


**MANUAL**  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Governor's Office

<b>Subject:</b> The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule	<b>Number:</b> Manual 210.9 Amended
<b>By Direction of:</b>  Michael Newsome, Secretary of Administration	<b>Date:</b> May 15, 2019
<b>Contact Agency:</b> Office of Administration, Office of Continuity and Records Information Management, Telephone 717.783.5055	

This manual provides Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agencies with retention period requirements and disposal authorization for records common to most agencies.

The authority for this manual is derived from *Management Directive 210.5, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Records Management Program*.

Office of Administration  
Office of Continuity and Records Information Management  
613 North Street  
Room 510, Finance Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0400  
[Records Management](#)  
Email: [OA, Enterprise Records Management](#)  
Telephone: 717.783.5055  
Fax: 717.783.4374

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## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

The General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (“General Schedule”) provides Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agencies with retention period requirements and disposal authorization for records common to most agencies. It specifies how long to retain agency records, identifies those agency records having permanent/archival value, and authorizes the disposal of records at the end of specified time periods. In coordination with the Agency Records Coordinator, *Management Directive 210.5, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Records Management Program* and *Manual 210.1, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Employee Records Management Manual*, provide detail and guidance for employees to comply with policies and procedures for the management of commonwealth records. The use of this schedule is mandated for all agencies subject to *The Administrative Code of 1929*, agencies under the Governor’s jurisdiction, and entities that store records at the State Records Center (SRC).

If an agency has unique records or unique records management requirements, due to particular federal or state laws, statutes, contractual requirements, or regulations, the agency should have an Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule for those records. The General Schedule would apply to the agency’s other records. If an agency needs help creating or updating their Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule, they should contact their Agency Records Coordinator or the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives.

No records may be destroyed without the approval of the agency Chief Counsel if those records are subject to a legal hold, involved or reasonably likely to be involved in litigation or related to known investigations, even if the retention period for those records has been met. Similarly, audit and other records may be required to be held for longer periods than otherwise reflected on the records retention and disposition schedules. Also, records that do not appear on an approved records retention and disposition schedule may not be purged or destroyed without Executive Board approval (*Section 524 and 525 of The Administrative Code of 1929*). If and when unscheduled records are identified, agency staff should contact their Agency Records Coordinator or supervisor.

### **How to use the General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.**

The General Schedule lists records in groups called records series. A record series includes the record series title, item number, description, media code, vital record, agency and SRC retention, and disposal code.

The following detailed information about media and disposal codes will assist in applying this schedule:

**Media Codes** identify the format of a records series and are assigned as follows:

- 1 = paper (includes photos and photo negatives)
- A = microfilm
- B = electronic (machine readable)
- C = portable media (CDs, DVDs, cassette tapes, etc.)
- D = cartographic (maps, drawings, blue prints, plans, etc.)
- M = multiple media (can include all formats above)

**Disposal Codes** are used to direct the final disposition of records. Records must be disposed of according to the assigned code listed on approved retention and disposition schedules as follows:

**Code 1 = Routine Handling**

No special precautions will take place upon disposal. The records should be disposed of in accordance with the commonwealth's recycling program. If the records are held at the SRC, all records are shredded.

**Code 2 = Archival Review**

Upon completion of the retention period in the agency and/or the SRC, the State Archives will review the records. Following the review, the State Archives will then decide to accept the entire records series, parts of it, or, after agency notification, may allow disposal of the entire records series. **Records assigned a Code "2" may not be destroyed without written permission from the State Archives.** Records deemed confidential or sensitive by an agency may be transferred to the State Archives after the State Archives and the agency head or designee have agreed to the confidential treatment of such records.

**Code 3 = Special Handling (Records retained in Agency only)**

This code is used for the destruction of records containing confidential or sensitive information that requires special handling by shredding, burning, recycling or any other method that reduces information to an illegible condition.

**Code 5 = Return to Agency (Records retained in SRC only)**

This code means that at the conclusion of retention at the SRC, the records will be returned to the agency for disposal.

**Code 6 = Delete**

For use with electronic records only. When electronic records have met their retention period, they must be deleted.

**Code 7 = Review by Agency and State Archives**

At the conclusion of the retention period of records requiring permanent/archival or long-term retention, review by the agency and the State Archives will be required to justify the continued need for permanent/archival or long-term retention, regardless of format. After the expiration of the initial retention period, retention will be extended in 25-year increments for those records determined to have continuing value to the agency.

