Organizing the File Room

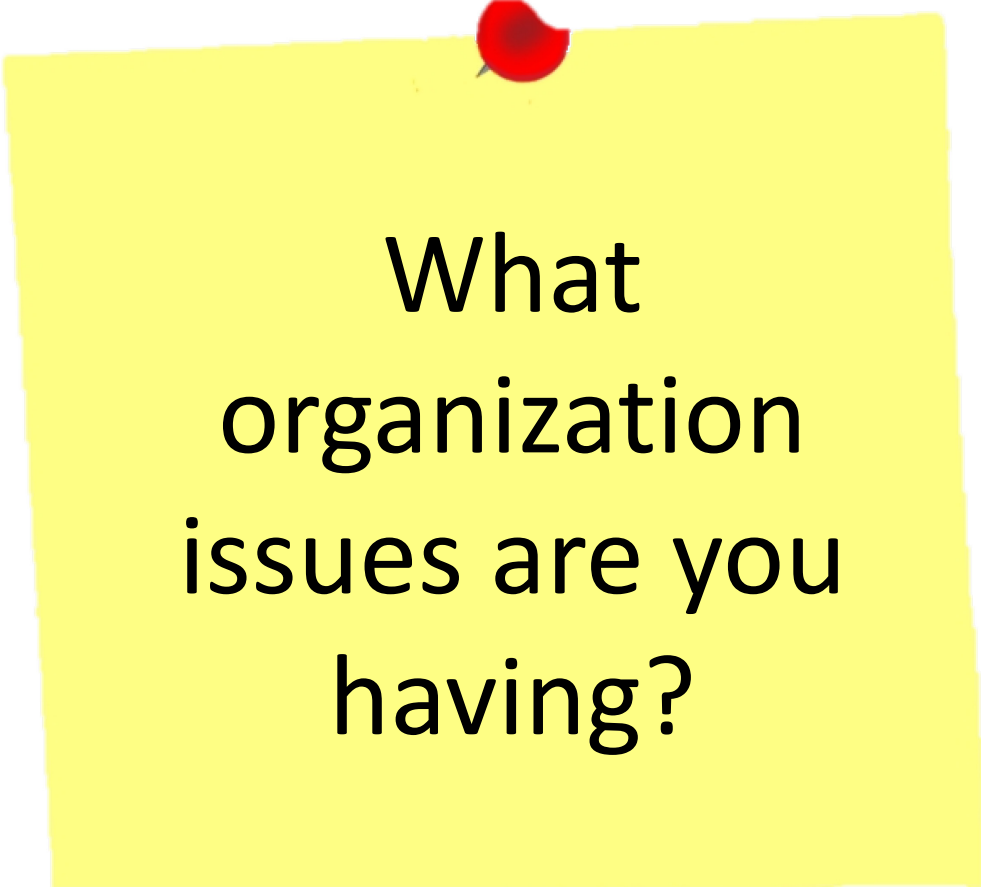WASHINGTON

SECRETARY OF STATE

STATE OF WASHINGTON

Secretary of State

Washington State Archives

INTRODUCTIONS

1. Name

2. Position

3. Records management experience

What organization issues are you having?

WASHINGTON SECRETARY OF STATE
Washington State Archives

Understanding Retention Requirements

Assessing the Situation

Making a Work Plan

Sorting, Arranging, & Organizing

Finishing Up

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UNDERSTANDING RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

Reading Schedules

Searching Schedules

DISPOSITION AUTHORITY NUMBER (DAN)	DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS	RETENTION AND DISPOSITION ACTION	DESIGNATION
GS 09009 Rev. 1	**Meetings – Staff and Internal Committees** Records documenting meetings of the agency's staff and those of internal committees, commissions, councils, boards, task forces, etc. Includes, but is not limited to: • Agendas, meeting/agenda packets (briefs, reference materials, etc.); • Speaker sign-up, written testimony; • Audio/visual recordings and transcripts of proceedings; • Minutes. Excludes records covered by: • Advisory Body Records (DAN GS 10015); • Governing/Executive/Policy-Setting Body Records (DAN GS 10004); • Meeting Arrangements (DAN GS 09024); • Meeting Materials – Members' Copies/Notes (DAN GS 09026).	**Retain** for 2 years after end of calendar year *and* until no longer needed for agency business *then* **Destroy.**	NON-ARCHIVAL NON-ESSENTIAL OFM

