify:	
<b>18 a. Name of Person Doing Inventory:</b>	<b>b. Date Inventory Completed:</b>
<b>c. Records Officer's Signature:</b>	

# Instructions for Completing the Inventory Worksheet

Archives & Records Management Division strongly recommends the use of these inventory worksheets. Remember: print, do not abbreviate, and ask questions of office staff or the agency records officer if needed when information is not apparent. Staff can duplicate worksheets after filling in repetitive fields. For example, when inventorying a particular unit, copying worksheets with the agency name/department/ office name filled in can save staff time. Publications created outside agency, blank forms, and personal files should not be inventoried. If uncertain about an answer, leave it blank and review later.

## 1. a. Agency Name; b. Department or Division; c. Office/Unit

Give the full, legal name of your agency, department/division, and office/unit. Example:

a. Agency	b. Department/Division	c. Office/Unit
Office of the Secretary of State	Archives & Records Management Division	Records Management Office

## 2. Record Series Title

Enter a specific title that is descriptive. This may be determined AFTER looking at the records and if applicable, the Records Retention Schedule. The schedule can often provide titles that accurately describe the record series in question. Otherwise, they can act as a guideline for a title that can be changed as necessary. Do not use office jargon or informal titles. Titles should include the following elements:

- ✍ Subject of the records (e.g., land, tax, and recreation)
- ✍ Function/Purpose (e.g., litigation, election, assessment)
- ✍ Form of Material (e.g., deeds, ledgers, photographs, maps, licenses)

*Examples:*

TAX ASSESSMENT LEDGERS (not tax books)  
 LITIGATION FILES (not Office Files)  
 DOG LICENSE APPLICATION FILES (not PX-25's or other form titles)  
 MOTOR VEHICLE INCIDENT REPORTS (not Yellow Forms)  
 STUDENT MEDICAL EVALUATION FILES (not Student Files)

## 3. Record Series Disposition Authority Number (DAN)

If applicable, match the record series with its current Record Retention Schedule for the DAN assigned by the State Records Committee (example: 89-07-02347 is a valid DAN). If no unique DAN is assigned but you are using a General Schedule DAN indicate by ✍ General Schedules include the GS number (example: GS 14001). If this record series is not scheduled, indicate by ✍ NOT Scheduled and review this space later.

## 4. Record Series Retention

If applicable, provide the current retention as indicated on the Record Retention Schedule in Office/Records Center/Total years (if applicable) or the General Schedule (*if not scheduled, leave blank*).

## 5. Cut-off

An event or date that establishes when a record becomes inactive and the retention can begin. *Examples:* **Calendar year** (December 31 retention begins) **Monthly** (end of month retention begins); **Fiscal Year** (Last month/day of fiscal year retention begins); **Other** specified examples: **After revised or superseded, When filmed and verified, After audit completed, and Termination of Employee, etc.**

## 6. Location of Records

a. BUILDING	b. FLOOR	c. ROOM	d. CABINET/SHELF	e. DRAWER/BOX
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Indicate the physical location of the record series. Use as many of the above elements as possible. However, situations will vary. In the case of electronic records, also indicate the diskette label, the box in which it is stored, or the directory (e.g., drives) on which it is stored.

## 7. Record Series

### a. Date Span

Write down the beginning date of the record series and the ending date. This can be in the form of years (1980-1999), or the month and the year, such as is common with fiscal records, (3/1978-7/1990). **Ongoing record series could be identified with**

“9999” (1980-9999). If it is difficult to determine exact dates, scan the records and write down approximate ones, using c. or ca. (*circa meaning “approximately”*) (ca.1977-ca. 1991).

Examples:

Exact years	(1940-1985)
Exact month/year	(3/1940–7/1985)
Ongoing dates	(1940-9999)
Approximate dates	(ca.1940-1985) or (ca.1940-ca.1985)
Probable dates	
Decade Unsure	(194? -1985)
Year Unsure	(1940? -1985)
Century Unsure	(18? -1985)

**b. Bulk Dates**

If the majority of the record series cover certain years, add these as well under BULK DATES. For example, list a record series spanning 1972-1990, and having five out of six cubic feet covering the years 1980 to 1987 as: Date **Span** (1973-1990) **Bulk Dates** (1980-1987).

**8. Filing Arrangements**

Describe the order of the record series. **Alphabetical** arrangement can be files ordered by last names or by topics. **Numerical** arrangement uses a numbering system such as purchase order numbers, etc. **Chronological** arrangement of records is by date. **Alphanumeric** combines alphabetical and numerical systems using codes like HWY-01. If you are checking other, describe the arrangement.

**9. Media Type**

a. Paper	b. Audio-visual	c. Microfilm	d. Electronic
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Identify the physical form of the record series from the four different categories (a-d). Beneath each of these are selections to check. Some record series may exist in more than one media form. Please check all that apply. Example:

Record Series Title: LITIGATION FILES

<b>a. Paper</b>	<b>c. Microfilm</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter size	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Microfiche

Record Series Title: CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

<b>a. Paper</b>	<b>d. Electronic</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer printout	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diskette

**10. Total Quantity**

After choosing the media type characteristics selected in number nine, also indicate their total quantity. The **paper** category should be in cubic feet. (*See cubic foot equivalents page\**.) For containers not listed, multiply the three dimensions and divide by 1,728 to get the number of cubic feet, then multiply by the number of containers to calculate total cubic feet. Whenever using decimals in any of these calculations, do not use any smaller than 0.1 or estimate, based on the size of a standard cubic foot records center carton.

The **audio-visual** category, list the number of tapes, prints, negatives or slides. Under the **microfilm** category, add up the number of rolls of 16mm and/or 35-mm film. *Aperture cards* or *microfiche* formats just add up the individual cards or sheets. **Electronic** media, total the number of bytes from tapes, disk, or CD ROMS. Also, indicate the number of tapes, disks, diskettes, etc.

**11. Annual Accumulation**

Fill this in only if the record series is ongoing. Indicate the rate it grows every year, using the most recent year or two as a guide.

**12. Record Series Copy Type**

The series appraisal should designate which copy is the “primary copy”. A primary copy is the clearest and most complete that should contain any original signatures, certifications, etc. Other duplicate or secondary copies produced for informational purposes only may be destroyed using General Schedule 50 authority. However, if more than one copy of this record series is used for a specific administrative, fiscal or legal purpose, it needs to be scheduled separately. Indicate if another unit, agency, business, federal agency, local government agency, etc., maintains other copies of this record series.

**13. Reference Frequency**

Indicate how often the record series is used, both by office staff and others, if applicable.

**14. Condition of Records?**

If there is damage to part or all of the record series, indicate this by checking all those applicable.

## 15. Legal or Confidential Restrictions

Check “yes” if the record series is specifically restricted by law from public view or is confidential. Site the law or regulation that restricts the documents. Examples of these are birth certificates, student records, health records, etc.