**How to Dispose of Records.**

No records involved in current or likely litigation, investigations or audits are to be disposed of without approval from the agency Chief Counsel. Otherwise, agencies should use this schedule to dispose of records on a continuing basis after retention periods have been met. Disposition should be carried out as follows in coordination with your Agency Records Coordinator or supervisor:

1. Review the General Schedule to determine whether a specific record series is listed. If the record series is listed, review the retention period and disposition code requirements. If the record series is not listed, check your Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. If it still is not listed, contact your Agency Records Coordinator or supervisor for assistance. Financial records, including payroll records often state who the official owner of the record is. If an agency is not the owner of the record, they may dispose of records when they no longer need them but must destroy copies when they have met their retention.
2. Match the record series description or title with the records created by your program.
3. For records eligible for disposal/destruction, which are stored in an agency, reference should be made to Form STD-62 (Records Disposal Report). Agencies are encouraged to use this optional disposal report, according to their business needs, to document their internal disposals of paper records.
4. For those records with inactive retention to be stored at the SRC and/or permanent/archival retention designated for the State Archives (Disposal Codes 2 and 7), complete Form STD-59-GS (Records Transfer List-General Schedule).
5. All completed STD forms must be reviewed and approved by the Agency Records Coordinator.
6. Upon receipt of the approved STD-62 and/or STD-59-GS, agency staff should transfer and/or dispose of records in accordance with the assigned disposal code.

Guidelines and detailed instructions for all records management processes and current versions of Commonwealth of Pennsylvania General Records Retention and Disposition Schedules are available through the [Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, State Records Management](#) website.

## SECTION TWO: KEY DEFINITIONS

**Active Records.** Records that are used to conduct current operations.

**Agency File Plan.** A tool used by employees to manage their records in accordance with the General and/or Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedules. The Agency File Plan provides specific guidance to bureaus and offices to ensure that all employees properly manage records under their care and control.

**Disposition.** Disposition occurs when records change custody, location, or cease to exist. Records at the end of their retention period may be sent to the State Archives or be shredded or recycled, depending on the disposition instructions given for those records.

**Inactive Records.** Records that are not needed for ongoing agency business or that are accessed relatively infrequently, but whose retention period has not yet expired.

**Non-Records.** Information that does not meet the definition of a record. These materials relate to non-state government business or activities and may include items such as announcements of community events and personal emails. Non-records may also include publications such as trade journals, pamphlets, and reference materials received from outside organizations, conferences, and workshops. Non-records may be disposed of at the convenience of the agency when they have no more value or use to the agency. The following are examples of non-records:

- blank forms, publications, etc., which are outdated or superseded;
- preliminary drafts of letters, reports, and memoranda which do not represent significant basic steps in preparation of record documents;
- shorthand notes, stenography tapes, mechanical recordings which have since been transcribed, except where noted on the Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule;
- routing and other interdepartmental forms which do not add any significant material to the activity concerned; and
- form and guide letters, sample letters, form paragraphs, vendor product information packets and brochures.

**Record.** Information, regardless of physical form or characteristic, that documents a transaction or activity of an agency and that is created, received or retained pursuant to law or in connection with a transaction, business or activity of the agency. The term includes documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, film or sound recordings, information stored or maintained electronically, and data- or image-processed documents.

**Record Series.** A group of records that may be treated as a unit for purposes of classification, designation, description, management, or disposition because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, have a particular physical form, or because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt or use.

**Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.** A comprehensive document approved by the Executive Board showing retention periods and all actions to be taken with respect to disposition of records. The schedule describes the contents of each record series and defines: 1) the length of time each series is to be maintained; 2) the prescribed format that the record series exists, such as paper or electronic; 3) the final disposition of the records (shredded, deleted or sent to the State Archives). There are two types of records retention and disposition schedules used by state agencies to control records: General and Agency-Specific. The General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule identifies record series common to most agencies. The Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule identifies unique records series created by an agency.

**Transitory Records.** Records that have little or no documentary or evidential value and that need not to be set aside for future use; have short-term administrative, legal or fiscal value and should be disposed of once that administrative, legal or fiscal value has expired; or are only useful for a short period of time, perhaps to ensure that a task is completed or to help prepare a final product. For more detail refer to Records Series G001.021 and G001.025 of the General Schedule.

Additional definitions are available in *Management Directive 210.5, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Records Management Program*.

## SECTION THREE: THE GENERAL SCHEDULE

### G001 [Administrative Records](#)

#### **G001.001 – G001.005**

Administrative Records for the **Executive Level** of an agency. Executive level is defined as senior management employees such as agency heads, deputy secretaries or equivalent, chief counsels, bureau directors or equivalent, and members of boards or commissions. Also includes records which document the policies, procedures and administration of an agency. Records created at this level of a state agency are considered to be “archival” and must be reviewed by the State Archives after the retention period has been satisfied for transfer to the State Archives or destruction.

