

Records Disposition System (RDS) for Provincial Government

All official government records must be retained by the responsible government institution for the length of time designated in the applicable records schedule [the Administrative Records System 2006 (ARMS 2006) for administrative records or an institution-specific Operational Records System (ORS) for operational records]. Once the retention periods described in these schedules are met, official records may be disposed of using the procedures set out by the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Additional records are disposed of through institution specific **approved** additional records disposal policies (see The Saskatchewan Records Management Guidelines).

Disposition includes the destruction of records, as well as appraisal and transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Disposition is applicable to **ALL FORMATS** of records, including electronic.

The first step in any records disposal (destruction or appraisal) is to have a Designated Records Officer (DRO) in place.

- The head of the institution must assign the responsibility for signing off on the disposal of record to a position or positions at a senior management level.
- The Designated Records Officer (DRO) is the person(s) in the institution, designated by the Deputy Minister or President/CEO, that has the final responsibility for authorizing disposal of records. The Saskatchewan Archives must be advised in writing who has been assigned as the DRO (forms are available from the Archives).
- The DRO need not be the person responsible for preparing disposal requests.

Although the disposal process for administrative and operational records is defined differently by *the Archives Act, 2004*, there are a number of requirements that must be met prior to using the disposal process for administrative records as defined in the Act. These requirements are discussed in detail in Section 2. **Prior to meeting these requirements, all departments, agencies, crown corporations, etc. must use the disposal procedures detailed in Section 1 for all records, whether administrative or operational.**

Section 1

Disposal Process for Operational Records AND for Administrative Records prior to meeting requirements detailed in section 2.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

1. Identify records that have served their retention periods and that the department/branch wishes to request for disposal (either destruction or transfer to the Archives).
2. Confirm that retention periods and other conditions have been met and that the records have been related to the appropriate records schedule.
3. Prepare a disposal request to submit to the Saskatchewan Archives Board on either a *Disposal Request Form - Operational Records* or a *Disposal Request Form - Administrative Records* (both available from the Archives), which must be signed by the Designated Records Officer (DRO).

An inventory of the records must accompany the disposal request. Inventory forms are available from the Archives, however other forms from the SPM Records Centre, or ones created by the institution may be used PROVIDING they contain all the required information:

- department/branch name
- transfer number (if applicable)
- medium identification (hard copy or electronic – if electronic provide the application name and version number)
- location of records and, for medium other than paper, how they can be accessed. (It is the responsibility of the department, etc. to have available the necessary hardware and software to make all electronic records accessible for review)
- titles of files or file groupings, including a brief description of records

- inclusive dates
- schedule and item numbers (e.g. primary and secondary numbers)
- volume of records (how many boxes, cd's, etc.)
- name and phone number of a contact person.

Designated Records Officer (DRO)

4. Authorize disposal (destruction or transfer) of records by signing either the *Disposal Request Form – Operational Records* or the *Disposal Request Form – Administrative Records*. Submit the relevant form, along with an inventory form, to the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Disposal Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

5. Ensure that the request is complete, that the records are eligible for disposal, that they have been related to the correct schedule and that they have met their retention requirements. Although the Archives conducts a review, these conditions should be confirmed by the submitting department prior to requesting disposal. If additional information is needed you will be contacted by the disposal archivist either in writing or by phone. If, during the review process, it is discovered that all or some of the records are not eligible for disposal you will be advised by letter to retain them.

Appraisal Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

6. Examine lists of records and select those that require a physical appraisal in order to determine the historical value of records.
7. Send a letter to department advising on the disposition of the records.
The letter may: authorize destruction of the all records included in the disposal request; authorize destruction of some of the records and advise to retain the remaining records for a physical appraisal; or advise to retain all the records for appraisal.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

8. Destroy any of the records that were authorized by the Archives for destruction, according to department procedure.

Appraisal Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

9. Appraise records and identify those required for archival retention.
10. Send the list of historically significant records to be acquired by the Archives to the department personnel responsible for records management. Send documentation confirming the appraisal and provide authorization that records not selected for archival retention may proceed to destruction.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

11. Using the list provided by the Appraisal Archivist, select records identified as archival and contact the Saskatchewan Archives Board to arrange for their transfer to the Archives.

Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

12. Confirmation will be sent to the department personnel when the boxes are accessioned into the holdings of the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Where to Begin

If you need assistance during any portion of the process, please contact our inquiry line at (306) 787-0734 or email recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca.

- **Collecting Information:** To begin the disposal process you need at least the following information about your records: medium identification (if records are boxed include box numbers, if records are electronic include where and how they can be accessed), records titles and dates for each record/group of records. This information can be included in inventory listings, file lists, any other file listings, or SPM Records Centre transfer sheets. If the file listings are not complete, it will be necessary to review the records to fill in the

missing data. If this information is not available, it will be necessary to conduct a records inventory.