## 16. Description of Records Series

### *a. Informational Content*

This is an essential part of the inventory form because it provides information used to determine whether to keep a record and for how long. Elements should include the type of documents (correspondence, minutes) and the format (maps, photographs). It should list the key information. Other significant information in the content of a series should be listed such as a noteworthy event or a controversial subject. This can include information such as gaps in dates. Examples:

- ✍ Series consists of building permits, and supporting materials such as maps, drawings, specification, and inspection reports
- ✍ It contains information on construction materials, physical structure, and code violations
- ✍ Voter registration applications that provide name, address, party affiliation, place of employment, length of residence, and place of birth. Applications from 1990-93 missing
- ✍ Roster files (electronic) includes names, addresses, and telephone numbers. The files are stored on hard drive with daily backups on tape

### *b. Who Creates and/or Uses the Records and for What Purpose?*

List who created the record series, then provide a brief explanation of why it was created and how it is used. The purpose should be specific to the records, not a general statement such as “government administration.” Examples:

- ✍ Minutes created to provide a legal record of the decisions made by the commission
- ✍ Records documenting payments made to childcare recipients and used to prepare annual reports submitted to the state
- ✍ Field book used for assessing property value and levying taxes
- ✍ Provides a record of money paid to employees for Commute Trip Reduction Program

### *c. Primary Purpose of Record Series*

What is the main consideration of these records? Is it their legal implications, their administrative value for day to day business, their financial data, or their rich informational content? If there is another purpose the records serve, specify under “other.”

### *d. Are these Records Essential?*

If the agency needs this record series to provide continuity and preservation of government then check “Yes”. *Note: About five percent of an agency’s records are usually categorized as essential (see RCW 40.10.010).*

### *e. Are these Records Potentially Archival?*

If you feel these records have archival value, check “Yes”. If you are not sure, leave blank. Examples of “archival” values:

- ✍ Board minutes of decision-making boards, commissions and committees established by statute, resolution, or regulation
- ✍ Original or “official” copies of formal policy directives
- ✍ One copy of the agency annual reports
- ✍ Original or record copy of organizational documentation including charts
- ✍ Records documenting a historic or “landmark” event

Keep in mind that the State Archival Appraisal Committee performs the actual archival appraisal based on numerous factors considered from the record series title and function/description statement submitted on Record Retention Schedules. **It is important that the record series title and description are concise.** *Note: Records designated, as “Archival” must be transferred within fifty years after the creation of the records so they may be preserved for posterity in archival-quality conditions. If you think this may be archival, keep in mind the retention should reflect the 50 yr. Retention maximum.*

## 17. Electronic Records

Only fill this section out if electronic media was indicated in number nine. Electronic records must be inventoried just as those in other formats. Most of the following categories require discussion with the individuals who create and use the record series.

### **a. Media Characteristics**

List the physical and technical characteristics for the media. Include the brand name and model, date of manufacture, physical size, capacity and density or any special attributes such as calculated “read” date. Examples:

<i>Brand Name and Model:</i>	Maxell MF2DD diskette, 3M DC2000 data cartridge, and KAO MM2HD diskette
<i>Physical Size:</i>	3.5-inch diskette, 5.25-inch removable hard disk cartridge, and 12-inch write-once optical disk cartridge
<i>Capacity and Density:</i>	6,250 bpi (magnetic tape reel); 2 megabytes, double sided high density (3.5 inch diskette); 6.6 gigabytes, double-sided (12 inch write-once optical disk cartridge).
<i>Special Attributes:</i>	Teflon coated diskettes.

**b. Name and Version of Software Used to Create these Records**

List the agency purchased software name and version to create and maintain these records. Examples

- ✎ *Word Processing: WordPerfect 6.0/ MS Word for Windows/AmiPro 3.01*
- ✎ *Spreadsheet: Lotus 1-2-3 version 2.4/Quicken 7.0*
- ✎ *Database:MS Access 1.0 for Windows/dBase IV/ AlphaV/Oracle/Ingres/Informix*
- ✎ *Geographic Information Systems: Arc/Info version 7/Arc/View 2.0/MapInfo for Windows version 2.0/Atlas GIS/Intergraph MGE*

*Note: Most commercial software is “backward compatible” for only one or two version. For example: WordPerfect 5.1 is compatible with WordPerfect 5.0 & 5.2 but not 4.1.*

**c. Programmer’s Name & Programming Language**

If the software was custom written for creation and maintenance of the records series, list the programmer’s name and the programming language used. Also, list the programmer’s name if a custom application was developed on an off-the-shelf product (such as a database). This information is important in order to update, modify, and access records. Examples:

- ✎ *Programming languages: C/C==/Fortran/Cobol/Pascal/Clipper*

**d. List Further Documentation or Supporting Files**

Include a brief description of any electronic or other files that support or are essential to the utilization of the record series. This might include indexes, data dictionaries, metadata documentation for geographic information systems (GIS) or other files that may exist electronically or in human readable formats. Examples:

- ✎ *For an Imaging System:* The index for these images is located at S:\imaging/index.doc (on the LAN: Local Area Network). Customer number, name, and state may search the index.
- ✎ *For GIS:* Documentation for the geographic data contained in the system is stored on the Sun Spark station located in the Planning Dept. office. The file name is metadata. This documentation includes information about the sources of the data, accuracy, coordinate system, descriptions of each coverage, and maintenance frequency. A hard copy of this information is kept in the Planning Department files under “metadata.”

**e. Access Requirements & Migration Issues**

Describe the hardware required to access the record series, the memory requirements, any special peripheral devices required, and the name and version number of the operating system needed to access the records. *It is important to maintain intellectual access to records during their scheduled retention. In addition to the record creator, consult with relevant staff from areas such as data processing and management information systems. Include migration steps that will insure continued readability for the record retention period if software and/or hardware evolve and can no longer be read.* Examples:

- ✎ The record series was created on an IBM-compatible 486 DX-2 personal computer running the DOS 6.1 operating system and Windows 3.1. The data requires 150 megabytes of storage; the application software requires 8 megabytes of memory
- ✎ The record series was created on an IBM 3090 running MVS
- ✎ The images are stored on an IBM AS/400 using Image Plus software (SBT Corporation). The optical disks are stored in IBM 3995 Model A43 optical disk jukebox
- ✎ Migrating digital imaging system records include: upgrading equipment & software as technology evolves & periodically recopying disks as required; recopying optical disks based upon projected longevity and/or periodic verification of the by-passing the intermediate generation that is mature but at risk of becoming obsolete.

**f. How often is the back up preformed?**

Indicate how often back-ups of the record series are performed.

**g. Is there a security back up?**

Indicate if there is a security back up, where is it stored, and how often is it cycled. *Note: It is important to have a security back-up copy stored off site and backup is only destroyed after 3 backup cycles, but not before relevant audit and documentation requirements or before any appropriate review and verification have been met.*

## 18. Name, Date, Agency Records Officer

Enter the name of the person filling out the inventory form, the date the inventory was completed, and the agency record officer's signature.

### MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE

The State Records Management Office recommends record coordinators or others performing this inventory first contact their agency Records Officer for information or assistance. Your Records Officer is your agency liaison with the State Records Management Office. Record Officers can contact their assigned record specialists at the State Records Management unit for assistance with filling out this form.

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIRECTORY		
ARCHIVES	(360) 586-1492	research@secstate.wa.gov
IMAGING SERVICES	(360) 586-2487	tsmith@secstate.wa.gov
RECORDS CENTER	(360) 753-5468	recordscenter@secstate.wa.gov
RECORDS MANAGEMENT	(360) 586-4901	dcasler@secstate.wa.gov

# TABLE OF CUBIC FOOT EQUIVALENTS

## File Folder Drawers

Quantity	Item and Size Description	Cubic Feet
1	File Drawer, Letter-size Vertical	1.5
1	File Drawer, Legal-size Vertical	2.0
1	File Drawer, Letter-size Lateral	2.0
1	File Drawer, Legal-size Lateral	2.5

## Shelf Units

Quantity	Item and Size Description	Cubic Feet
1	Open Shelf, Letter-size – 36" long	2.0
1	Open Shelf, Legal-size – 36" long	2.5
1 linear ft	Open Shelving, Letter-size – Various Lengths	0.75
1 linear ft	Open Shelving, Legal-size – Various Lengths	1.0

## Off-Site Storage Containers

Quantity	Item and Size Description	Cubic Feet
1	Check Storage Box, Standard (3.5" x 8" x 24")	0.4
1	Record Ctr Storage Box, Standard (10" x 12" x 15")	1.0
1	Storage Box Large/Letter-size (10" x 12" x 36")	2.0
1	Storage Box Large/Legal-size (10" x 15" x 36")	2.5
1	Tab Storage (3.5" x 8" x 14")	0.2
1	Map Storage (6" x 6" x 36")	0.7
1	Map Storage (6" x 6" x 48")	1.0
1	Map Storage (4" x 4" x 48")	0.4

## Map or Plan Drawers

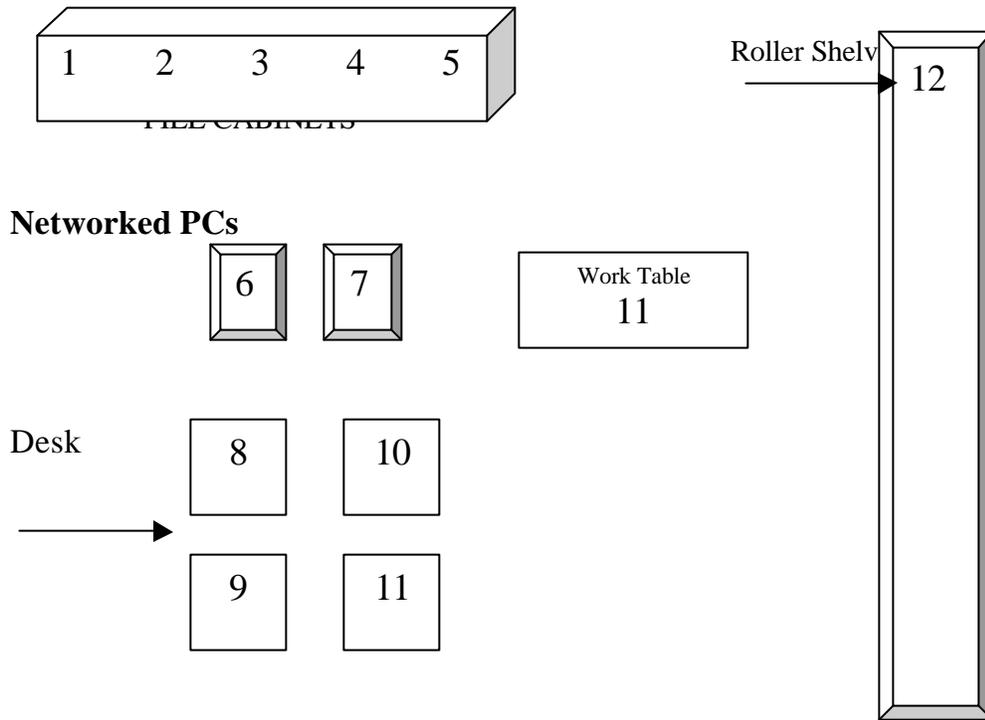
Quantity	Item and Size Description	Cubic Feet
1	2" x 26" x 38" Flat	1.1
1	2" x 26" x 50" Flat	2.2
1	4" x 26" x 38" Flat	2.3
1	4" x 26" x 50" Flat	4.4

## Map or Plan Tubes

Quantity	Item and Size Description	Cubic Feet
1	2" x 26" x 38" Roll	0.1
1	2" x 26" x 50" Roll	0.1
1	4" x 26" x 38" Roll	0.3
1	4" x 26" x 50" Roll	0.5

**Other Situations:** To convert measurements of items of other size into Cubic Feet, use the following formula: Measure in inches and then multiply the item's LENGTH x WIDTH x HEIGHT then divide the total by 1728 to equal cubic feet.

# SAMPLE INVENTORY MAP



Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
Building: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Room: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Map Drawn By: \_\_\_\_\_

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## *Issues to consider*

The needs assessment document analyzes the information gathered during the records inventory and discusses areas of concern, possible solutions and future goals. It is a fundamental component in the development of a records management plan.

- ✍ Advisory Board
- ✍ Appraisal
- ✍ Archives
- ✍ Automation
- ✍ Budgeting
- ✍ Collections
- ✍ Conservation/Preservation
- ✍ Confidentiality
- ✍ Disaster Recovery
- ✍ Disposition
- ✍ Equipment
- ✍ Environment
- ✍ Facilities
- ✍ Files Management
- ✍ Information Technology
- ✍ Inventory (including updates)
- ✍ Legislation
- ✍ Microfilming
- ✍ Policies/Procedures
- ✍ Processing
- ✍ Public Relations
- ✍ Publications
- ✍ Reference
- ✍ Reproduction
- ✍ Safety
- ✍ Scheduling
- ✍ Security
- ✍ Staffing
- ✍ Training
- ✍ Users/Uses
- ✍ Vendors/Consultants
- ✍ Essential Records
- ✍ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✍ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✍ \_\_\_\_\_

# PART II: Guidelines for Scheduling

## Why a Record Retention and Disposition Schedule?

Record retention and disposition schedules are vital to every records management program. The regular use of record retention and disposition schedules provides the following:

- Ensures that records have been retained for as long as they are needed*
- Ensures the prompt and legal disposition of records after they are no longer needed*
- Frees file cabinets and office and storage space for reuse, saving the cost of new equipment or new construction*
- Reduces the amount of staff time required to manage unneeded or obsolete records and locate needed documents*
- Facilitates the identification and preservation of archival records*

The purpose of a records retention and disposition schedule is to ensure that records are retained as long as they are needed by a state government agency for administrative, fiscal, legal, or historical/research purposes. Minimum record retention periods are determined by careful study and analysis of records by the agencies' appointed records officer<sup>2</sup> to determine their potential value for these purposes. Understanding the meaning of these different kinds of "values" is key to understanding the importance of using a Records Retention and Disposition Schedule, and, therefore, to operating a sound records management program.