#### **G001.006 – G001.031**

Administrative Records for the **Program Level** of an agency are those records created in the process, planning and implementation of the administrative tasks and general office operations of an agency or office. Includes program level records, routine correspondence, subject files, tracking and control records, requests for information, records under the *Right-to-Know Law*, less formal requests concerning state agency records and information, and transitory records and reference files.

### G002 [Press/Public Relations](#)

Records of contacts with the general public, the media, the legal community, and others regarding state agency policies, activities, and actions. Includes press releases and public relations information.

### G003 [Legislative](#)

Records documenting the activities, initiatives and relations of a state agency with the Legislature and the Governor's Office of Legislative Affairs. Includes files on requested legislation, legislation affecting the agency, contacts with legislators, and other related material. May include records of contacts with legislative bodies at both the state and federal levels.

### G004 [Legal](#)

Legal services and matters involving state agencies that are handled by the Office of General Counsel (OGC) and administered primarily by the agency Chief Counsel. Includes records pertaining to agency legal actions and issues, correspondence with the OGC, informal and formal legal opinions.



**G005**

**Grants**

Records generated in the administration of grants either issued by the state or received by state agencies. Records include grant application, grantor and grantee correspondence, and official responses, grant contracts, fiscal records, reports, administrative correspondence, grant products, and related records.

**G006**

**Training**

Records documenting training development and state employees training designed to ensure the development of a state work force with the skills and knowledge necessary to accomplish state agency goals and to offer state employees opportunities for professional and technical skill development.

**G007**

**Information Systems**

Records relating to the operation and management of agency information technology and electronic systems.

All electronic records must be managed according to the informational content and need to be retained in accordance with either the General or Agency-Specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

**G008**

**Records/Forms Management**

Records generated in the operation of an agency records management program, documenting the creation, management, flow and disposition of state government records in accordance with state management laws, policies, procedures and practices.

Forms Management includes documentation of commonwealth agency efforts to control and standardize form creation and design and to monitor the use of forms.

**G009**

**Security/Employee Safety**

Records generated in the operation of an agency's general security and employee safety programs. Security records involve documenting the security provided for agency buildings and grounds, security logs, activity reports, and incident report records. The employee safety records include, but are not limited to, communications to employees, documentation of safety roles, investigations, reports, and safety training records.

**G010**      **Facilities Management**

Facilities management encompasses the operation and maintenance of buildings and other facilities owned or leased by commonwealth agencies. Records may include the following:

1. Documentation related to capital projects; fixed asset management, buildings and grounds maintenance, and space planning allocation.
2. Information pertaining to the acquisition, management, and disposition of agency-owned real property (land), including appraisals, contracts, deeds, title reports, water rights, and other related documents.
3. Records documenting the management of state-owned or leased equipment, supplies and motor vehicles; the operation of state agency mail room services; and the administration of telecommunications services provided to state agencies.

**G100**      **Audit**

Records documenting the audits of administrative departments, boards, commissions, local agencies, and subrecipients of federal or state grants, including, but not limited to, audits performed by the Department of the Auditor General, independent auditors, the Office of the Budget, or agency audit organizations.

**G101**      **Budget**

Records normally generated in all levels of agency organization. They show proposals from all operating levels as well as the bureau-wide and agency-wide coordinating work done by formally organized budget offices. The records consist of detailed work papers and budgetary statements developed by single operating units, the more significant budget statements and related papers representing consolidated submissions prepared at the bureau or equivalent level and forwarded to the agency budget officer, and the records at the highest-level pertaining to the budget submission for the entire agency. In SAP, these documents may include budget prep decision packages, budget execution items such as availability control and augmenting revenues and federal grant accounting and planned project budget items.

**G102**      **Finance**

Records in these records series are related to statements of monthly payments, accounts payable, cost allocations, fixed assets, status of funds, and related correspondence that includes, but is not limited to, purchasing cards, travel card, and merchant services program. Also includes all information relating to contracts, leases, acquisitions, and procurements.

**G103****Payroll**

Records pertaining to employee salaries, wages, benefit payments, payroll taxes and tax reporting, withholdings, deductions, overpayments, and back pay awards and settlements.

**G200****Human Resources**

Human Resources records include the Official Personnel Folder (OPF), Organization Management, Personnel Administration, Compensation Management, Time Management, Labor Relations, Equal Employment Opportunity and ADA, and Code of Conduct, Statement of Financial Interest. Also includes records generated in the administration of the commonwealth's employee benefits programs, documenting the benefits programs and services provided that include records related to Leave, State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP), Workers Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, Benefit Entitlements, and other related employee benefits and services records.