

IM Advisory — Preparing Paper Records for Offsite Storage

Overview

Records transferred to offsite storage must be carefully organized and documented to ensure future accessibility.

Advice

- Perform an initial assessment of the records:
 - o Identify each records series to be transferred. Remember to document the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule (RRDS) title and number, where appropriate.
 - o Verify the department or other public body, is the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for the records.
 - o Review the records to determine if any meet the requirements of transitory records (assessed as low-value and the initial purpose for their retention is no longer valid). Records, once assessed as transitory, can be securely disposed.
 - o Confirm whether the records' retention requirements have been met and if disposal instructions outlined in the RRDS (secure disposal or transfer to The Rooms Provincial Archives) can be implemented.

- Identify a location where records can be processed. Consider:
 - o A large table where records can be organized, placed in a folder and labeled.
 - o Access to equipment (e.g. computer and printer to create and print labels).
 - o Secure shredding bins to securely destroy records defined as transitory records.
 - o Ability to secure records during off hours/while awaiting pickup.

- Determine where records will be stored:

FYI — IM Advisory — Preparing Paper Records for Offsite Storage

- Certain government records are eligible for storage at the Provincial Records Centre (PRC) at no cost to the department or other public body. Refer to the FYI—IM Advisory—Transferring Records to the Provincial Records Centre.
 - The Rooms Provincial Archives will accept archival records that have been pre-approved by the Government Records Committee (GRC) of having the disposition of Archive or Selective Retention on the RRDS. This is typically a very small volume of records, 5% - 10%. Consult with the Government Records Archivist on how to transfer records to The Rooms Provincial Archives.
 - Commercial storage is used for the largest volume of government records. Departments and other public bodies are responsible for the fees associated with using commercial storage. Contact the Public Procurement Agency for information regarding this service.
- Use only standard size boxes procured via the master standing offer agreement for boxes. This box type fits on standard shelving.
- Seal the box with packing tape to minimize risk to records while in transit.
- Organize records that will go into each box:
- Arrange records according to the departmental filing system (e.g. numerical, alphabetical, and chronological). Retain any internal file listings or finding aids, as these will be useful in mapping records to the RRDS.
 - Securely destroy any transitory materials including duplicate copies, published materials, etc.
 - Eliminate metal bindings, as this will make the box lighter and protect records as metal corrodes over time.
 - Store records in labeled folders, as this supports a faster, more secure retrieval.
 - Pack only one type of record series per box with a similar disposal date. Retention requirements for a series may change over time. If there are multiple series in a box then changes may require reboxing and re-indexing the records.
 - Do not use hanging file folders, as these folders destroy the box over time.
 - Do not overfill boxes or exceed the standard recommended weight limit of 20lbs.
- Document each box with a file list that itemizes content.

- o The level of detail may vary (e.g. case files may require an alphabetical list of names while a date range may be sufficient for records filed chronologically); however it must be sufficient to enable future retrieval of the records.
 - o A sample file listing template is on the OCIO website as the second page of the Record Transfer form.
 - o Calculate a disposal date based on the RRDS (e.g. records from September 2012 with 5-year retention in the semi-active column will be disposed of in September 2017).
- Boxes should be packed leaving a 1-2 inch gap to allow for easier access when doing retrievals.
- Each box must have a box number (unique to the organization) that corresponds to the department or other public body’s inventory listing.
- Do not put any other markings on the box that reveal the content of the records. Boxes will be assigned tracking numbers that correlate to the records transfer forms.

For more information on preparing records for offsite storage, contact IM@gov.nl.ca.

Supporting Materials

POLICY—Information Management and Protection Policy
<https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/ocio/files/im-im-ip-policy.pdf>

FYI—IM Advisory—Transferring Records to the Provincial Records Centre
<https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/ocio/files/fyi-im-advisory-transferring-records-to-prc.pdf>

Version History

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