Administrative value means that the record/document has value for as long as the information it holds is necessary for program operations or for the continued administration of the program or the agency. If a record possessing administrative value were accidentally disposed of, it would directly affect a state government agency's ability to carry out its duties.

Fiscal value identifies records that document money received, managed, and spent, and establishes an audit trail. Records with fiscal value include, for example, audit reports, bills of sale, receipts, and accounting registers.

Legal value means that the records document the rights or responsibilities of a government and its citizens. In court cases, a record of legal value can support a state government agency, whether it is the plaintiff or the defendant. Records having legal value include, for example, maps and plans, permits and approvals, logs, indexes, and contracts.

Historical or other research value is found in records that are valuable for the information they contain about a state government agency, its activities, and the citizens it serves. These are records that document the history of a community and its citizens, or that have value for future program and policy analysis by the government. Records with continuing historical or other research value include, for example, minutes, tax rolls, deeds, mortgages, building permits, census records, maps, and architectural drawings.

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<sup>2</sup> Records Officers are designated at each agency to supervise its records program and to represent the office in all contacts with the state records committee and the division of archives and records management. A records officer's designation, power and duties are described in RCW 40.14.040.

## Types of Schedules

There are general schedules and unique schedules. State General Schedules are designed for records that are common to many government offices; unique schedules are designed for records that are specific to an agency.

## Record Series Appraisal for Scheduling

The agency records schedules are developed through a comprehensive analysis and appraisal process. Assembled information, including a *completed inventory worksheet*, applicable laws and regulations, and surveys of internal offices.

A record retention and disposition schedule describes the life cycle of specific record series<sup>3</sup> and eventually the time to destroy, send to Archives, or otherwise dispose of the records. State law requires State Records Committee approval of state agency submitted retention schedules before any records destruction can occur. State agency schedules are submitted to the Secretary of State's Archives and Records Management Division, Records Management Section for review prior to State Records Committee consideration.

Records officers should compare each record series developed to the General Records Retention Schedules for Agencies of Washington State Government (State General Schedule). If the information gathered does not substantially match the content and function of a series contained in the State General Schedule, it is probably unique to your agency and will require a unique retention schedule describing the records and proposed retention periods.

Unique record retention and disposition schedules must be developed along agency lines, with schedules written for specific agency office/units. Agency based schedules facilitate either transfer of inactive records to a records center and final destruction, or transfer to the Archives for historical preservation.

Record series must be reviewed on an annual basis and revised as needed. Since state laws, services and office operations are constantly revised; agency schedules must reflect its current business practices. These are subsequently submitted for review by State Records Management office, State Records Committee, and the State Archival Appraisal Committee<sup>1</sup> for approval. Records Management office is willing to review a draft of a schedule before it is finalized. Review of a draft can often save time and work. Upon final approval the agency records officer is mailed a copy of the schedule and the original is filed at the State Records Management Office.

## Using the State General Schedule

The General Schedule is approved and ready to use by any state government agency. After the appraisal and designation that the record series is a General Schedule item, it is your authority to dispose of records after these records exceed the specified retention periods, and are no longer needed for any purpose. Retention periods listed in the General Schedule pertain to information contained in records regardless of media: paper, microfilm, computer disk or tape, audio or videotape, or other forms. Whatever the medium, state government agencies must retain records for the length of time specified by the scheduled retention periods and must ensure that they are accessible for the full retention period. A retention requirement is not met, for example, without the hardware and software needed to “read” a record that exists only in machine-readable form.

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<sup>3</sup> A record series is a group of documents, volumes, folders, or other records having the same physical form and one or more of the following aspects: Arrangement under a single filing system; Relation to a particular subject; Documentation of a particular kind of transaction.

Before using a schedule, take time to read the introduction and become familiar with the functional headings. The record series in the General Schedule are written in general terms, and are arranged under headings that reflect their function (e.g., fiscal). Under each functional heading are schedule items that describe the purpose or function of records (e.g., audit) rather than identify individual documents or forms. Records, whose content and function are substantially the same as an item described on the schedule, should be considered covered by that item.

When using the General Schedule, records officers should determine whether they are dealing with an primary copy of a record or a secondary (duplicate) copy produced for informational purpose (which can be discarded if no longer needed) or if the secondary copy has a specific administrative, fiscal or legal purpose (which will need to be scheduled separately). This is determined from the Inventory Worksheet or by consulting with appropriate personnel in the offices where the records are used

The General Schedule's retention periods apply to primary copies of the records. Duplicate copies are covered on the General Schedule's "Cover page" at the beginning of each section. By identifying primary and duplicate copy values, those redundant or convenience copies may be eliminated, freeing space and equipment.

The General Schedule contains similar records that could be found within most state governments. No one state government agency will have all of the records listed in the General Schedule. If a state government agency does not normally create a record, the presence of that item on a General Schedule does not mean that it must now do so. It means only that if the state government agency at some point creates the record, then that record must be retained for the listed period.

The record series contained in the State General Schedule are developed to be broad, all encompassing documents, applicable to many different types of state government agency offices. For agency's internal offices, it is recommended that records officers distribute General Schedule items specific to their office. General Schedule items cannot be revised or altered. They are already approved and should NOT to be submitted with an agencies unique schedule for the Review & Approval Process.

## Preparing an Agency Unique Schedule

All records having a value must be scheduled. With the exception of non-records defined in General Schedule 50 which can be discarded as soon as they are read and should never reach a filing cabinet (*examples: duplicate copies that have no administrative, legal, fiscal or historical value to an office, transmittal letters and acknowledgements which do not add any information to the material transmitted; request for printed material after the request have been filled; informal notes, worksheets and rough drafts of letters, memoranda or reports that do not represent basic steps in the preparation of documents; shorthand notes, including stenographic notebooks and stenotype tapes, and dictating media which have been transcribed verbatim; miscellaneous notices of community affairs, employee meetings or holidays; stocks of publications or unused forms that are kept for supply purposes only; tickler, follow-up suspense copies of correspondence; and library and reference materials.*)

Schedules are timetables that identify a record series and the length of time records must be kept in active and inactive status prior to final disposition. Working directly from your completed Inventory Worksheet to prepare your schedule you can determine:

- ✍ Agency office & person responsible for the record series
- ✍ Record series media type (paper, auto-video, microfilm, electronic)
- ✍ Title and description of the record series
- ✍ Copy status (primary or duplicate) & location of other copies
- ✍ Classification - Official Public Record (OPR) or Office Files & Memoranda (OFM). RCW 40.14.010
- ✍ Value (administrative, fiscal, legal, historical/research)
- ✍ Years covered by the record series

## Determining a Record Series Retention

Determining a retention period best suited to a record series requires careful analysis and consideration of the information gathered during the inventory process. No record should be destroyed while it still has significant value. No record should be retained after its value has been exhausted. Do not keep records based on “someone may need them someday.” Maintaining records on this basis uses valuable resources and is costly to your agency. Evaluation for retention periods should be based on:

*Statutory or regulatory requirements* for specific records retention periods are infrequent. Statutes and regulations are usually geared toward actions rather than records. Record retention may be inferred, however, by the need to provide evidence of a particular action. When a statute or regulation is being cited as the basis for a retention period, the specific statute or regulation must be indicated on the records inventory worksheet (#17) and added to the retention schedule.