* You cannot destroy or transfer records without a DAN

UNDERSTANDING RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

→ Reading Schedules

→ Searching Schedules

1. Table of Contents

2. Keyword Search (Ctrl+F)

3. Subjects index

4. Schedule Database

ACTIVITY: FIND THE RIGHT DAN

Each table or group will receive a card with 3 example records

Match each example record to a DAN using the Retention Schedules

Report back to the class:

1. What was your record?

2. What DAN does it go under?

3. What information are you missing?

6

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ASSESSING THE SITUATION

→ **Identify Office Contacts**

→ Make a Records Map

→ Preview the Records

- Leadership support

- Administrative assistants

- Office veterans with institutional knowledge

- Natural stakeholders

ASSESSING THE SITUATION

→ Identify
Office
Contacts

→ **Make a
Records
Map**

→ Preview the
Records

- Identify records storage areas

- Label each room or storage area, shelf or file cabinet

- Estimate amount of records/number of boxes

- Take notes on security

- Take notes on condition

ACTIVITY:
MAKING A
RECORDS MAP

How to Prepare for Records Disasters

Selecting Appropriate **Records Storage Areas**

Selecting Appropriate **Shelving for Records Storage**

ASSESSING THE SITUATION

Identify Office Contacts

Make a Records Map

Preview the Records

- 1-2 minutes on each box

- Check and _verify_ box and folder labels

- Look for subject/topic patterns (financials, HR, special project, etc.)

- Make an educated guess

- This will become the 1st draft of your inventory

Activity: Preview the Records

Briefly describe the records in the example box:

1. What position/office?

2. General topics/functions?

3. General date range?

4. Variety? (All the same or mix?)

5. Amount? (Is it one box of many?)

6. Frequently used/requested?

November 3, 1976   November 4, 1976
October 5, 1976
September 28, 1976
MRC - Sept. 21, 1976   MRC - Sept. 16, 1976
September 8, 1976
MRC + County Board   September 1, 1976
August 23, 1976
July 21, 1976
MRC - July 14, 1976   July 7, 1976
July 30   June 17, 1976
MRC - June 9, 1976   June 3, 1976
June 1, 1976
April/May Program Directors' Reports
May 12, 1976   May 19, 1976
April 21, 1976   May 4, 1976
April 14, 1976
March 31, 1976   April 7, 1976
March 24, 1976   March 16, 1976
March 5, 1976
February 2, 1976 - MRC   February 3, 1976 - MRC
January 26, 1976 - MRC
January 22, 1976   January 20, 1976
January 6, 1976   January 14, 1976
RESOLUTIONS - 1976
December 22, 1975
October 29, 1975   November 12, 1975   November 4, 1975
October 2, 1975

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MAKING A WORK PLAN

→ **Categorize Records**

→ Prioritize Record Categories

Categorize records by department or work unit

- Pay attention to context

- Physically separate boxes if possible

- Note location and department or work unit on your inventory

MAKING A WORK PLAN

→ Categorize Records

→ **Prioritize Record Categories**

- Look for an easy win

  - Obvious, Simple, Familiar

  - Big chunks of the same type of record

- Heavily requested records

- Payables/ Receivables
- Recruitment
- Meeting Minutes/ Agenda Packets
- Ordinances/ Resolutions
- Work Orders
- Blank Forms/ Publications
- Legal Case Files

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Sorting, Arranging, & Organizing

→ **Make Actual Piles**

→ Weeding & Arranging,

→ Storage Strategy

→ Create Inventory

→ Label Boxes

- **Keep**: Hasn't met retention yet

- **Transfer**: Met retention, ARCHIVAL

- **Destroy**: Met retention, NON-ARCHIVAL

- **Unsure**: Taking too long or need more info to find the correct DAN
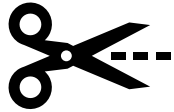
SORTING, ARRANGING, & ORGANIZING

→ Make Actual Piles

→ **Weeding & Arranging,**

→ Storage Strategy

→ Create Inventory

→ Label Boxes

Find a Balance: How much time, effort, or space will this save down the line?

