



# RECORDS SCHEDULE QUALITY CONTROL CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to review draft records schedules prior to submission to NARA in the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) 2.0. See the [ERA 2.0 Agency User Guide](#) for more information on entering schedule information into ERA 2.0 fields. Schedules not receiving adequate quality control before submission will likely be returned without action.

## **Overall Requirements**

- Do not include records that are covered by [General Records Schedules \(GRS\)](#) disposition authorities unless you are requesting a deviation from the GRS.
- Do not include non-record materials.

## **General Information Section**

- **Agency or Establishment and Record Group:** Some agencies may have more than one name or Record Group available. Make sure to use the appropriate agency name and Record Group for your schedule. You will have to create a new schedule if either of these fields is incorrect.
- **Record Schedule Applies to:** Only use “Department-wide” if you are at the Department level and the schedule will apply to one or more components in the Department.
- **Agencies to which this schedule applies:** Make sure this field indicates the correct component agencies. Only include those components that will use the schedule. Contact your appraiser for assistance if a component agency does not appear in the options.

- **Schedule Subject:** This field serves as a brief title for the schedule. Enter any longer descriptions of the program or function that creates the records or the records themselves in the “Additional Schedule Information” field.
  - The Schedule Subject must not include acronyms or abbreviations. Spell out acronyms and abbreviations.
  - The Schedule Subject should not begin with agency codes. File codes should go in the Agency Code field.
  - If the schedule is a public use version of a classified schedule, the Schedule Subject should be: PUBLIC USE VERSION - [Schedule Title].
  
- **Additional Schedule Information:** This is an optional field. Only include information that pertains to the schedule.
  - If the schedule is a public use version of a classified schedule, this field must include the statement "This schedule represents a public use version of a records schedule classified in accordance with Executive Order 13526."
  
- **Is there a classified version of this schedule?:** Only use this field if you are scheduling classified records and will provide a classified version of the schedule. The schedule in ERA has to be a public use version. You must provide both the public use version and the classified version. Contact your appraiser about submitting the classified version.
  
- **Is consultation and coordination with Tribal Governments required?:** NARA requires agencies to complete tribal consultation prior to submitting schedules if it is needed. Agencies are in the best position to determine whether a records schedule has an impact on Tribal interests. Agencies should consult the business units whose records are being scheduled, their designated Tribal Consultation Coordinator, and their General Counsel as needed in making determinations pertaining to Tribal consultations. See [AC 27.2021](#) (note that the AC Memo reflects the original process that has now changed with ERA 2.0). Some agencies are exempt from tribal consultation and should use the appropriate drop-down option in this field.

## **Groups**

Groups are used to bring together records that share common titles and descriptions with different dispositions. When submitting a schedule in ERA, a group must have two

or more items. Schedules should not consist of one group. In this case, the schedule serves as the group.

- **Group title:**
  - Should represent records being described.
  - Should be meaningful to agency personnel.
  - Do not include file codes. File codes go in the Agency Code field for the item.
- **Group description:** This field is optional. If used, include information about the record content and the function for which the records are used. This should apply to all records in the group.
  - Do not repeat the title in the description.

## **Items**

- **Item title:**
  - Should represent records being described.
  - Should be meaningful to agency personnel.
  - Should not include file codes. File codes go in the Agency Code field.
- **Item description:** Include information about the record content and the function for which the records are used.
  - Do not repeat the item title in the item description.
  - Item descriptions are not required if a Group is used that sufficiently describes the record content and the function for which the records are used.
- **Is this item media neutral?:** Records usually are media neutral. They should only be media specific when the format of the record is significant.
  - Note that if "Paper/analog only" is selected, the agency must explain why permanent records are being proposed for transfer in paper/analog format and not digital. Provide this explanation in the Additional Schedule Information field, Item Description field, or both.
- **Is this item a Big Bucket?:** This field should only be yes if this is a functional or flexible/open aggregate item and the agency intends to add series to the bucket without future approval. See the *Guide to Aggregate Item Schedules*.

- A crosswalk may be required. Use the Crosswalk Template (see the *Guide to Inventorying, Scheduling and Disposition of Federal Records*).
- Upload the crosswalk into ERA as an attachment.
- **Agency Code:** This is an optional field. This field should only contain your file code associated with the item or some other classification your agency uses to manage items, such as a classification code. Do not enter the Record Group number or Code of Federal Records citations in this field.
- **Does this item supersede existing agency items?:** Identify any approved agency-specific authorities that are superseded by the new item.
  - Cite the pre-ERA authorities correctly.
    - Use the proper format. Examples:
      - N1-059-83-001 / 4/B/13
      - NC1-269-80-3 / 17A10/b/1)
    - Include the appropriate item number
    - List each item separately
  - For superseded DAA authorities, select from the drop-down list in ERA.
  - Make sure that the superseded authorities cover the same records as the new authority, at least in part.
  - Check to make sure you haven't left out authorities. Check the schedule you have cited to see if there are any additional authorities that should be superseded or that are obsolete.
  - Identify any authorities that are superseded in part. **Use this only if the new authority does not cover all records covered by the superseded authority.** Make sure that explanations of superseded in part are clear and understandable. Examples:

The new item supersedes only a portion of the previously scheduled records...	Possible Explanations
Based on a timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● For records created after December 2001</li> <li>● Day forward from schedule approval</li> <li>● FY16 and earlier only</li> </ul>
Based on a format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pamphlets booklets leaflets and</li> </ul>

	monographs only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supersedes in part for posters only</li> </ul>
Based on an office or position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief of Staff only</li> <li>• OIG only</li> </ul>
For a specific system (in an item that schedules multiple systems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IntelPlus only</li> </ul>
For a specific set of records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission Meeting Minutes</li> <li>• Administrative policies that provide guidance on program related activities</li> <li>• For routine cases</li> <li>• Coordinated Industry Case Data only</li> </ul>

- **Is this item a deviation from the GRS?:** Only deviate from the GRS if you have a reason to do so. Consult your appraiser or [GRS\\_Team@nara.gov](mailto:GRS_Team@nara.gov) if you are uncertain about a GRS deviation.
  - Make sure you have cited the appropriate GRS authority or authorities.
- **Justification for GRS deviation:** Provide an appropriate justification for deviating from the GRS. See [Requesting GRS Deviations](#) for more information.
- **Cutoff Instruction:** Cutoff instructions are not required, but may provide clarity on when the retention or transfer period starts. See *Scheduling Records* in the *Guide to Inventory, Scheduling and Disposition of Federal Records (ISD)* for more information about how to use cutoff instructions.
- **Disposition:** The proposed disposition should be either Temporary or Permanent.

### **Temporary Item Information**

- **Retention period:** Use the standardized options if possible.
  - Make sure that it meets your agency's business needs.
  - Be prepared to explain the business needs to your appraiser.

- **Legal citation related to record retention:** This is an optional field. Use it only if there is a legal citation that relates to the retention of the records. If the citation does not specify retention, do not include it on the schedule.
- **Are any of the records covered by this item national security classified?:** This field is yes if any records covered by the schedule item are national security classified. This information is needed to identify internal NARA stakeholders and to assign the schedule to an appraiser with appropriate clearances.
- **GAO approval required:** The General Accountability Office (GAO) must concur with items deviating from [GRS 1.1](#), item 010. GRS 1.1, item 010, covers financial and accounting records. Any retention less than 6 years is a deviation. This requirement ensures that GAO auditors have adequate access to records for auditing purposes.

### **Permanent Item Information**

- **Are there multiple instructions for this item?:** Use this field only when you want different transfer periods for different record formats under the same item. If the transfer period for all formats is the same, do not use this field.
- **Transfer Instruction:** Use the standardized options if possible.
  - If the transfer period is less than 15 years or greater than 30 years, you must submit an early or late legal transfer checklist. See [NARA Bulletin 2020-02: Guidance on Scheduling the Early and Late Transfer of Permanent Records](#).
- **Current Records Format:** Indicate the formats in which the records are currently known to exist. This information is not binding. It is used to aid the appraisal process.
- **Current Volume:** Enter the known volume for each format. This can be an estimate.
  - Do not enter zero. If you do not know the volume, enter “Unknown.” Be prepared to explain to your appraiser why the volume is unknown.
- **Approximate first year of records covered by this authority:** This should be the

first year for which records exist as they are covered by this schedule. It identifies if the authority is day forward or if it also covers any existing legacy records.

- **End year of records covered by this authority:** This is an optional field.
  - Enter a year if records are no longer being created.
- **Date span of the initial transfer:** This is an optional field.
  - The entry should reflect the date range of the initial transfer of records.
  - If the date span of initial transfer is not known, enter “Unknown.” Be prepared to explain to your appraiser why it is not known.
  - This should be calculated based on information on the schedule. Examples:  
Example 1:
    - The records were scheduled in 2023.
    - There is no cut off.
    - Transfer when 15 years old.
    - The first year of records covered by the authority is 1990.
    - The date span of the initial transfer would be: 1990-2008. (This is because the first transfer would presumably include all records that have met their transfer date as of when the schedule was approved. The latest records eligible for transfer are 2008 (2023 minus 15), with the earliest being 1990.)
  
  - Example 2:
    - The records were scheduled in 2023.
    - Cut off when the case is closed. (Presumably, some records close each year.)
    - Transfer in 5 years blocks when the block is 15 years old.
    - The first year of records covered by the authority is 2020.
    - The date span of the initial transfer would be: 2020 - 2025.
- **Frequency of transfer:** This is an optional field.
  - The entry should be a whole number.
  - Frequency of transfer is based on the cutoff instruction or blocking:
    - Cut off at the end of the year when case is closed: Frequency is 1 year (presumably at least one case will close each year)
    - Transfer in 5 year blocks... : Frequency is 5 years.
    - It is likely that some records will be cut off each year so frequency of transfers is usually 1.

- If frequency of transfer is unknown, this field should be left blank.

- **Are any of the records covered by this item subject to a FOIA exemption?:**  
Indicate the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) exemptions that your agency is currently applying to the records.