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# NASA Procedural Requirements

**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**

**NPR 1441.1D**

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## **Subject: NASA Records Retention Schedules (w/Change 5, 6/26/09)**

**Responsible Office: Office of the Chief Information Officer**

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## **Appendix A. Glossary**

### **Accountable Officers' Accounts**

Specific documents supporting disbursements or collections of money prepared by Accountable Officers and required by GAO to be maintained for audit.

#### **ACTIVE RECORDS**

Records that are referred to on a frequent basis, i.e., daily, or weekly. Records that are maintained in office files for immediate access, use, and reference. Also considered current records, which are necessary for conducting the business of an office.

#### **APPRAISAL**

The process of determining the value and, thus, the disposition of records based upon their administrative and other uses, their evidential and informational or research value, their arrangement, and their relationship to other records.

#### **BLOCKING FILES/RECORD SERIES**

(1) One or more chronological segments of records that are in the same series and are dealt with as a unit for disposition purposes, especially during the transfer of permanent records to NARA. For example, a transfer of records in 5 year blocks.

(2) In electronic records, a grouping of data stored as a unit on an external storage medium and dealt with as a unit by the computer of input or output.

(3) The records of an Agency, organizational component, or functional area.

#### **CASE FILE**

A folder or other file unit containing materials relating to a specific action, transaction, event, person, place, project, or other subject. A case file may cover one or many subjects that relate to the case; for example, a contract file contains

records on a specific contract, such as the application, correspondence, addenda, reports, and processing documents. Other types of case files include official personnel folders, surveys, and studies.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

Records arranged and filed according to their general informational content. Consist mainly of general correspondence but may also include forms, reports, and other material that relate to programs and functions not to a specific case or a particular person or organization. See GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

#### DESTROYING

Physical destruction or alienation of records; any act which effectively obliterates the informational content of records, such as unauthorized removal of Government documents, tearing up, burning, pulping, erasure (tapes/diskettes/disks).

#### DISPOSITION

Actions taken with regard to noncurrent records. The actions include retirement to a records center for temporary storage, transfer to NARA, donation to an eligible depository, reproduction on microfilm, and destruction. Disposition may include two or more of these actions, such as retirement after 1 year to a records center, with retention for 5 years and destroy when 6 years old.

#### EVIDENTIAL VALUE

The usefulness of records as the primary evidence of NASA's authority, functions, organization, operations, and basic decisions and procedures.

#### FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER (FRC)

A records storage facility operated by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for housing and servicing inactive and semiactive records of the Federal Government.

#### FILE

(1) An accumulation of records maintained in a predetermined physical arrangement.

(2) Storage equipment such as a filing cabinet.

#### FILE BREAK

Termination of a file at regular periodic intervals to facilitate continuous disposal, retirement, or transfer of the file/record series, i.e., monthly, yearly, 5 year blocks.

#### GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

A file consisting of correspondence accumulated by organizations as a result of their routine operations. Records consist of arrangement of correspondence, memoranda, and messages on a number of different subjects as distinguished from a case file that contains correspondence about specific transactions or projects.

#### GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULES (GRS)

A comprehensive listing of temporary records common to several or all Federal agencies, issued by NARA, governing the disposition of specified recurring series of records. These standards are mandatory for Federal Agencies.

#### INACTIVE RECORDS

Records that are no longer required or which are referred to so infrequently in the conduct of current business that they may be removed from the office and either retired to an FRC or destroyed depending on the approved disposition. Also referred to as NONCURRENT RECORDS.

#### INVENTORY

A systematic listing of all records series in an office or an agency generally including

the location of each series, physical characteristics, and description of content.

#### LONG TERM RETENTION

The length of time that records are to be kept. Long term refers to a period of retention which can be anywhere from 10 years to 60 years.

#### NONCURRENT RECORDS

Records no longer required to conduct agency business and, therefore, ready for final disposition.

