

State of Florida

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE



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Division of Library and Information Services

Bureau of Archives and Records Management

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Introduction

The Bureau of Archives and Records Management developed this self-evaluation guide for State and local governmental agencies to use as an overview of the basic components of a records management program. Using this guide will assist agencies in making a preliminary assessment of the status of their records management programs and in identifying major problems and setting priorities for program improvements.

There are various publications available that provide additional details regarding records creations, maintenance, and disposition policies and procedures. An order form is included.

The Bureau of Archives and Records Management provides professional assistance and training to state and local government agencies in managing the records and information required to take care of the business of government. The Bureau strives for a records management program which has a clear definition of program objectives, responsibilities, and authorities. As public records and information managers, the staff make every effort to remain educated and informed so decisions are made intelligently and appropriately.



Section I

A. PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION AND ORGANIZATION

Chapter 257(5)(a), Florida Statutes, identifies the term “agency” as meaning any state, county, or municipal officer, department, division, bureau, board, commission, or other separate unit of government created or established by law. Within the law, it is stated that it is the duty of each agency to designate a records management liaison officer (RMLO). The RMLO assists in establishing and maintaining an active and continuing records management program within the agency.

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| Y | | N |
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Your agency has formally designated a Records Management Liaison Officer (RMLO) for coordinating a records management program.

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| Y | | N |
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Records management responsibilities are included in the position description for the RMLO.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO routinely communicates with the Bureau of Archives and Records Management analysts.

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| Y | | N |
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Employees are informed of the identity and role of the RMLO serving their offices.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO is involved in the transfer of archival records to the Florida State Archives.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO participates in planning for new electronic information systems and in major modifications to existing systems to ensure incorporation of record keeping requirements and records disposition procedures.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO is involved in the development of micrographic applications.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO is involved in the development of electronic record keeping systems, including procurement of computer equipment.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO is involved in the development of document imaging systems.

B. GUIDANCE AND TRAINING

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO has received training in State records management regulations, policies, and procedures.

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| Y | | N |
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Agency RMLOs, secretaries, file clerks, and others with regular records duties receive training in records maintenance and filing procedures and records disposition.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLOs brief senior officials and program administrators on the importance of records management and records handling responsibilities.

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| Y | | N |
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The State of Florida electronic records regulations (Rule 1B-26.003, FAC) and guidance have been distributed to all employees who are responsible for managing electronic information and record keeping systems.

C. INTERNAL EVALUATIONS

Internal evaluations are conducted by the agency RMLO on a regular basis to insure that all records are scheduled and disposed of in a timely manner. Records shall include paper documents as well as electronic documents.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO periodically evaluates records management practices.

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| Y | | N |
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These evaluations include electronic records.

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| Y | | N |
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Written evaluation reports are prepared.

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| Y | | N |
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Evaluated offices are required to respond to the evaluation reports promptly.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency RMLO follows up to determine if offices implement necessary corrective action or recommendations for improvements.

D. CREATION OF RECORDS/ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has provided guidance for all employees on the definition of State/local records and nonrecord materials, including those created using office automation, and the ways in which they must be managed.

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| Y | | N |
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Each agency has written guidance on what records, including electronic records, are to be created and maintained and the format of the official copy.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has issued guidance and instructions for documenting policies and decisions, especially those arrived at orally.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has issued guidance on the record status of working papers/files and drafts pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

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| Y | | N |
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Agency procedures require creation of finding aids such as captions and indexes to facilitate access to individual files, including electronic files or record items when appropriate.



Section II RECORDS MAINTENANCE

The proper management of records guarantees that complete records are maintained. There is also the guarantee that records can be located when needed, when records and non record materials and personal papers are maintained separately and when the identification and retention of permanent records are simplified. The benefits to be obtained from an effective records and information management program are many. Some of the things records management can assist in doing are compliance with legal retention requirements, faster retrieval of information, space savings, fewer lost or misfiled records, and a reduction of expenditures for records. Special records require additional standards for maintenance.

A. GENERAL

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has established standards and procedures for classifying, indexing, filing, and retrieving records and made them available to all employees.

