



---

# Developing Records Retention Schedules: How Archival Designations Are Determined/ Changed

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government agencies on how Washington State Archives determines archival designations.

The Archives assigns one of three archival designations to each records series within retention schedules:

1. Archival (Permanent Retention)
2. Archival (Appraisal Required)
3. Non-Archival

New designations are assigned and existing designations are reviewed as part of reviewing records retention schedules. Changes to existing designations may be warranted due to changes in agency functions, content of the records, and/or a more thorough appraisal of the records.

## Process for Determining/Changing Archival Designations

1. The assigned staff archivist evaluates the records and recommends an initial/changed archival designation based on:
  - a. An appraisal of the records;
  - b. [Washington State Archives' Policy Statement on Archival Appraisal](#); and
  - c. [Washington State Archives' Policy Statement on the Reappraisal, Weeding and Deaccessioning of Material From Its Accessioned Collections](#).
2. Staff archivists from across the Archives review and provide feedback on the recommendation.
3. The State Archivist gives final approval as part of the approval of the records retention schedule by the State and/or Local Records Committee.

Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from  
Washington State Archives:

[www.sos.wa.gov/archives](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives)  
[recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov](mailto:recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov)