

## **Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan Guidelines for the Management of Transitory Records**

Transitory Records are not subject to *The Archives and Public Records Management Act* and do not require the approval of the Provincial Archivist for their disposal. The Transitory Records Guidelines have been developed to provide Government Institutions with clearer instruction for the management of transitory records. These guidelines are applicable to all Saskatchewan Government Institutions defined under *The Archives and Public Records Management Act*, including ministries, crown corporations, agencies, boards, commissions, etc.

The Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006) included certain transitory records in the classification system for the convenience of users who needed to file and retrieve them even though they did not meet the definition of a government record and were not subject to the same retention and disposal requirements as government records. However, the inclusion of transitory records in the classification system gave users the impression that the records must be classified and that permission to dispose of them must be granted by the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. **In order to avoid this confusion, and to further streamline ARMS, all transitory records have been removed from ARMS2014.** Additionally, the definition of a transitory record has been expanded to include certain records from ARMS 2006 that now fall into the transitory category.

Although transitory records are not subject to retention requirements, institutions may still need to classify certain transitory records so that they can be easily located when required. The following guidelines have been developed so that users may classify transitory records if they wish to do so; however, use of this section is discretionary.

**Transitory Records Definition:** Records of temporary usefulness that are needed only for a limited period of time, to complete a routine task or to prepare an ongoing document. Also, exact copies of official records made for convenience of reference. These records are not required to meet statutory obligations or to sustain administrative or operational functions. Once they have served their purpose and, in the case of convenience copies the official record has been identified, these records should be destroyed in accordance with internal disposal procedures.

**Note:** Although permission from the Provincial Archivist is not required to dispose of transitory records, they must be destroyed using methods appropriate to their level of sensitivity and/or security classification. For example, if a transitory record contains personal information it must be disposed of in such a way that the personal information cannot be reconstructed (i.e. unsolicited resumes).

Users are reminded that transitory records are subject to Freedom of Information requests and legal holds. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that destruction of transitory records be carried out regularly and that transitory records not be retained longer than the official record. Institutions must ensure that transitory records are not required for Freedom of Information requests or litigation before disposing of them.

## Transitory Records

### TR10 Advertising/Promotional Material

Solicited or unsolicited information received from businesses or individuals advertising or promoting products or services.

Includes: company profiles, sales letters, flyers, brochures, e-bulletins, catalogues, price lists, free trial CDs or DVDs, junk mail, etc.

Retention
Destroy when no longer required

### TR20 Convenience/Duplicate Copies

Exact copies of an official record **where nothing has been added, changed or deleted**, the copies have been produced only for convenience of reference and the official record has been filed in the institution's classification and retention system.

Includes: photocopies of paper documents, extra electronic copies of electronic documents, reading or circulation copies, duplicates of microfilm, CDs or DVDs, obsolete stationary, blank copies of forms, etc.

Also includes chronological files. Chronological files are copies of official records arranged chronologically for reference purposes, where the official record is filed and retained within the Government Institution. Excludes records generated for certain administrative purposes (e.g. program monitoring purposes, etc.), such as those collected by a Deputy Minister's or President's office, etc.

Retention
Destroy when no longer required

### TR30 Intermediate Records

Records that are used only in the preparation of other records and are not needed once the preparation of other records is completed.

Includes: Data input/entry forms or other input records which are used to enter data into a master file/automated information system, where the information is

subsequently maintained and used, **unless the original entry forms are required for legal, fiscal, audit or other statutory purposes (i.e. time cards).**

Audio recordings or voice mail messages that have been transcribed.  
Electronic transaction files, used to update a master file, that become obsolete once the update is validated and/or backed-up, etc.

**Note:** Data Input/Entry Forms are forms or other records used to enter data into an automated information system. This designation generally applies to information that has been initially recorded by hand in a standardized format onto a paper form. Information from these forms is then transferred into a database, where it is subsequently maintained and used. Data Input/Entry Forms are therefore transitory records of temporary usefulness that are not an integral part of an administrative or operational record, and are only required for a limited period of time. Unless required for financial, legal, audit, or other statutory purposes, Data Input/Entry Forms are obsolete once the data entry or update is validated and backup procedures are completed.