#### NONRECORD MATERIAL

Material such as extra copies of documents and correspondence that are kept only for convenience or reference, stocks of publications and processed documents, personal records, reference items, and library or museum material intended solely for reference or exhibition. Also see RECORDS.

#### OFFER

A term formerly used to describe the act of requesting NARA to approve the transfer of records, or the act of initiating the transfer of records either scheduled or unscheduled.

#### OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY (OPR)

##### OFFICE OF RECORD

An office designated as the official custodian of records for a specified program, activity, or transaction of an organization.

Under functional or decentralized filing plans, the Office of Record or OPR is usually the office which created the record or initiated the action on an incoming records, unless otherwise designated.

Under centralized filing, the central file(s) are designated or become the OPR.

#### OFFICIAL FILES

An accumulation of official records documenting an action or providing valuable information. The official files include the originals of incoming correspondence and the initialed copies of the outgoing and interoffice correspondence, the original or action copies of reports, completed forms, maps, photographs, and other similar documents.

#### PERMANENT RECORDS

In U.S. Government usage, records appraised by NARA as having enduring value because they document the organization and functions of the agency that created or received them; and/or, because they contain significant information on persons, things, problems, programs, projects, and conditions with which the agency dealt. These records are valuable or unique in that they document the history of the agency and generally record primary missions, functions, responsibilities and significant experiences or accomplishments of the agency.

#### PROJECT FILE

A type of case file that contains records relating to an assigned task or problem. Also see CASE FILE.

#### RECORD GROUP NUMBER

An identification number assigned to a single Federal agency by GSA or NARA for archival control of that agency's documentation/records. NASA has been officially assigned a Record Group Number of 255.

#### RECORDS

All books, papers, maps, photographs, negatives, machine readable materials, diskettes, microfilm, audio tapes, or other documentary materials, regardless of

physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the U.S. Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of the data contained therein. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and or processed documents are not included.

Machine readable materials include, but are not limited to, optical disk, magnetic tape, sound recordings, microforms, and any other such recording medium regardless of how produced.

## RECORDS CENTER

(1) A facility for the economical storage and servicing of records pending their ultimate disposition.

(2) An area or facility designated as a temporary staging area.

Also see "FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER."

## RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES

A legal document governing, on a continuing basis, the mandatory disposition of recurring record series of an organization or agency. Also known as a records schedule, records control schedule, records disposition schedule, retention schedule, or schedules. NASA's schedules are formally called NASA Records Retention Schedules (NRRS).

## RETENTION PERIOD

The period of time that inactive records must be kept after cutoff or break, prior to their destruction.

## RETIREMENT

The shipment of semicurrent and noncurrent records to a records center or some other authorized depository for storage until the expiration of their retention period.

## SCHEDULE

An official agency action document listing the records series created by the agency. A schedule indicates whether each series of records is permanent or temporary and includes retention periods. Also see RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES.

## SERIES

File units or documents arranged in accordance with a filing system or maintained as a unit because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use. Sometimes known as a "record series."

## TEMPORARY RECORDS

Records approved by NARA or by an authorized agency records schedule for disposal, either immediately or after a specified period of time. Also called disposable records or nonpermanent records.

## TRANSFER

The movement of records out of filing cabinets and office space into the legal custody of NARA or other authorized depository.

## TRANSITORY RECORDS

A general term for those types of records that lose their value within a short period of time (approximately 3 months) and that should be separated during filing from

records requiring longer retention or until the purpose for which it was created has been accomplished and the record can be destroyed.

#### VITAL RECORDS

Records essential for maintaining the continuity of Federal Government activities during a national emergency. These records consist of two categories: (1) emergency operating records, which outline the essential functions of the Government for the duration of emergency conditions, and (2) rights and interests records, which are required for the preservation of the rights and interests of individual citizens and the Government. (See NPD 1440.6 NASA Records Management.)

#### WORKING PAPERS

Documents such as rough notes, calculations, or drafts, assembled or created and used in the preparation or analysis of other documents.

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