*Audit requirements* usually only apply to financial or fiscal records. These requirements are most often limited to retention of three or four years. Do not assign retention periods based on what an individual auditor wants. The auditing authority should make this determination.

## Approval of Retention & Disposition Schedules

The State Records Committee has sole statutory authority for approval of state agencies’ record retention schedule requests in accordance with the provisions of RCW 40.14. The Records Management office has been assigned authority to assign Disposition Authority Numbers after Committee approval, conduct a comprehensive analysis and recommend appropriate schedule modifications, and dispense schedules for the appropriate level of signature authority need as outlined below.

State Records Committee (SRC) Signature Authority	State Records Management office SRC assigned Signature Authority.
Adding a new record series.	
Revise a record series to change the <u>total</u> retention.	Revise a record series to adjust agency office & Records Center retention having <i>no change to the total retention</i> .
Revise a record series to change cut-off.	Revise a non-substantive record series to change cut-off ( <i>example: from End of Year to year-end</i> ).
Revise a record series to change title or description that alters the series function.	Revise a record series to change series title or description that does NOT alter the series function.
Revise record series to change classification (Official Public Record (OPR) or Office Files & Memoranda (OFM) as described in RCW 40.14.010.	Revise a record series to transfer from one agency to another or if agency is defunct and absorbed into another.
	Revise to discontinue or reinstate an existing approved record series.

The review and approval process establishes agency records management procedures, safeguards the integrity of the State Records Committee’s approval authority, and provides quality control for the Disposition Authority Number (DAN) system. This process is streamlined by eliminating duplicate effort and potential error caused by submission of schedules with records series that do not require approval.

General Schedule records do not require additional approval and should not be included when submitting a unique schedule for this process. Unique record series submitted on a schedule without a revision statement<sup>4</sup> indicating what change is being requested or containing a previously approved revision statement<sup>5</sup> will not be accepted. The Records Management office has been authorized by the Committee to return these to the agency records officer unprocessed.

<sup>4</sup> Revision statement examples: (Rev 1: Changes classification from OPR, cut-off from Termination of Contract, and *adjust* retention from 36mo/36mo/6yrs to 24mo/48mo/6yrs), (Rev 1: Increases retention from 6yrs to 48mo/48mo/8yrs, changes title and description to reflect current business practices.)

<sup>5</sup> *Approved revision statements must be removed before any subsequent revisions are submitted.*

## Special Requirements of the Process

*Submitting a General Schedule item as an agency unique item.* If an agency has a valid need to retain a General Schedule records series for a time period other than what is stated in the General Schedules, it must use the scheduling process to apply for a unique DAN. This request must be accompanied by a written valid justification that includes any federal or state mandated requirements.

*Retention periods greater than 10 years.* All record series submitted with retention periods greater than 10 years require written justification demonstrating a *value* requiring the long-term need that include any state or federal requirements.

*Note:* It is not recommended that any record series with retention greater than 10 years be retained in electronic format unless migration issues are addressed and assured.

*Archival designations* added or removed by the Archival Appraisal Committee *are not* considered a numbered revision to a record series.

*Notification Statements* – are not a numbered revision but make a change that requires notification to the State Records Management office. The Records Management offices tracks offices within an agency and which DAN is used where. This is tracked for disposition & filing purpose within the Archives & Records Management Division. Notifications need to be done if there is an: *Amendment to existing office name/number; Offices eliminated/absorbed; or Internal transfers of a record series' control from one office to another—not altering series function.* Office number in memo format listing the DAN & RECORD Series to be transferred or on a schedule can send notifications *as follows:*

TITLE/Description	OPR/OFM	Office of Primary Copy	Cut-off (start of retention)	Retention			Disposition Authority No. (DAN)
				Office	Records Center	Total	
<b><i>Notification: The following record series are being transferred from office 410 to office 500; 8/99.</i></b>							
CASH RECEIPT BOOK – Provides a record of all cash payments received in the office for third party damages	OFM	500	Fiscal Year	12mo	0 mo.	1 yr.	89-11-054321
BACKGROUND FILES Provides criminal history information pertaining to employees, contractors, and case files.	OFM	500	Termination of Employee	36mo	36mo	6yrs	94-12-49214 Rev 1

## Keeping Schedules Up-to-date

A unique retention schedule must be kept up-to-date if it is to be of value. Any addition, elimination or significant change in an existing function makes it necessary to amend the schedule to reflect the change.

## Archives & Records Management Division Services

The Archives section mission is to centralize the archives of the state of Washington, to make them available for reference and scholarship and to ensure their proper preservation. Their duties include: appraisal of all state government records for archival value; designation of records that shall be transferred to the Archives; preservation of historical records of the State as a public trust; and assuring availability of records to researchers (RCW 40.14.030).

The Records Management section provides records management services to state and local governments including technical advice and assistance, publications, training, and consultations with records officers concerning records and information management issues. The section staff has experienced records specialist who can visit and provide on-the-spot advice. They also provide administrative staff and services to the State and Local Records Committee (RCW 40.14.010 and RCW 40.14.060).

The State Records Center provides low-cost, secure, and accurate off-site storage for state agency records that need to be retained, but do not need to be kept in more expensive office space. Services include training, consultation, supplies, box pick-up, storage, reference and refilling, and records disposal.

Imaging Services Bureau provides micrographic production, security microfilm inspection/storage, and data-imaging conversion under current industry standards. Services are provided at actual cost by contract and include consultations on alternative media storage options.

State Records Committee: The committee was formed by RCW 40.14.050. The committee is required to approve, modify, or not approve the recommendations submitted on a record retention schedule. The committee consists of the State Archivist and representatives from the Office of the Attorney General, the State Auditor, and the Office of Financial Management. The committee may adopt appropriate procedures for record disposition authorization, scheduling and other matters relating to retention, preservation or destruction of public records.

The committee meets at least once a quarter in an open public meeting. These meetings are generally held as business dictates on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the State Archives & Records Management Building in Olympia, Washington.

Archival Appraisal Committee: The committee consists of five archivists. When agency records officers submit a unique record series for State Records Committee approval, these schedules are also routed to the Archival Appraisal Committee to appraise the record series for their historical/research value. The State Archivist or the Archives section manager to designate certain series as archival uses this committee's recommendations.