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| Y | | N |
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Access to all records, regardless of media, is limited to authorized personnel.

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| Y | | N |
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Retention periods are clearly defined and implemented for each record series.

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| Y | | N |
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Permanent record series are identified and maintained separately from records with shorter retention periods.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has established and implemented regulations or procedures for the storage of security-classified and other restricted records.

B. PAPER-BASED RECORDS

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| Y | | N |
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Each agency has designated official file locations (file stations)?

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| Y | | N |
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A file plan for each series of records maintained is at each file station.

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| Y | | N |
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Each office has procedures for filing, charging out, and refiling its records.

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| Y | | N |
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File drawers and folders are labeled correctly.

C. ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Chapter 1B-26.0021, Florida Administrative Code, provides standards for microfilming of public records to assure that the film, photographing methods, processing, handling, and storage is in accordance with methods, procedures, and specifications designed to protect and preserve such records on microfilm. Chapter 1B-26.003, Florida Administrative Code provides standards for public records which have a retention value of more than ten years which will be recorded and stored on electronic media.

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| Y | | N |
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Records within the agency electronic information systems are readily identifiable.

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| Y | | N |
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Electronic recordkeeping systems that maintain the official copy of text documents on electronic media provide indexing or text search capabilities.

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| Y | | N |
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Electronic recordkeeping systems require user identification codes or passwords to control access and ensure integrity of the documents.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency regularly backs up electronic records to safeguard against loss of information due to equipment malfunction or human error.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency avoids the use of diskettes for the exclusive long-term storage of permanent, long term or unscheduled records.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency maintains complete and up-to-date technical documentation for each electronic information system.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency safeguards and maintains all software and hardware required to read electronic records throughout their lives.

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| Y | | N |
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Procedural controls are in place for all electronic recordkeeping systems (magnetic and imaging) to protect the integrity of the records and their legal admissibility under Florida law.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has implemented a standard procedure for external labeling of the contents of diskettes, disks, and magnetic tape reels or cartridges.

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| Y | | N |
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All long term and permanent backup/security electronic recording media are maintained in a storage facility either on-site or off-site with temperature and humidity controls.

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| Y | | N |
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A statistical sample of all electronic media containing long-term or permanent records is read annually to identify any loss of information and to discover and correct the cause of data loss.

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| Y | | N |
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Tapes used for permanent, long term and unscheduled records are copied before they are 10 years old onto tested and verified new tapes.

Magnetic media

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| Y | | N |
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Magnetic media containing permanent, long term or unscheduled records are stored under recommended temperature and humidity conditions, and the media is protected from potential exposure to magnetic fields.

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| Y | | N |
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Agency employees using personal computers have received training and guidance in determining record status of documents that they create with office automation applications.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency implemented procedures for maintaining State records created using personal computers in an official file (hard copy or electronic recordkeeping system).

| | | |
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| Y | | N |
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All agency staff who use computers have been trained in procedures to avoid the unintentional loss of records, including techniques for backing up files and for handling diskettes.

Optical Imaging Systems

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| Y | | N |
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Optical imaging systems used to store permanent or long term records meet State transfer requirements.

Audiovisual records

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Original and use copies of audiovisual records are maintained separately.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Finding aids such as indexes, captions, lists of captions, data sheets, shot lists, continuities, review sheets, and catalogs (published or unpublished) are maintained for all audiovisual records.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Cross-references to closely related textual records are maintained with audiovisual records.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency has instituted procedures to ensure that information on permanent or long term magnetic sound or video media is not erased or overwritten.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency retains original photographic images created electronically (digital photography).

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency maintains originals of permanent, long term or unscheduled photographs scanned into electronic format.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency stores permanent audiovisual records, particularly color films and photographs in environmentally controlled space.

CARTOGRAPHIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS

| | | |
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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Maps and drawings are stored flat in shallow-drawer map cases rather than folded or rolled.

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| Y | | N |
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Permanent and long term maps and drawings are stored in acid-free folders.

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| Y | | N |
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Large, heavy atlases and other bound volumes of maps or drawings are stored flat, preferably on roller shelves to facilitate moving them without damage.

