



A

Accession: To legally and physically take archival records into the Archives for permanent preservation and storage. Also used to refer to archival records that are transferred to the Archives as a unit at the same time.

Appraisal: The process of determining the value and disposition of records based on their administrative, legal and fiscal use; their evidential and informational or research value; and their relationship to other records. See also *Reappraisal*.

Archival (Appraisal Required): Designation for public records that may possess enduring legal and/or historical value and must be appraised by the Archives. Such records are to be evaluated, sampled and weeded according to archival principles by Archives staff. Records appraised as non-archival may be destroyed after their retention has been met.

Archival (Permanent Retention): Designation for public records that possess enduring legal and/or historical value and must not be destroyed. State government agencies must transfer these records to the Archives at the end of their minimum retention period. Local government agencies must either transfer these records to the Archives or retain and preserve them according to archival best practice until transferred to the Archives. Other than removing and disposing of duplicates, the Archives will not sample, weed, or otherwise dispose of records with this designation.

Archival Value: The ongoing usefulness or significance of records, based on administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential, or historical information they contain that justifies their continued preservation. See also *Archival (Appraisal Required)* and *Archival (Permanent Retention)*.

Archives: Collections of records preserved because of their enduring evidential, informational, and research value in documenting activities and functions of agencies, organizations, families, or individuals. Also refers to a facility in which records of historical value are preserved and housed, or to an organization or institution that preserves, houses, and provides access to records of historical value. In this document Archives usually refers to the Washington State Archives.

Archives Advisory Committee: Committee of county auditors, county clerks and representatives from other sectors of local government in Washington State that advises the State Archivist in some functions of the Archives. Previously known as the Archives Oversight Committee.

Archives Catalog (ArCat): A web application used by the state and regional branches of the Archives to facilitate management of and access to archival holdings.

ArchiveThis!: An application that facilitates the ingestion and validation of records transferred to the Digital Archives.



C

Collection: A group of paper and/or digital records with a unifying characteristic or function held by the Archives. Includes records on the Digital Archives (DA) website artificially grouped together on the basis of a common set of search fields. The term *Record Series* is used in place of *Collection* in many DA interfaces.

Collection Policy: Official statement identifying types of records the Archives will collect or acquire and the terms and conditions under which it will do so.

CORE: See *Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule*, for which *CORE* is an acronym based on Common Records.

D

DAN: See *Disposition Authority Number*.

Deaccession: To remove records from an archival collection and disposition them through destruction or transfer to another institution. See also *Reappraisal*.

Deed of Gift: Agreement between a private donor and the Archives, transferring ownership of and legal rights to records donated to the Archives.

Digital Archives (DA): A repository for the long-term maintenance and preservation of digital records, often with the purpose of making them available. In this document Digital Archives refers to the Washington State Digital Archives.

Digital Imaging Grant: One of three options in the Local Records Grant Program, this grant helps local government agencies with the costs of having the Archives' Imaging and Preservation Services or another vendor digitize a specific set of records to help with their retention, management, and disclosure. See also *Local Records Grant Program*, *Organizing the File Room Grant*, and *Technology Tools Grant*.

Digital Microfilming: The creation of microfilm copies from digital images, often for the purpose of long-term preservation backup.

Digital Object: An electronic file, existing in a specific format, transferred to the Digital Archives (DA) for preservation. Can be indexed for retrieval on the DA website.

Digitization: The process of converting an analog document (paper, microform, film, analog audio or audiovisual tapes) to digital format for the purpose of access and/or preservation.



Disposition: Actions taken with records when they are no longer required to be retained by an agency. Possible disposition actions include transfer to the Archives and destruction.

Disposition Authority Number (DAN): Control number for a specific records series in a retention schedule that authorizes a retention period and disposition action for records belonging to that series.