1. AGENCY OFM NO. 303	2. AGENCY Secretary of State	3. DIVISION Archives & Records Management	4. OFFICE NO. 300	5. OFFICE OF RECORD: Records Management
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6. ADDRESS (MS or Street, City, and Zip Code) 1129 Washington St, PO Box 40238, Olympia, Washington 98504-0238	7. CONTACT (Name and Telephone Number) Ken House (360) 586-4900
---	--

8. AGENCY RECORDS OFFICER  
 I hereby certify that I have completed an appraisal of the record series and examined this schedule for accuracy. \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date (required to process) Printed name

**9. LIST OF RECORD SERIES**

a. ITEM NO.	b. TITLE/DESCRIPTION	c. OPR/ OFM	d. Office of Primary Copy	e. Cut-off (start of retention)	f. Retention			g. Disposition Authority No. (DAN)	h. Archival Designation/Remarks
					Office	Record Center	Total Years		
1	CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION Records of certificates of completion sent to workshop participants <i>(NEW SERIES)</i>	OFM	431	When mailed	12	0	1 yr		
2	TRAINING FACILITY FILES Records of facilities, maps, site size, accommodations, fees, and evaluations. <i>(REV 1: reduces retention from 12/0/1yr)</i>	OFM	431	<b>When superseded</b>	0	0	0		
<p style="color: blue; font-size: 1.1em; margin: 0;"><b>EXAMPLE OF SCHEDULE BEING SUBMITTED TO THE STATE RECORDS COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL</b></p>									

**FOR ARCHIVES & RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION USE ONLY**

**10. ACTION AUTHORIZED STATE RECORDS COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

_____ <i>For the Attorney General</i>	_____ <i>For the State Auditor</i>	_____ <i>For the Office Financial Management</i>	_____ <i>For the State Archivist</i>
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**11. ACTION AUTHORIZED FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICE BY SRC DELEGATED AUTHORITY (if applies)**

Records Management ANALYST: _____ <span style="display: block; text-align: center;"><i>Authorized Signature</i></span>	Remarks: _____
---	----------------

**Approved as Recommended**    
  **Approved as Amended**    
  **Returned Unprocessed**    
**DATE OF ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. AGENCY OFM NO.	2. AGENCY	3. DIVISION	4. OFFICE NO.	5. OFFICE OF RECORD:
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6. ADDRESS (MS or Street, City, and Zip Code)	7. CONTACT (Name and Telephone Number) Ken House (360) 586-4900
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8. AGENCY RECORDS OFFICER  
 I hereby certify that I have completed an appraisal of the record series and examined this schedule for accuracy. \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date (required to process) \_\_\_\_\_ Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

**9. LIST OF RECORD SERIES**

a. ITEM NO.	b. TITLE/DESCRIPTION	c. OPR/ OFM	d. Office of Primary Copy	e. Cut-off (start of retention)	f. Retention			g. Disposition Authority No. (DAN)	h. Archival Designation/Remarks
					Office	Record Center	Total Years		

**FOR ARCHIVES & RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION USE ONLY**

**10. ACTION AUTHORIZED STATE RECORDS COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

_____ <i>For the Attorney General</i>	_____ <i>For the State Auditor</i>	_____ <i>For the Office Financial Management</i>	_____ <i>For the State Archivist</i>
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**11. ACTION AUTHORIZED FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICE BY SRC DELEGATED AUTHORITY (if applies)**

Records Management ANALYST: _____ <span style="display: block; text-align: center; font-size: small;"><i>Authorized Signature</i></span>	Remarks: _____
---	----------------

**Approved as Recommended**    
  **Approved as Amended**    
  **Returned Unprocessed**    
**DATE OF ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Instructions for Completing the Records Retention Schedule

Archives and Records Management Division will only accept a Records Retention Schedule similar to this recommended format when submitting a record series to the State Records Committee. If using a different form, please contact the Records Management Office for prior approval (note: if using the ACCESS Retention Scheduling Database supplied from the Records Management office, this is an approved form).

Performing an inventory will greatly assist you in obtaining accurate information when writing a schedule. Remember: print, do not abbreviate, and ask questions of office staff or the agency records officer if needed when information is not apparent. Staff can duplicate worksheets after filling in repetitive fields. For example, when writing several schedules for particular office/unit, copying schedules with the agency name/department/ office name filled in can save staff time. General Schedule items should not be included on an agency unique schedule. If uncertain about an answer, leave it blank and review later.

## Agency OFM Number

Indicate the three-digit number assigned to your agency by Office of Financial Management. If you do not know this number, contact the Records Management Office for assistance.

## 2. Agency

Give the full, legal name of your agency.

## 3. DIVISION

Give the full department/division name

## 4. Office number

Indicate the internal office number assigned by the Records Management office together with the agency records officer. Contact the Records Management office if you do not have an office number.

## 5. Office of Record

Indicate the office/unit that is using this record series.

## 6. Address (MS or Street, City, and Zipcode)

If your agency uses Consolidated Mail, enter the office mail stop only. If no Consolidated Mail service is available, please enter your complete mailing address.

## 7. CONTACT (Name and Telephone Number)

Please enter a contact name and telephone number of the records coordinator for this office.

## 8. AGENCY RECORDS OFFICER

The agency records officer is required to certify that they have completed an appraisal of the record series and examined this schedule for accuracy by signing any schedule submitted for approval. Please date when signed and type the name and title of the signing records officer.

## 9. List of Record Series

- a) **Item No.** Not required but you can number the record series you are submitting.
- b) **Title/Description:** Type in all CAPS the title of the record series and lower case for description. *Recommendations for both existing and new record series:*

*Existing Record Series:*

If you have recently completed a records inventory worksheet, use it as a guideline for changing the title/description (#15 on the inventory worksheet) as necessary. If the current title should be more specific and descriptive as recommended for a new record series below, your title change will require the change be noted in the record series revision statement at the end of the description (see review & approval process guidelines for revision statement). If the current title accurately describes the record series, enter the identical title that was previously approved.

*New Record Series:*

The Records Management office strongly recommends you complete a records inventory worksheet to use as a guideline for scheduling a new record series. Titles and descriptions should be specific and descriptive. Remember: do not use office jargon or informal titles, do not use form numbers in either titles or descriptions. Include the following elements:

- ✍ Subject of the records (e.g., land, tax, and recreation)
- ✍ Function/Purpose (e.g., litigation, election, assessment)
- ✍ Form of Material (e.g., deeds, ledgers, photographs, maps, licenses)

*Title Examples:*

TAX ASSESSMENT LEDGERS (not tax books)  
LITIGATION FILES (not Office Files)  
DOG LICENSE APPLICATION FILES (not PX-25's or other form titles)  
MOTOR VEHICLE INCIDENT REPORTS (not Yellow Forms)  
STUDENT MEDICAL EVALUATION FILES (not Student Files)

c.) **OPR/OFM** Enter if the record series is an Official Public Record (OPR) or Office Files and Memoranda (OFM) as defined below:

**RCW 40.14.010 Definition and classification of public records.** As used in this chapter, the term "public records" shall include any paper, correspondence, completed form, and bound record book, photograph, film, sound recording, map drawing, machine-readable material, compact disc meeting current industry ISO specifications, or other document, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and including such copies thereof, that have been made by or received by any agency of the state of Washington in connection with the transaction of public business, and legislative records as described in RCW 40.14.100.

