

Glossary of Records and Information Management Terms

Active Records

Records that are required for day-to-day business and are subject to frequent use; generally accessed more than once per month.

Administrative Value

In appraisal, the usefulness of records for the conduct of current and/or future administrative business needs.

Agency

An organizational entity of government, either executive, legislative, or judicial, that is defined by law and has decision-making authority. Can be an office, department, board, commission, or other separate unit.

Agency-Specific Schedule

Retention schedule which specifies the approved disposition of a record series unique in purpose and function to its creating agency.

Appraisal

The process of determining the value and thus the disposition of records based on their current administrative, fiscal, and legal value; their evidential and informational value; their arrangement and condition; their intrinsic value; and their relationship to other records.

Archives

- The noncurrent historical records of an organization or institution, preserved because of their enduring value.
- 2. The agency responsible for selecting, preserving, and making available, records determined to have permanent or continuing value.
- 3. The building in which an archival repository is located. Salt Lake County Archives is located in West Valley.

Archivist

One who is professionally trained for or whose primary duties consist of appraising, describing, referencing, and caring for archival records.

Arrangement

The order or relationship of individual files within a record series to each other, frequently reflecting the function of the record series to the organization, i.e., alphabetical by county, numerical by case number, alphanumeric by address, or chronological.

Classification

"Classify" and their derivative forms means determining whether a record series, record, or information within a record is public, private, controlled, protected, or exempt from disclosure under UCA 63G-2-201(3)(b).

Controlled Data

According to UCA 63G-2-304, data on an individual collected and maintained by state government, necessary for the administration of government programs, which is available only to appropriate agencies and to others by express consent of the individual, but not to the individual himself. A record is controlled if: (1) the record contains medical, psychiatric, or psychological data about an individual; (2) the governmental entity reasonably believes that: (a) releasing the information in the record to the subject of the record would be detrimental to the subject's mental health or to the safety of any individual; or (b) releasing the information would constitute a violation of normal professional practice and medical ethics; and (3) the governmental entity has properly classified the record.

Conversion of Records Formats

The process of transferring records from one physical format to another. Conversion includes changing paper to microform, optical disk, or another electronic format.

Copy

A reproduction of the contents of an original document which is not the official file copy of the agency. Copies are usually identified by their function, i.e., action copy, reading file copy, tickler file copy, etc. In most instances, copies will have a shorter retention than the official file copy (see Record Copy) of a record series.

Cubic Feet

Measurement of volume for records and manuscripts, 1'x1'x1'; also shown as cu. ft. or c.f. A single State Records Center storage box holds one cubic foot of letter or legal size paper records.

Custody

The guardianship of records and manuscripts which may include both physical possession (protective responsibility) and legal title (legal responsibility).

Data Administration

Developing and administering policies, procedures, practices, and plans for defining, organizing, protecting, and efficiently utilizing data.

Data Dictionary

Information on the definition, structure, and usage of data within a system or organization. See also Metadata and Documentation.

Designation

Indicating the primary classification that a majority of records in a record series would contain, based on a governmental entity's familiarity with a record series or based on a governmental entity's review of a reasonable sample of a record series.

Disposition

The final action that puts into effect the results of an appraisal decision for a series of records. Transfer to an archival repository, retain permanently in the agency, or destruction, are among possible disposition actions.

Documentation

Information on the definition, structure, and usage of data within a system or organization. Includes printed instructions, comments, and information for a particular system of computer hardware and software. See also Metadata and Data Dictionary.

Duplicate

- Pertaining to microforms, a duplicate is a working copy other than the master or security copy, which is administratively useful to an agency. In most instances, duplicates will be scheduled to serve the same or shorter retentions than master copies.
- 2. Often used interchangeably with Copy.

Electronic Records

Records consisting of data and information which is input, created, manipulated and/or stored on electronic media which show evidence of actions and decisions occurring during transactions of government business. Also referred to as Machine-readable records.

Evidential Value

In appraisal, the value of a record that documents the activities of an organization or agency.

Files Management

Applying records and information management principles and techniques to filing practices in order to organize and maintain records properly, retrieve them rapidly, ensure their completeness, and make their disposition easier.

Fiscal Value

In appraisal, records required until a financial audit is completed or financial obligations are fulfilled.

General Records

Records that are common to many agencies within the same organization or type of government.

General Schedule

Retention schedule which specifies the approved disposition of certain series of general records common to many agencies and serves as a model for agencies to evaluate similar record series.

Historical Value

In appraisal, the value that documents the history of an organization. Sometimes referred to as archival, continuing, or enduring value. Secondary Historical Value does not document the history of an organization, but recognizes a record containing information that is useful for conducting historical research.

Imaging

Means electronic or "digital" imaging; the ability to capture, store, retrieve, display, process, distribute, and manage information as a digitized representation of the original.

Inactive Records

A series of records with a reference rate of less than one search per month.

Information Management

The application of planning and standards to the creation, use, retrieval, retention, conversion, disposition, and preservation of information resources in any format.