Once the data has been entered and verified, and backup procedures are complete, and provided the original is not required to meet statutory obligations or to sustain administrative or operational functions, these records may be disposed of.

**This classification does not apply to the electronic records resulting from the data entry process. These records must be classified by function, and disposed of according to an approved records schedule.**

Retention
Destroy upon successful replacement or incorporation into the subsequent or final record

#### **TR40 Draft Documents and Working Materials**

Drafts that do not document significant steps in the development of a final version of a document and are not needed to track the evolution of policy, legislation, legal documents (contracts, agreements), etc.

Includes: rough notes and outlines, annotated copies with editing and formatting notes, drafts with stylistic, spelling or grammatical changes, minor drafts not circulated for comment, etc.

**Note:** Not all drafts and working materials are automatically transitory. In some cases, offices drafting policy, legislation, standards, guidelines, procedures, legal

documents, audit reports, etc. may need to track the evolution of the final product. Various drafts may need to be kept in order to have a record of what changes have been made and why. **It is the responsibility of each office to identify and retain these drafts under the appropriate classification in an applicable records retention and classification schedule.**

It may not be practical to classify drafts of documents in the transitory records section while work on them is ongoing. However, once work is completed any drafts designated as transitory may be disposed of in accordance with this section.

<b>Retention</b>
Destroy once the final version has been produced and a master copy and any required drafts (see note) have been filed and retained in accordance with an approved records classification and retention system

#### **TR50 Records of Short Term Value**

Records created or received for minor or short term informational/reference purposes, as well as records that require frequent updates by overwriting, provided they are not essential to support any administrative or operational functions.

Includes: Records based on information available from other sources (i.e. contact lists and distribution lists), appointment books/day planners/electronic calendars, memoranda and messages sent to all staff, 'FYI' and 'CC' messages that do not pertain directly to your business and do not initiate or require action, minor administrative messages such as those confirming meeting times, opened envelopes that do not provide any additional information such as the sender's address or date of receipt stamp, unsolicited resumes, etc.

<b>Retention</b>
Destroy when no longer required

## **TR60 System Backup Files**

Files routinely made for security of information and emergency system recovery purposes.

**Note:** System backup files are only required for limited periods of time in order to meet the administrative and operational requirements of government agencies. System backups are typically made on a daily, weekly, monthly and/or annual basis.

Backups usually include data or data extractions, but may also include commercial or custom-designed software. Backup procedures and their frequency may differ from system to system. An acceptable practice is to re-use electronic backup media according to a re-use schedule established on a system-by-system basis.

**This classification does not apply to disk or tape backups made for other purposes. For example, electronic records transferred to tape, disk, etc., for long term preservation must be classified by functions, and disposed according to an approved records schedule.**

<b>Retention</b>
Disposal of these records through destruction or re-use of the media may proceed according to internal disposal procedures

## Non-Government Records

**Non-Government Records:** Not all records created by Government Institutions are considered government records and are therefore not subject to the requirements of *The Archives and Public Records Management Act*. The following are considered to be non-government records and can be destroyed without reference to an approved retention schedule when no longer needed: **published records** and **non-work-related records**. Non-government records should be kept separate from an agency's government records.

**Published Records:** Published records are typically available from other sources such as libraries. Books, magazines, periodicals, pamphlets, brochures, journals and newspapers, whether printed or electronic, are not considered government records and can be destroyed or deleted. This includes publications received from external sources as well as extra copies of internal publications.

**Exception: the master copy of all internal publications, along with the working papers documenting their development, are considered government records.** These must be classified using ARMS2014, item 1500 Books and Publications Development or, for Crown Corporations, the appropriate item in a corporate-wide retention schedule.

In addition, eight copies of all government publications released in any form (including print and electronic) must be sent to the Legislative Library in accordance with *The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. Contact the Legislative Library for further information in this regard.

**Non-Work-Related Records:** These are records belonging to government employees which concern their private lives. These records do not pertain to any aspect of government business. This includes any records relating to industry groups/professional associations, etc. in which one takes part as an individual rather than as a representative of a Government Institution.