E

Enterprise Content Management (ECM): Described by the Association for Intelligent Information Management ([AIIM](#)) as “a dynamic combination of strategies, methods, and tools used to capture, manage, store, preserve, and deliver information supporting key organizational processes through its entire lifecycle.” See also *Enterprise Content Management System/Solution*.

Enterprise Content Management System/Solution (ECMS): A system designed to help an organization manage its paper and electronic records throughout their lifecycle. See also *Enterprise Content Management*.

EPubs Portal: A secure web interface that bypasses the Digital Archives’ ArchiveThis!, used by the State Library and local agencies to submit PDF copies of agency publications for preservation and online access.

Essential Records: Records needed to respond to, and/or perform critical operations during/after, a disaster or emergency. They need to be protected through backup or enhanced storage. (RCW 40.10.010)

Essential Records Protection Program: Archives program that offers free microfilm storage facilities to state and local government agencies of Washington State. See *Security Microfilm*.

Exemption: Law that allows the withholding or redaction of specific type(s) of information in public records.

F

Finding Aid: An access aid or reference material, such as a records series description, list or index, that provides information about records held by the Archives, allowing users to search for and identify records of interest.

G

General Schedule: See *State Government General Records Retention Schedule*.



H

Holding Electronic Records Tank (HERT): Access portal for digital objects that are preserved in Digital Archives databases but are not indexed for website search and retrieval. Accessible by the transferring agency and the Archives, but not directly by the public.

I

Information Governance (IG): The set of multi-disciplinary structures, policies, procedures, processes and controls implemented to manage information, supporting an organization's immediate and future regulatory, legal, risk, environmental and operational requirements.

L

Legal Hold: Suspension of the normal processing or disposition of public records because of current or anticipated litigation, public records request, audit, government investigation or other such matter.

Life of the Agency: Retention period for records that must be maintained by the office of record as long as that office exists. See also *Permanent*.

Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE): Retention schedule that authorizes the destruction/transfer of Washington State local government agencies' public records relating to the common functions of the management of each agency and management of each agency's assets, finances, human resources and information resources. Used in conjunction with *Sector Schedules*.

Local Records Committee: Committee established by [RCW 40.14.070](#) to review and approve disposition of local government records through records retention schedules. The Committee's three members include the State Archivist and one representative each from the Offices of the Attorney General and the State Auditor.

Local Records Grant Program: Competitive reimbursement grant program administered by the Archives, designed to assist local government agencies with the costs associated with improving their technology information systems for public records retention, management and disclosure. See [RCW 40.14.026](#). See also *Digital Imaging Grant*, *Organizing the File Room Grant*, and *Technology Tools Grant*.



M

Metadata: Created or collected data about records, used for different purposes, such as administration, description, discovery, and preservation.

Migration: Periodic transfer of data from one electronic system to another in order to ensure continued integrity and accessibility of data despite changes over time in hardware, software, and storage media.

N

Non-Archival: Designation given to public records that do not possess sufficient historical value to be designated as “Archival.” Agencies must retain these records for the minimum retention period specified by the appropriate current records retention schedule. Agencies should destroy these records after their minimum retention period expires, provided the records are not required for litigation, public records requests, or other purposes required by law.

Non-Essential Records: Public records which are not required in order for an agency to resume its core functions following a disaster, as described in [chapter 40.10 RCW](#).

O

Office Files and Memoranda (OFM): Public records not defined and classified as official public records in [RCW 40.14.010](#) and other documents or records as determined by the records committee to be office files and memoranda.

Office of Record: Group, department, or office within an agency responsible for maintaining a primary record from creation (or receipt) through disposition.

Official Public Records (OPR): Public records necessary to document transactions relating to public property, public finances, and other agency business, or records determined by the records committee to be official public records. See [RCW 40.14.010](#).

OFM: See *Office Files and Memoranda*.

Open Government Training Act: Washington state law ([ESB 5964](#)) requiring many public officials, all appointed public disclosure officers (see [RCW 42.56.080](#)) and state agency appointed records officers (see [RCW 40.14.040](#)) to receive public records training.