- **Assigning Schedule Designations and Calculating Disposal Dates:** All records must be related to an appropriate operational records system, or if the request is for administrative records, to ARMS 2006. Once this has been done it is necessary to verify that the records have met the retention requirement specified in the system. To determine disposal dates it is necessary to determine the fiscal year of last action on the file. For example, if a record has an end date of May 15, 1992, its current fiscal year is 1992-1993. If the record in question has a six year retention period, you begin counting those six years AFTER the current fiscal year, i.e. 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99. Therefore the date that this record became eligible for disposal was 1 April 1999.
- **Submitting the Disposal Request:** Submit a *Disposal Request Form-Administrative Records* or a *Disposal Request Form – Operational Records*, signed by the Designated Records Officer (DRO), accompanied by an inventory of the records, with schedule designations, to the Saskatchewan Archives Board at the address given below. If you are using the SPM Records Centre transfer sheets (or inventory sheets from any other storage facility) please ensure that the schedule designation information on these sheets is correct before submitting to the Archives. Often several years have elapsed from the time of placement in semi-active storage to date of disposal request. It must be determined if a new Operational Records System (ORS) has been approved within that time period or if there have been any relevant changes to the administrative records system (e.g. ARMS 2006 replacing ARMS) . The records must be related to a current approved system prior to submission to the Archives.

Provincial Archivist
Saskatchewan Archives Board
P.O. Box 1665
Regina Saskatchewan S4P 3C6

Before sending a disposal request to the Archives, please ensure that all listed records are properly scheduled and are eligible for disposal and the request has been authorized by the Designated Records Officer (DRO).

How to contact us

If you require assistance at any time in the disposal process, you can call our inquiry line at 787-0734 or email us at recordhelp@archives.gov.sk.ca.

Section 2

Disposal Process for Administrative Records once certain requirements are met

The Archives Act, 2004 authorizes government institutions to destroy any public record in their custody without the written permission of the Provincial Archivist providing the record is **“administrative in nature and is addressed in a common administrative records schedule approved by the public records committee.”** In order to facilitate this provision of the Act, the ARMS 2006 manual has been revised to include both a Final Disposition column and procedures for the proper use of this column.

An institution cannot use the Final Disposition Column unless:

- the work unit uses ARMS 2006 for classification and disposition
- the institution has established an accountable records management program including written records management policies and procedures dealing with filing practices, disposal of additional records, filing of electronic records, etc.).
- all records management responsibilities are clearly defined and assigned.
- the head of institution has assigned responsibility for ‘signing off’ on the disposal of records to a position or positions at a senior management level (DRO)
- the head of the institution has indicated in writing that their records management program is sufficient and they agree to follow procedures set out by the Archives.
- the Archives has reviewed the records management policies and procedures
- your department or branch has an approved ORS in place, so that your records are properly identified as either operational or administrative.

Institutions unable to fulfill these requirements should follow the Disposal Process outlined in Section 1.

Once these requirements have been met, the following procedures may be used to dispose of ADMINISTRATIVE records.

Final Disposition Column

ARMS 2006 provides information regarding the final disposition of administrative records. **This does NOT include the records of the head of the institution which will all be held for appraisal.** The Final Disposition column (FD) will contain one of the following:

- A Appraisal is required for possible transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board
- D Records may be destroyed

Procedures for disposal of Administrative records designated 'Appraisal Required' (A)

An appraisal must be requested when the records have met the requirements of their retention periods and have been identified as "A" in the final disposition (FD) column in ARMS 2006 (Administrative Records Management System 2006).

The final disposition Column DOES NOT relate to the records of the head of the institution (President/CEO, Deputy Minister, etc.). All of these records will be appraised for possible transfer to the Archives

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

1. Identify records designated for archival appraisal as indicated in the Final Disposition column in ARMS 2006.
2. Prepare inventories of the material designated for archival appraisal. (Inventory forms are available for use*. Internal department inventory forms or Records Centre inventory forms may be used provided the relevant information is included).
3. Send a *Request for Appraisal Form** [reviewed, approved and signed by the Designated Records Officer (DRO)], along with the records inventories to the Provincial Archivist.

Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

4. Appraise records and identify those required for archival retention.
5. Send the list of historically significant records to be acquired by the Archives to the department personnel responsible for records management. Send documentation confirming the appraisal and provide authorization that records not selected for archival retention may proceed to destruction.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

6. Using the above list, select records identified as archival and contact the Saskatchewan Archives Board to arrange for their transfer to the Archives.

Archivist, Saskatchewan Archives Board

7. Confirmation will be sent to the department personnel when the boxes are accessioned into the holdings of Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Destruction: All remaining records not selected for archival retention may be destroyed according to the Procedures for disposal of records designated 'Destroy" (D).

*all forms are available from the Archives

Procedures for disposal of Administrative records designated 'Destroy' (D)

The Final Disposition Column DOES NOT relate to the records of the head of the institution (President/CEO, Deputy Minister, etc.). All of these records will be appraised for possible transfer to the Archives.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

1. Identify records that have served their retention periods and that have been identified for destruction in the Final Disposition column in ARMS 2006.
2. Prepare detailed inventories of the material designated for destruction. Confirm that retention periods and other

conditions have been met and that the records are indeed administrative, and have been related to the appropriate primary and secondary in ARMS 2006.