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| Y | | N |
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Adequate finding aids such as indexes exist for cartographic and architectural records.

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| Y | | N |
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Cross-references for closely related textual records are maintained with cartographic and architectural records.

MICROGRAPHIC RECORDS

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| Y | | N |
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Records on microfilm are arranged and indexed to permit ready retrieval of individual documents.

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| Y | | N |
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Microfilms contain a title header or initial target page that identifies the records.

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| Y | | N |
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Boxes containing microfilm are individually labeled with the record series and date span of the records, and they are sequentially numbered.

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| Y | | N |
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Permanent records are filmed separately from records with shorter retention periods.

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| Y | | N |
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Silver gelatin and nonsilver microfilm are filed separately.

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| Y | | N |
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Silver gelatin master microfilm of permanent or long term records are inspected every 2 years while these records are in storage.



Section III RECORDS DISPOSITION

The records disposition program enables agencies to dispose of records that are no longer needed so that only those active records needed for current business are maintained in costly office space. Under records schedule provisions, agencies may destroy specified records, transfer eligible records to records centers or storage areas, or transfer permanent records to the Bureau of Archives and Records Management. The Bureau of Archives and Records Management issues General Records Schedules (GS) for records common to most agencies. Because these schedules provide disposition requirements, agencies do not have to schedule those records individually, unless a variation from the GS disposition standard is needed. Agencies may request authority to establish a disposition standard different from that in the GS by submitting Form 105, Records Retention Schedule. However, agencies must schedule all other records they create or receive which are not found in the GS. Records schedules for state agencies, local government agencies and various other agencies records, must be approved by the Bureau of Archives and Records Management before implementation, and once approved, they are mandatory.

RECORDS DISPOSITION SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT

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| Y | | N |
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Records schedules are based on inventories.

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| Y | | N |
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Inventories are updated periodically to reflect new records series or electronic information systems, changes in recordkeeping practices, or changes in programs resulting from legislative or regulatory changes.

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| Y | | N |
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Records schedules contain a clear and complete description of records series that reflects the content and arrangement of the files.

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| Y | | N |
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Schedules contain a clear and concise description of electronic recordkeeping systems that reflects the purpose, content, sources of information, and outputs.

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| Y | | N |
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Disposition instructions include provisions for cutoff, instructions for retiring appropriate hard copy records to storage facilities, and specific retention periods before final disposition of all records, as well as instructions for transferal of records to the Florida State Archives.

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| Y | | N |
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Agency program officials review proposed records schedules relating to their offices or functions.

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| Y | | N |
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Proposed schedules for records are reviewed by the agency's Office of the General Counsel.

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| Y | | N |
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The agency has distributed all pertinent information containing records disposition policies and procedures as well as the Bureau of Archives and Records Management approved agency records schedules.

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| Y | | N |
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Records disposition reviews are periodically conducted to identify new records series and information systems that should be scheduled and changes in recordkeeping practices that require records schedule revision.

RECORDS DISPOSITION SCHEDULE IMPLEMENTATION

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency RMLO monitors implementation of the records schedule, both in headquarters and field facilities.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency RMLO provides copies of all approved records schedules to all relevant offices, both in headquarters and in the field.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Records are destroyed only in accordance with approved records schedules.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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File custodians take prompt action to cut off files, destroy records whose retention periods have expired, and retire eligible records to a records center in accordance with schedule provisions.



Section IV VITAL RECORDS

The vital records program is intended to assist agencies in identifying and protecting those records essential to continuing their operations under other than normal business conditions.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency has assessed potential risks to the agency's records.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency has established a vital records program specifying the responsibilities of various agency officials.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency has designated a vital records manager, which can be the RMLO, to coordinate the program.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency identified its vital records, i.e., its emergency operating records and legal and financial records.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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The agency periodically reviews its vital records plan and updates it as necessary.

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| Y | <input type="checkbox"/> | N |
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Special media records, such as electronic or microfilm records, designated as vital records, provision have been made for access to the equipment needed to use the records in case of emergency.