OPR: See *Official Public Records*.



Organizing the File Room Grant: One of three options in the Local Records Grant Program, this grant helps local government agencies with the costs associated with organizing paper records and destroying or transferring to the Archives records that have met their minimum retention period. See also *Digital Imaging Grant*, *Local Records Grant Program*, and *Technology Tools Grant*.

Out of the Archives: Monthly digital newsletter of the Archives featuring articles on historic topics and Archives events.

P

Partner: An agency or entity that shares records with the Digital Archives (DA). Partners are typically state and local government agencies and Archives offices that scan and index materials for access on the DA website. Private entities are accepted as partners on a case-by-case basis.

Permanent: Retention period for records that must be kept indefinitely by the office of record. Distinct from *Archival (Permanent Retention)* in that the office of record, rather than the Archives, is required to maintain the records. See also *Life of the Agency*.

Potentially Archival: See *Archival (Appraisal Required)*.

Pre-Accessioning: The transfer of copies of electronic records to the Digital Archives for preservation purposes before the end of the records' retention period.

Preservation: Activities carried out to ensure that the content of archival records is maintained in usable formats for as long as access to that content is needed or desired.

Primary Record: Original record (whether created or received by an agency) that serves as the agency's official record and must be retained in accordance with a current approved records retention schedule.

Provenance: Information about the origins, custody and ownership of archival records.

Public Records: Records that have been created or received by any government agency in Washington State in connection with the transaction of public business regardless of physical form or characteristics. See [RCW 40.14.010](#). See also *Record*.

Public Records Act (PRA): [Chapter 42.56 RCW](#), containing laws pertaining to the protection and maintenance of and access to public records of government agencies in Washington State.

Public Records Officer: Person appointed by an agency to serve as a point of contact for members of the public requesting disclosure of public records and to oversee the agency's compliance with the Public Records Act. See [RCW 42.56.580](#).



R

RCW: See *Revised Code of Washington*.

Reappraisal: Process of reviewing records in the Archives to see if they still warrant preservation or if their historical value is minimal enough that they should be removed from the archival collection. See also *Appraisal* and *Deaccession*.

Record: “Data or information that has been fixed on some medium; that has content, context, and structure; and that is used as an extension of human memory or to demonstrate accountability.” From the Society of American Archivists’ [A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology](#). See also *Public Records*.

Record Group: Agency or other entity from which archival records originated.

Records Center Management System (RCMS): Web application used by state agencies in Washington to document transfer of records to the Records Center, order barcode labels for records to be transferred, and submit reference requests for records already transferred.

Records Officer: See *Public Records Officer*.

Records Retention Schedules: Documents authorizing the retention, destruction, and transfer of public records to the Archives. Records retention schedules approved by the State Records Committee set legal retention, destruction and transfer requirements for records held by state government agencies. Records retention schedules approved by the Local Records Committee set legal retention, destruction and transfer requirements for records held by local government agencies.

Records Series: A group of records performing a specific function, which is used as a unit, filed as a unit, and may be transferred or destroyed as a unit. A records series may consist of a single type or a number of different types of documents that are filed together to document a specific function.

Records Transmittal and Box Content List: Form submitted with records being transferred to the Archives, listing the records and documenting the transfer of custody agreement. See also *Transmittal Agreement*.

Redaction: The concealment of exempt or otherwise legally non-disclosable information in a public record before the record is released to a party not authorized to see the concealed information.

Restricted Records: Public records not legally subject to public disclosure because of exemption or other legal reasons.



Retention Cutoff: The event that triggers the start of the retention period for a records series. A records series' retention cutoff is usually included in the records retention schedule applicable to that series.

Retention Period: Minimum length of time that a records series must legally be kept by the agency of record. Retention periods are authorized by the appropriate records committee and listed in records retention schedules.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW): the codified laws of Washington State.