Designated Records Officer (DRO)

3. Authorize destruction of records by signing the *Destruction Notification Form* *.

Department Records Manager/Co-ordinator

4. Destroy records authorized for destruction. Complete the *Destruction Notification Form* * (signed by the DRO) and send a copy to the Saskatchewan Archives Board, including the inventory of records destroyed. This inventory will be used for audit purposes by the Archives – the department/branch is responsible for retaining a copy of the inventory as well as records that document destruction of material. The Destruction Notification Form contains the following information: date of destruction, where destruction took place, who witnessed it, and the method of destruction.

Note: *Government offices using external shredding or recycling services should follow their department's policies with respect to the provisions of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP), The Health Information Protection Act (HIPA), and any other legislation governing information access and privacy.*

*all forms are available from the Archives

Section 3 **Definitions**

The following definitions are important for your understanding of these guidelines. Additional terms are defined in the Glossary of ARMS 2006.

ADDITIONAL RECORD: Refers to any other copy of a record (other than the official record) required for administrative purposes. Additional records cannot be disposed of without an approved policy.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD: Records pertaining to administration or "housekeeping" activities of the organization not central to the mandated function of the institution in question. For most

government departments and some crown corporations, administrative records may include the management of facilities, property, material, finances, human resources, and information systems.

DESIGNATED RECORDS OFFICER: The head of the institution must assign the responsibility for signing off on the disposal of records. This responsibility should be assigned to a position or positions at a senior management level and does not have to be the person responsible for preparing disposal requests. The Designated Records Officer (DRO) is the person(s) in the institution, designated by the Deputy Minister or President/CEO, that has the final responsibility for authorizing disposal of records

DESTRUCTION: Destruction occurs when records have served the required retention period and have been identified for destruction according to the Final Disposition (FD) column in ARMS 2006, or if the records have been reviewed by the Saskatchewan Archives Board and determined to possess no long-term historical significance.

DESTRUCTION NOTIFICATION: For ADMINISTRATIVE records with **DESTROY (D)** in the Final Disposition Column of ARMS 2006 (Administrative Records Management System 2006). Notification sent to the Saskatchewan Archives Board advising that certain administrative records have met their retention periods and have been destroyed. A *Destruction Notification Form*, which is provided by the Saskatchewan Archives Board, must be used. This includes the name of personnel authorizing destruction (head of institution or designate), date of destruction, where the destruction took place, who witnessed it, and the method of destruction.

DISPOSAL REQUEST: Request sent to the Archives to request disposal of OPERATIONAL records that have met their required retention periods. Disposal can include destruction or transfer of records to the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Disposal requests must be made on a *Disposal Request Form* and must include an inventory of the records. Disposal Request Forms and Inventory forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Other inventory forms (department or Records Centre) may be used, providing the relevant information is included.

GOVERNMENT RECORDS: All recorded information that relates to the transaction of government business, regardless of physical form,

including documents, maps, electronic records, e-mail, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers, etc. which are received, created, deposited or held by an office of a department, agency, board, crown corporation, commission, or other institution of the Government of Saskatchewan.

OPERATIONAL RECORD: Records which relate to the operations and services provided by an office in carrying out the functions for which it is responsible according to statute, mandate, or policy. In most cases, operational records are distinct from common administrative functions and are unique to each government institution.

RECORD: Recorded information, regardless of medium (paper, computer disks, electronic, microfilm, e-mail, photographs, maps, etc.) or characteristics. A record can refer to a single document or a group of documents in a file folder

RECORDS APPRAISAL: The process of determining the historical value of records for possible transfer to the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

RECORD SCHEDULE: The schedule is an effective tool for records management which provides a classification system, a concise and convenient description of each record and its required retention period. Records Schedules are the authority by which government organizations may dispose of records no longer required. All records schedules must be approved according to the procedures set out in *The Archives Act, 200*.

RECORDS MANAGER/CO-ORDINATOR: The department records manager is whoever is responsible for preparing disposal requests in your branch or unit (the terminology may be different depending on each institution). This person(s) is responsible for properly identifying records as administrative or operational, ensuring that the records are properly classified and all retention requirements have been met, as well as preparing the requests, ensuring that the appropriate documentation/requests are signed by the Designated Records Officer (DRO), and arranging for transfer or destruction of the records, in compliance with the procedures set out by the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

The DRO and the department records manager(s) need not be the same person and in most cases, won't be.

REQUEST FOR APPRAISAL: For **ADMINISTRATIVE** records with **APPRAISAL REQUIRED (A)** in the Final Disposition column (FD) in ARMS 2006 (Administrative Records Management System 2006). Request sent to the Saskatchewan Archives Board asking for an archival review of administrative records that have met their retention period and have been identified for appraisal in ARMS 2006. Records will either be transferred to the Archives for permanent archival retention or identified for destruction. A *Request for Appraisal Form* must be used and must be accompanied by an inventory of the records. Request for Appraisal forms and Inventory Forms are available from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Other inventory forms (department or Records Centre) may be used, providing the relevant information is included.