- Organize to Destroy

- Organize to Access

- Leave As-Is

SORTING, ARRANGING, & ORGANIZING

✂---

→ Make Actual Piles

→ Weeding & Arranging,

→ Storage Strategy

→ Create Inventory

→ Label Boxes

1. Your accounts payable files contain packing slips but you know the auditor doesn't need them.

2. Your general accounting files are mixed with bond, grant, and levy files.

3. "Dave's Files – Do Not Destroy" (Forearm filed)

Sorting, Arranging, & Organizing

→ Make Actual Piles

→ Weeding & Arranging

→ **Storage Strategy**

→ Create Inventory

→ Label Boxes

Essential and Sensitive Records

Create a storage plan to optimize use of storage spaces for *security*, *preservation*, and *convenience*

- Restricted access?

- Climate controlled and/or protected from natural disaster?

- Proximity to records creators and users?

SORTING, ARRANGING, & ORGANIZING

→ Make Actual Piles

→ Weeding & Arranging

→ Storage Strategy

→ **Create Inventory**

→ Label Boxes

Location	Sub-Location	Brief Description	Inclusive Dates	Volume	Records Series Title	DAN	Retention Period	Transfer / Destroy Date	Archival?	Essential?	Action
Main File Room	Shelf A-6-1 to 5	Office supply receipts	2004-2012	5 boxes	Financial Transactions - General	GS 2011-184	6 yrs after EOFY	July 2018	N	N	D
Main File Room	Shelf A-5-1	Office supply receipts	2013	1 box	Financial Transactions - General	GS 2011-184	6 yrs after EOFY	July 2019	N	N	K

SORTING, ARRANGING, & ORGANIZING

- → Make Actual Piles
- → Weeding & Arranging
- → Storage Strategy
- → Create Inventory
- → **Label Boxes**

BOX LABEL						
AGENCY	Cascadia PUD					
DEPARTMENT	Accounting Department					
DAN	**TITLE/DESCRIPTION**		**DATE RANGE**	**TRANSFER/ DESTROY**	**ESSENTIAL**	**ARCHIVAL**
GS2011-184	Office Supply Receipts		2004-2012	Jul-18	No	No
LOCATION: Main Storage Room A-6-3					**BOX:** 3 OF 5	

Boxed by:
_____

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Understanding Retention Requirements

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Your Archivist Will Need…

Archival Appraisal & Transfer

Records Destruction

- A brief description of the records
- Disposition Authority Numbers & Titles
- Approximate volume and format
- Date range of the records
- Disclosure exemptions, if any

FINISHING UP

→ Archival Appraisal & Transfer

→ Records Destruction

Records Management Destruction Log
Please refer to your authorized Retention Schedules to complete this form. Instructions on Page 2.

Disposition Authority Number (DAN)	Records Series Title	Date/Date Range of Records	Eligible Destruction Date (As dictated by your retention schedule)	Description	Location
Ex: GS50-01-43	*Meetings –Staff and Internal Committees*	*2019*	*2021*	*Agenda Packets (paper), meeting minutes (electronic)*	*Office 245: (S:) drive*

Method of Destruction:
- ☐ Shred paper records yourself, in your department/unit
- ☐ Utilize locked bins for paper shredding through vendor
- ☐ Dispose of electronic records only
- ☐ Other:_ _____

Volume to be Destroyed:
Number of files: _____

Number of Boxes: _____

Electronic (KB, MB, GB, TB): _____

Name of Agency/Department:

_____

Date of Destruction: _____

Signatures of Approving Officials:

_____

Department Records Management Coordinator

_____

Supervisor/Director/Records Officer (RO)

_____

Shredding Vendor (if applicable)

For Official Use Only *(must complete before destruction) :*

Date Recv'd for Review: _____

Date Approved: _____

FINISHING UP

Destroy Records in Compliance with [Chapter 434-640 WAC: Methods of Records Disposal](#)

Choosing a Destruction Method:

- Shredding or Recycling?

- Vendor or In-House?

*DO NOT DESTROY RECORDS VIA BURNING.

→ Archival Appraisal & Transfer

→ Records Destruction

Moving Forward

Now that you've mastered the art of organizing the **paper** file room, it's time to think about tackling the **digital** file room.

How to Do a Bulk Email Clean-Up Project

- Phase 1 - Sampling Analysis

- Phase 2 - Search and Destroy Method

- Phase 3 - Meat Cleaver Method

WASHINGTON STATE ARCHIVES

THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU WITH FREE CONSULTATION, TRAINING, & ADVICE.

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