

# Records Schedules Frequently Asked Questions

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## **Q1. What schedules are in the [Records Control Schedule \(RCS\) Repository](#)?**

The repository contains 1) Records Schedules created in and submitted to NARA via the [Electronic Records Archives \(ERA\)](#) electronic system, and 2) Standard Forms 115 (SF 115) - Requests for Disposition Authority, submitted by Federal agencies to NARA prior to implementation of ERA. A SF 115 was submitted to NARA as a hardcopy paper document; a Records Schedule is an ERA born-digital document. Both are requests for disposition authority from Federal agencies to NARA.

The repository contains schedules approved by the Archivist of the United States since May 13, 1973, as well as schedules withdrawn, by either NARA or the submitting Federal agency, without approval. A few gaps may exist. The Scanning Team is currently identifying gaps and scanning remaining schedules.

## **Q2. Are the SFs 115 and Records Schedules different from one another?**

Yes, in look and feel only. Informational fields on a Records Schedule generally duplicate fields on a SF 115. See the diagram [Crosswalk Comparing SF 115 and Records Schedule](#). Both are requests for disposition authority, and when approved by the Archivist of the United States, are legal authorities that are used by Federal agencies to apply disposition to records.

**Q3. What do the identifying numbers for SFs 115 and records schedules mean?**

NARA assigns a unique job number to each submitted schedule. The number enables NARA to track every submitted schedule. The format of the job number has changed through the years. See [Key for SF 115 and Records Schedule Numbering](#).

**Q4. If I cannot find a schedule when I search a record group, what are the next steps?**

Check that the schedule number format is correct. See [Key for SF 115 and Records Schedule Numbering](#) for the correct formats.

If the schedule number is correct and you cannot find a schedule after searching a record group, contact the Scanning Team at [LSSP\\_Team@nara.gov](mailto:LSSP_Team@nara.gov) and provide the following:

- schedule number
- topic(s) (i.e. inspections)
- any document which refers to the schedule (i.e. copy of a page from an agency manual which cites the schedule number).

The Scanning Team will research the question and reply to you.

**Q5. Why are parts of some schedules redacted (blacked out) or removed?**

Some schedules of intelligence agencies and their predecessors may contain classified information or information withheld under a specified statute in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), such as information about the organization and function of the agency and the names and identifiers of most if its employees. These are the current (b)(3) statutes generally used:

- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA): 50 U.S.C. § 403(g); Section 6 of the CIA Act of 1949;
- Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA): 10 U.S.C. § 424;
- National Reconnaissance Office: same as DIA;
- National Geospatial – Intelligence Agency: same as DIA;
- National Security Agency: 50 U.S.C. § 402; National Security Act of 1959.

**Q6. What is the approval date of a schedule?**

On SFs 115 and Records Schedules, the date of approval is the date of signature by the Archivist of the United States.

**Q7. What does a “Withdrawn” stamp on a schedule mean?**

If the “Withdrawn” stamp appears in the upper right corner of the first page of the SF 115, the schedule was withdrawn by either NARA or the submitting agency any time prior to approval by the Archivist of the United States. These schedules are not approved and Federal agencies cannot use items on them for disposition. A Records Schedule includes the status of the schedule on the last page.

If the “Withdrawn” stamp appears next to an item in a schedule, the item is not approved and Federal agencies cannot use it for disposition.

**Q8. Are all records schedules in the Records Control Schedule Repository still in effect?**

Many records schedules are no longer in effect because they have been superseded by an updated or more recent schedule. Information about which schedules are active and valid, and which ones have been superseded is not currently available on the website. Unfortunately, a records schedule does not always indicate when it supersedes an earlier schedule.

**Q9. How do I know if a schedule item is active and valid?**

A Records Schedule or SF 115 may list two or more schedule items within it. Many, but not all, SFs 115 list superseded items in column nine (9). On a Records Schedule, a superseded item appears immediately before the disposition instructions of the new item. If in doubt, contact the agency Records Officer, located on the [Federal Agency Records Officers List](#).

**Q10. Can I sort the schedules by job numbers so the current schedules appear at the top of the list in the search?**

The search function sorts alphabetically and then numerically. Current schedules will appear at the top of the list if the schedule number begins with DAA.

**Q11. How can I create a spreadsheet of all schedules for a record group?**

After you retrieve the record group, right click on the horizontal bar with the headers Title and Number/File name. Choose Export to Microsoft Excel in the drop-down menu.

**Q12. What are lined-through items on a SF 115?**

NARA personnel lined through items on a SF 115 during the appraisal process when

- the records were covered by an existing General Records Schedule item, or
- the records were previously approved on an earlier records schedule and there are no changes to their disposition on the new schedule, or
- the items were withdrawn.

Lined-through schedule items are not approved and Federal agencies cannot use them for disposition.

**Q13. What is the purpose of the handwritten notations on a SF 115?**

Prior to signature by the Archivist of the United States, NARA personnel

- line through items which will not be approved, or
- write revisions with approval of the agency, or
- note other actions.

In addition, after the Archivist of the United State signed a SF 115, NARA personnel noted changes (with the concurrence of the agency) that did not need the Archivist's approval, such as revised transfer instructions. See [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) About Changes to Previously Approved Schedule Items](#) for additional information.

**Q14. What is a withdrawn item on an approved SF 115?**

NARA withdraws (cancels) an item when the agency and NARA need additional time to discuss the description of the item or the proposed disposition. NARA has not approved withdrawn items and agencies cannot use withdrawn items for disposition.

**Q15. Does NARA remove lined-through items and other markings on SFs 115?**

No, NARA does not remove lined-through items or other markings and annotations. NARA personnel lined-through and/or marked SFs 115 according to NARA policy and procedure at the time. Because records schedules are a permanent record for NARA, all line-throughs and other markings remain on the schedule.

**Q16. Will Records Schedules created in ERA have lined out items?**

No. Unlike SFs 115, unapproved items will not appear.

**Q17. Where can I see newly approved records schedules?**

See the list at [Newly Approved Schedules](#).

**Q18. What does the date span mean on the [Newly Approved Schedules](#) list?**

The date span is the week that NARA posts a record schedule on the RCS web page.