For the purposes of this chapter, public records shall be classified as follows:

(1) Official public records shall include all original vouchers, receipts, and other documents necessary to isolate and prove the validity of every transaction relating to the receipt, use, and disposition of all public property and public income from all sources whatsoever; all agreements and contracts to which the state of Washington or any agency thereof may be a party; all fidelity, surety, and performance bonds; all claims filed against the state of Washington or any agency thereof; all records or documents required by law to be filed with or kept by any agency of the state of Washington; all legislative records as defined in RCW 40.14.100; and all other documents or records determined by the records committee, created in RCW 40.14.050, to be official public records.

(2) Office files and memoranda include such records as correspondence, exhibits, drawings, maps, completed forms, or documents not above defined and classified as official public records; duplicate copies of official public records filed with any agency of the state of Washington; documents and reports made for the internal administration of the office to which they pertain but not required by law to be filed or kept with such agency; and other documents or records as determined by the records committee to be office files and memoranda. [1996 c 71 § 1; 1982 c 36 § 3; 1981 c 32 § 4; 1971 ex.s. c 102 § 1; 1957 c 246 § 1.]

**d. Office of Primary Copy**

If this is a duplicate copy that is required for a specific administrative, fiscal, legal, or historical/research value needing to be scheduled then enter the office number or name holding the primary copy of this record series. If this is a duplicate copy that is being preserved only for convenience of reference or information purposes it may be discarded when no longer needed under the authority of General Schedule 50.

e. **Cut-off (start of retention)**

Determine when the retention of this record series should begin based on the information obtained in the inventory.

f. **Recommended Retentions**

Determine the total retention based on the record series *value*. How long the series will be kept in the office is determined by its active status vs. non-active status or its reduced reference activity. This will assist you in determining how long records should be kept in office and those needing to be stored at the State Records Center.

Administrative value means that the record/document has value for as long as the information it holds is necessary for program operations or for the continued administration of the program or the agency. If a record possessing administrative value were accidentally disposed of, it would directly affect a state government agency's ability to carry out its duties.

Fiscal value identifies records that document money received, managed, and spent, and establish an audit trail. Records with fiscal value include, for example, audit reports, bills of sale, receipts, and accounting registers.

Legal value means that the records document the rights or responsibilities of a government and its citizens. In court cases, a record of legal value can support a state government agency, whether it is the plaintiff or the defendant. Records having legal value include, for example, maps and plans, permits and approvals, logs, indexes, and contracts.

Historical or other research value is found in records that are valuable for the information they contain about a state government agency, its activities, and the citizens it serves. These are records that document the history of a community and its citizens, or that have value for future program and policy analysis by the government. Records with continuing historical or other research value include, for example, minutes, tax rolls, deeds, mortgages, building permits, census records, maps, and architectural drawings.

g. **Disposition Authority No. (DAN)**

If this is record series that has previously been approved and has an assigned DAN by the State Records Committee, enter than DAN number. If you are submitting a new record series, this is left blank for the State Records Committee to approve and assign the DAN number.

h. **Archival Designation and or Remarks**

If this is a previously approved record series that has already been designated "Archival" by the Archival Appraisal Committee, then transfer the designation to the new form. If new or is not designated "Archival" leave this section blank for the Archives Committee. Remarks can be used for listing the state or federal law when justifying longer retentions.

**10. Action Authorized State Records Committee Approval.**

Do not fill in this portion. This is for Archives and Records Management Division Use Only by the State Records Committee.

**11. Action Authorized for Records Management Office - SRC Assigned Approval**

Do NOT fill this portion. This is for Archives and Records Management Division use only for action by the Records Management office regarding the approval of items on this schedule by State Records Committee delegated authority.

**MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE**

The State Records Management Office recommends record coordinators or others performing this inventory first contact their agency Records Officer for information or assistance. Your Records Officer is your agency liaison with the State Records Management Office. Record Officers can contact their assigned record specialists at the State Records Management unit for assistance with filling out this form.

# GLOSSARY

## **ACCESSION**

1. The act and procedures involved in a transfer of legal title and the taking of records or papers into the physical custody of an archival agency.
2. The materials involved in such a transfer of custody.

## **ACTIVE RECORDS**

Records that are referred to more than once per month per file drawer. Active records should be maintained in the office.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE FILES**

Records documenting the operation, management, and administration of an office. Usually distinguished from program records that relate to the office's primary function.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE**

The Record or document has value for as long as the information it holds is necessary for program operations or for the continued administration of the program or the agency.

If a record possessing administrative value were accidentally disposed of, it would directly affect a state government agency's ability to carry out its duties.

## **AGENCY LEVEL**

Indicates information generated or utilized by agency management.

## **AGENCY-WIDE**

Information used or dispersed throughout an entire agency.

## **ALPHABETICAL FILING SYSTEMS**

Arrangement of records according to the alphabet; used mainly for files referred to by last names or topic.

## **ALPHANUMERICAL FILING SYSTEMS**

Arrangement of records that combine alphabetical and numerical systems using codes such as HWY-01.

## **ARCHIVES**

1. The non-current records of an organization or institution preserved because of their permanent, continuing value.
2. The agency responsible for selecting, preserving, and making available archival materials.
3. The building where such materials are located.

**CASE FILES** - see Project Files

**CD-ROM** - see Compact Disk, or read-only Memory

## **CENTRALIZED FILES**

The files of several offices of organizational units physically and/or functionally centralized and supervised in one location.

## **CHRONOLOGICAL FILING**

The filing of documents in sequence by date.

## **CODING**

Marking a file code on the document to be filed.

## **COMPACT DISK**

A machine-readable medium used to reproduce records for rapid retrieval.

## **CONVENIENCE FILES**

Extra copies of records created and kept for quick reference and can be destroyed when no longer needed. Also, see non-records.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Any format of information that is an addressed, written communication to or from an agency or its employees.

## **CUSTODY (OF RECORDS)**

The guardianship of records that includes both physical possession and legal title.

## **CUT-OFF**

An event or date that establishes when a record becomes inactive and the retention can begin. Under this process, a file is terminated regularly at the end of a specified event or date, and a new file of the same record series is established.

## **DECENTRALIZED FILES**

Files that are created, used, maintained and controlled in or near the office of record.

## **DISPOSITION**

Any manner or method of changing the custody, location, or physical state of records. Includes transfer, microfilming, duplication or destruction.

## **DISPOSITION AUTHORITY NUMBER (DAN)**

The control number assigned to the record retention schedule by the State Records Committee.

## **DUPLICATE COPY CLASSIFICATION**

The second most general class of filing category under which records can be sorted or arranged for filing; subsidiary to primary classification. There are two types of duplicate copies 1) those

produced for informational purposes can be destroyed when no longer needed; or 2) those having an administrative, legal, fiscal, or historical value indicating the need to schedule.