S

Sampling: The selection of files or items from a group of records that are representative of the whole.

Scanning and Tossing: Process of imaging non-archival paper records, destroying the originals, and preserving the digitized version for the rest of the records' retention period. Requirements and guidelines for "Scan and Toss" policies and procedures are available from the Archives in the [Requirements for the Destruction of Non-Archival Paper Records after Imaging](#).

Scribe: An online Archives web application that allows users to log in from any computer with an internet connection and index digital images of archival records.

Secondary Copies: Duplicates of an agency's primary records used for informational purposes. May be discarded when no longer needed for agency business.

Sector Schedules: Records retention schedules for local government records used in specific, limited government functions, such as animal services, or created by specific types of local government agencies, such as health departments. Used by local government agencies in conjunction with the *Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE)*.

Security Microfilm: Silver duplicate or first-generation microfilm stored at the Archives under strictly-controlled environmental conditions that serves as an emergency/disaster back-up, in accordance with [chapter 40.10 RCW](#). The Archives provides security microfilm storage and inspection services to local and state government agencies at no cost.

SGGRRS: See *State Government General Records Retention Schedule*.

State Government General Records Retention Schedule (SGGRRS): Retention schedule that authorizes the destruction/transfer of state agency public records relating to the common functions of the management of each agency and management of each agency's assets, finances, human resources and information resources. Used in conjunction with each Washington state agency's own records retention schedule.



State Records Committee: Committee established by [RCW 40.14.050](#) to review and approve disposition of state government records. Its four members include the State Archivist and one representative each from the Office of the Attorney General, Office of the State Auditor, and the Office of Financial Management.

Subgroup: The office, department, or other entity of origin of archival records, usually a subdivision of the record group (agency or other entity) from which archival records held by the Archives originated.

Supported Formats: Formats (including county auditors' and clerks' recording system exports) that are accepted in the Digital Archives' ArchiveThis! or the EPubs Portal for online collections.

T

Technology Tools Grant: One of three options in the Local Records Grant Program, this grant helps local government agencies with the costs associated with acquiring specific hardware and/or software to improve records management and response time to public records requests. See also *Digital Imaging Grant*, *Local Records Grant Program*, and *Organizing the File Room Grant*.

Transfer Information Plan (TIP): Document used by agencies to provide information about a potential transfer of electronic records to the Digital Archives. The information is used in the appraisal process, for planning the technical aspects of the transfer, to document the agency's identification of restricted and disclosure exempt materials, and to gain an understanding of the records' context. Also referred to as a *Transfer Inventory Spreadsheet*.

Transfer Inventory Spreadsheet: See *Transfer Information Plan*.

Transitory Records: Records with little or no administrative, legal or fiscal value that need not be kept for future use or information. These records are categorized under the *Records with Minimal Retention Value (Transitory Records)* sections of the [Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule \(CORE\)](#) and the [State Government General Records Retention Schedule \(SGRRS\)](#).

Transmittal Agreement (TA): Form used to transfer legal and physical custody of archival records from government agencies to the Archives (see also *Records Transmittal and Box Content List*).

Treasures of the Archives: Periodic stories of interesting materials found on the Digital Archives (DA). Written by graduate students from Eastern Washington University's History Department and featured on the home page of the DA website.

W

WAC: See *Washington Administrative Code*.



Washington Administrative Code (WAC): The codified regulations of Washington State, arranged by subject or agency.

Web Admin: Website portal that allows Digital Archives partners to log in and view records in *HERT*, make corrections to metadata, respond to customers' questions and/or comments, restrict records at item level, and access records for business resumption and/or in an emergency.

Web Crawler: Application used internally by the Digital Archives to capture annual historical snapshots of state and local agency websites. The application captures only the HTML pages of the website, not digital objects that are available on the website.

Weeding: The removal of some records from an archival collection based on an appraisal decision that they are not archival or not necessary for the historical record.