## Implement Updates to Records Schedules

*Use this job aid when you are assigned to implement updates to records schedules. Check off each step when you have completed the step.*

| **Procedure Steps** |  |
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| 1. **Identify the needed change(s)** | ☐ |
| 1. Meet with records custodians, records managers and stakeholders to discuss the records in question. NARA recommends that agencies review records schedules regularly. | ☐ |
| 1. Take time to understand the records in question:  * What are the records? * How are they stored and used? * What information do they contain? * What medium/format are they?   Review a sample of the records, if necessary. | ☐ |
| 1. Compare the records to your agency’s approved records schedules (often called Records Control Schedules, or RCS) and the General Records Schedules (GRS).  * Are the records currently covered by an approved schedule (RCS or GRS)? * Are the records now covered by a new GRS item? * If the records are scheduled, is the current retention time and disposition adequate? | ☐ |
| 1. If you determine that the records are unscheduled, contact your Agency Records Officer or Records Management team to determine the correct scheduling procedures for your agency.    * To support the scheduling task, work with stakeholders to draft:      + A preliminary title and description for the records.      + A proposed cutoff, retention time, and disposition for the records.      + A recommendation of temporary or permanent.      + Notes describing your justification for the proposed retention and disposition. | ☐ |
| 1.5 If the records are covered by an existing, approved schedule, review the following with stakeholders and identify any changes that are needed to the schedule:   * Series title and description * Cutoff * Retention period * Transfer instructions (if applicable) * Final disposition instructions for the records   Work with stakeholders to decide whether a change to the disposition is needed due to changes in the records’ or system’s business use or legal, financial, administrative, or historical value. Document the proposed changes and the reasons for the changes. | ☐ |
| 1. **Draft the update and validate the needed change(s) with the originating office and initial stakeholders.** | ☐ |
| 1. If no changes or updates to the schedule are needed, work with the offices holding the records to ensure that they are using the correct records schedule information and disposition in their file plans and systems. | ☐ |
| 1. If you determine that changes to the schedule are needed, prepare a draft of the updated records schedule, including all the needed changes. | ☐ |
| 1. Review the draft schedule and proposed changes with the originating office and other stakeholders who receive, store, and use the records. | ☐ |
| 1. When the originating office and initial stakeholders have reviewed and approved the changes, move on to Step 3. | ☐ |
| 1. **Communicate the proposed change(s) to agency stakeholders and obtain final internal feedback and approval.** | ☐ |
| 1. Upon approval by the originating office of the proposed records series revision(s) to the RCS, forward the changes to designated agency internal stakeholders for their review and approval, as required by your agency’s records management procedures. These agency internal stakeholders often include:  * Agency Records Officer * Program managers and staff * General Counsel * Information Technology * Inspector General or audit team | ☐ |
| 1. Apply holds or freezes as needed: If proposed changes include changes in the disposition, then decide whether all disposition actions for that records series should be suspended until the proposed changes are adopted or rejected. | ☐ |
| 1. If there are disagreements about the proposed changes, then negotiate revisions. Ensure that all internal conflicts are resolved before forwarding the changes to NARA. | ☐ |
| 1. Your Agency Records Officer or Records Management team may send the proposed RCS changes to your agency’s assigned NARA appraisal archivist for informal review before formally submitting the schedule to NARA for approval. | ☐ |
| 1. **Submit formal RCS change(s) to NARA for approval.** | ☐ |
| 1. Once the changes have been finalized within the agency and there are no disagreements over the proposed changes, your Agency Records Officer (ARO) or Records Management team will arrange for the updated schedule to be input into NARA’s Electronic Records Archives (ERA) for final review and approval. | ☐ |
| 1. NARA will review the initial schedule submission in the ERA. If there are issues with the ERA entry, your ARO and team will discuss any issues or possible changes to the proposed series or series dispositions with your agency’s designated NARA appraisal archivist. | ☐ |
| 1. **Implement the approved change(s).** | ☐ |
| 1. If NARA approves the submitted schedule changes, then update the official agency copy of records schedule or manual to include the new or revised disposition authorities. | ☐ |
| 1. If a crosswalk is necessary for agency implementation to link new records series with superseded ones, then create one. 2. Create a table, template, or spreadsheet with multiple columns. 3. Identify the new or revised disposition authorities. 4. Identify current disposition authorities superseded by the new or revised ones. 5. Map (match) the new or revised authorities to the superseded ones. 6. Indicate for each new or revised disposition how the records’ retention and disposition have changed, and what new actions are needed. | ☐ |
| 1. Apply the new disposition authorities and calculate new disposition dates for active records and legacy records already in storage and affected by the RCS changes. (GRS series changes or additions must be implemented within six months of NARA issuance.) | ☐ |
| 1. Annotate the changes in records storage documentation or databases that track inactive records disposition within the organization. | ☐ |
| 1. **Communicate the change(s) to partners and stakeholders.** | ☐ |
| 1. Distribute schedule changes and any crosswalks to records custodians and other stakeholders through the agency intranet or other designated means. | ☐ |
| 1. Answer questions from records custodians about the RCS changes as they arise via intranet, face-to-face, or in meetings to discuss and implement the changes. Work with IT to implement changes to any information systems as needed. | ☐ |
| 1. Instruct records custodians to update affected office file plans or their equivalents with the new series and/or disposition instructions by a designated deadline. | ☐ |
| 1. Audit the file plans or equivalents after the designated deadline to ensure changes are made. | ☐ |
| 1. Encourage records custodians to notify you when additional changes to the RCS are necessary. | ☐ |
| 1. **Document the change(s) in an RCS history file.** | ☐ |
| 1. If applicable, maintain a record of all RCS changes using a spreadsheet, database, or text document and retain according to agency policy. | ☐ |
| 1. Review that portion of the RCS applicable to your office or business unit annually for potentially needed disposition changes or additions. | ☐ |