## **ELECTRONIC RECORDS**

Records created and/or stored by electronic means, usually on computer systems.

## **ESSENTIAL (VITAL) RECORDS**

A classification designated by RCW 40.10.010, which identifies records that are essential to provide continuity and preservation of government records.

## **FISCAL VALUE**

Identifies records that document money received, managed, spent, and establishes an audit trail. Records with fiscal value include, for example, audit reports, bills of sale, receipts, and accounting registers.

## **GEOGRAPHICAL FILING SYSTEMS**

Arrangement of records according to geographical area, alphabetically.

## **GUIDE**

A card or tab divider used in files to identify sections and/or sub-sections of the file. Guides provide physical support and aid in filing and finding individual records.

## **HISTORICAL/RESEARCH VALUE**

Records that are valuable for the information they contain about a state government agency, its activities, and the citizens it serves. These are records that document the history of a community and its citizens, or that have value for future program and policy analysis by the government. Typically, 1% to 5% of an agency's total records have historical value. Examples include minutes, tax rolls, deeds, mortgages, building permits, census records, maps, and architectural drawings.

## **IMAGING**

The act of reproducing records in digital format, on optical or magnetic media.

## **INACTIVE RECORDS**

Records with a reference rate of less than one search per file drawer per month. Such records may be transferred to a records center or the State Archives, or may be destroyed as provided by a records retention schedule approved by the State Records Committee.

## **INVENTORY**

A descriptive list of each record series in a government office includes such data as title, inclusive dates, quantity, arrangement, relationships to other series, and description of significant subject content. Vital in designing a records management program and in the development of a record retention schedule.

## **LEGAL VALUE**

Records series that document the rights or responsibility of a government and its citizens. In court cases, a record of legal value can support a state government agency, whether it is the plaintiff or the defendant. Records having legal value include, for example: maps and plans, permits and approvals, logs, indexes, and contracts.

**LIBRARY** —Also known as Learning Resource Center

## **PROGRAM LEVEL<sup>6</sup>**

Any of the major activities of an agency expressed as a primary function or organizational unit and mandated by legislation or as required by regulatory activities.

## **STATE RECORDS COMMITTEE**

The body established by the Public Records Act, RCW 40.14.070, to review and approve schedules for the retention and disposition of all state government records. It includes the State Archivist and one representative each from the Offices of the State Attorney General, State Auditor, and Financial Management.

**MACHINE-READABLE RECORDS** - See Electronic Records & Optical Disc

**MEDIA CENTER** – Learning Resource Center

## **MICROFILM**

1. A high-resolution photographic film used to record reduced-size images from original records.
2. The act of recording microphotographs on film.

## **NON- RECORDS-**

Materials with no retention value with no filing need. These records can be destroyed when no longer needed. This includes drafts, worksheets, routine replies, telephone messages, blank forms, publications, and extra copies of documents created for convenience or public distribution (see Non-Records General Schedule 50).

## **NUMERICAL FILING SYSTEM**

Arrangements of records in sequence according to document numbering system.

## **OFM (Office Files and Memoranda)**

A public records classification provided by RCW 40.14.010 which identifies records not defined and classified as Official Public Records (OPR).

## **OPR (Official Public Record)**

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<sup>6</sup> Program Level Records are those records, which are compiled as direct documentation of the program, as opposed to records created during the course of administering the program. Example: correspondence, subject files, policy statements and planning records documenting the operation.

A public record classification provided by RCW 40.14.010, which identifies record types that identify and classify Official Public Records.

## **OPTICAL DISK**

A machine-readable medium used to reproduce records for rapid retrieval.

## **OUT-CARD**

A guide card used to indicate that records have been taken from the file. The out-card should identify the specific item/file, date, and name of the person temporarily holding the record.

## **PERMANENT RECORDS**

Records which have sufficient legal, fiscal, and/or historical value, that will be retained indefinitely.

## **PRIMARY RECORD CLASSIFICATION**

The most important or original document that may contain original signatures, certifications etc. record regardless of media.

## **PROJECT (CASE) FILES**

Groups of documents that pertain to a particular action, event, person, or place. May consist of correspondence, form records, memoranda, or a combination of such records.

## **PROPRIETARY RECORDS**

Records containing information of a confidential or highly sensitive nature, requiring destruction by shredding, to eliminate the possibility of illegal or undesirable disclosure.

## **PUBLIC RECORDS**

All documents regardless of physical form or characteristics created or received by an institution in the course of business.

## **PURGING** - See Screening

## **READ-ONLY MEMORY (ROM)**

Electronic record storage systems that allow for research or "reading" access but protect the record from additional entries or alterations.

## **READING (DAY) FILE**

A file of extra copies of outgoing correspondence arranged in chronological order.

## **RECORDS CENTER**

A low-cost facility for the organized and controlled storage, maintenance, retrieval, and disposition of inactive records.

**RECORDS COORDINATOR** - Part of an agency's records management hierarchy.

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

The management function concerned with the efficient, systematic control of records from their creation to their ultimate disposition.

## **RECORDS OFFICER**

The individual appointed to manage an agency's records management program as defined in RCW 40.14.040.

## **RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE**

A disposition schedule ensures government records have been retained for as long as they are needed and establishes a method of prompt and legal disposition of record series. It also facilitates the identification and preservation of archival records.

## **RECORDS SERIES**

A set of related records, which is used and filed as a unit rather than at the item or folder level. This record series is stored or destroyed as a unit.

## **REFERENCE FILES**

Publications, books, periodicals, catalogs, bulletins, reports, maps, theses, tapes, films, photographs, and other materials that are needed as informational resources but are not part of the main body of files.

## **RETENTION PERIOD**

The period of time from when the record is created to the time it is disposed of.

**ROM** - see read-only Memory

## **SCREENING**

Removal of individual papers or folders from a group of records, usually to permit disposal of parts of the file, and retention or transfer of the rest. Also known as purging or weeding.

## **SECONDARY COPY CLASSIFICATION**

See Duplicate Copy Classification

## **SUBJECT FILE**

A file in which documents are arranged alphabetically by general subject or topic.

## **SUSPENSE FILE**

A file in which documents are arranged chronologically by a future date of recall, to remind the user of future tasks and events. Also known as a tickler file.

## **TERTIARY FILING CLASSIFICATION**

See Duplicate Copy Classification

**TICKLER FILE**: see Suspense File

**TRANSACTIONAL FILES**

Records documenting the unique daily transactions or activities of an office which distinguish its primary functions.

**TRANSITORY FILE**

A file of routine correspondence and other records with short-term value. Its retention period is limited to the interval required for completion of specific actions covered by individual pieces of correspondence.

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**TRANSMITTAL**

Documentation authorizing the disposal transfers to inactive storage, or transfer to archival storage of public records.

**VITAL RECORDS** -see Essential Records**WORKING FILE**

A file of rough notes, calculations, or preliminary drafts that are assembled and used in the preparation or analysis of other documents; usually retained in desk files or filed separately until project completion.