Information System

A system which provides input, storage, processing, communications, output, and control functions in relation to information and data. Normally used to describe computer systems.

Informational Value

In appraisal, the value of a record that provides unique and permanent information for purposes of research.

Inventory

A survey of agency records and nonrecord materials that is conducted primarily to develop retention schedules and to identify various RIM problems, such as improper applications of record-keeping technology.

Legal Value

In appraisal, the usefulness of records containing evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations. Also refers to retentions specified by statute, rule, or regulation.

Machine-readable Records

Records containing coded data or information which must be translated by a computer. May be stored on magnetic tape, diskettes, optical disks, or imaging systems and may include computer software, programs, database management systems, applications, and textual records such as system documentation.

Master

Pertaining to microforms, the master is the original film from which duplicates are made. The master usually serves as the security copy of the filmed records and is maintained in a secure and controlled, off-site, records center location.

Metadata

Information on the definition, structure, and usage of data within a system or organization. See also Data Dictionary and Documentation.

Microfiche

Microfilm containing multiple micro images in a grid pattern on a transparent sheet of film.

Microfilm

Reduced scale, photographic image of a record.

Microforms

Microfilm media, including reels, fiche, jackets, and computer output microfilm (COM) containing micro images.

Micrographics

The technology involved in the creation and use of micro images.

Open Systems

An environment that allows interchangeability and integrated operation between software systems from different vendors. Addresses the areas of portability--ability to use a variety of computer systems; inter-operability--the ability of different computers to exchange information; and open architecture--the ability to connect different peripheral computer devices.

Permanent Records

Indicates a disposition other than "destroy." Specifically, records would either be transferred to the State Archives or maintained permanently in office. These records need continued retention due to their long-term administrative, legal, fiscal, or historical value.

Policy Manual

A publication that states the course of action to be followed by an organization, unit, or department in conducting its activities.

Preservation

Action taken to slow or prevent the deterioration or damage of archival records. Basic actions to provide adequate facilities for the protection, care, and maintenance of archives, records, and manuscripts.

Private Data

According to UCA 63G-2-302, data on an individual collected and maintained by a governmental entity, necessary for the administration of government programs, which are available only to appropriate agencies and to others by express consent of the individual, and to the individual himself or next of kin when information is needed to acquire benefits due a deceased person. Records which must be considered private include medical records, library circulation records, and certain data element regarding public employees.

Processing

- To arrange records in a logical way so that they can be used for research and to describe them in order to provide for intellectual control.
- To preserve records of enduring value.

Protected Data

A record that is classified protected as provided by UCA 63G-2-305. Protected records usually contain non-personal data and are only accessible by those who submitted the information or those whose interests were sought to be protected. Records in this category include undercover law enforcement information, audit procedures, locations of prehistoric sites, etc.

Public Data

According to UCA 63G-2-301, data on individuals collected and maintained by a governmental entity, necessary for the administration of government programs, which are not classified as "private" or "controlled" or "protected" and therefore open to the public, unless otherwise exempted or restricted by law. Certain information is required to be public, such as laws, minutes of open meetings, and the gross compensation of public employees.

Record Copy

The original file copy of a record series maintained by the creating agency, sometimes referred to as the designated original or blue-ribbon copy.

Record Series

A group of identical or related records, files, documents and/or other media created by one agency that are normally used, indexed, or filed together, and that permit evaluation as a unit for retention and disposition purposes.

Record Series Number

See Series Number.

Records

All books, papers, letters, documents, maps, plans, photographs, sound recordings, management information systems, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received, and retained by any public office under state law or in connection with the transaction of public business by the offices, agencies, and institutions of the state and its counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions.

Records Center

A facility especially designed and constructed to provide low-cost, efficient storage and retrieval service on inactive records, pending ultimate disposition. The Salt Lake County Records Center is located in West Valley. This facility is not open to the general public.

Records and Information Management

The application of management techniques to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposition of records, undertaken to reduce costs and improve efficiency in record keeping. Includes management of filing and microfilming equipment and supplies; filing and information retrieval systems; files, correspondence, reports, and forms management; historical documentation; micrographics; systems applications; retention scheduling; and vital records protection.

Records Officer

In Utah, an agency-appointed person whose responsibilities include the development and oversight of RIM programs and who serves as the agency's contact person with the State Archives.

Retention Period

The period of time during which records are kept in the custody of the creating agency (including Records Center storage) before disposition occurs; usually in terms of years or contingent upon an event, such as an audit.

Retention Schedule

A list or other instrument describing record series and their minimum retention periods.

Schedule

Used as a verb, means to establish retention periods for current records and provide for proper disposition at the end of their active use.

Series Number

This number is a unique identifier assigned by the Utah State Archives to each record series created and maintained by each state and local government agency. The series number permits agencies to submit agency-specific retention and disposition schedules and allows the State Archives to catalog and share specific information about Utah's governmental records with research institutions and archival repositories across the country.

Transferring

Moving inactive records to the records center on a regular schedule.

Vital Records

Records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency and also those records essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities. Sometimes called essential records. Recommended that there be duplicates located off-site.