



283 FW 2 *Disposition Schedules*

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2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter provides the Service's Comprehensive Records Disposition Schedule (records schedule) and information about how to use it.

2.2 What is the policy? We must include all records in our custody, regardless of their physical form and character, in our approved records schedule within 1 year of creating or acquiring them.

2.3 What is a records schedule? A records schedule categorizes our records and lists the length of time we are required to keep them. It helps employees to organize their files and retain and dispose of records appropriately.

2.4 Are there different types of disposition schedules? Yes, there are two types of schedules:

A. Service Comprehensive Records Disposition Schedule (records schedule).

This schedule is:

- (1) Available as [Appendix 1](#) to this chapter,
- (2) The primary schedule employees should use, taking precedence over the General Records Schedule (see section 2.4B below),
- (3) Approved by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and
- (4) A list of our primary records categories and their required retention periods.

B. The [General Records Schedule \(GRS\)](#). Employees should only use this schedule when they cannot find a record category in our records schedule. The GRS is NARA's listing of records common to most agencies and includes their approved retention periods.

2.5 How do Service employees use our records schedule? Employees use the schedule:

- A. To maintain those records they consider permanent,
- B. As a guide to structure filing systems (using the designated categories), and
- C. To save space (by eliminating or transferring temporary records we no longer use to a Federal records center).

2.6 What procedures do Service employees follow for organizing and retaining records? Employees must:

- A. Review their records periodically to determine which ones are eligible for disposal or transfer.

B. Consult the records schedule before disposing of records. Compliance with the records schedule is mandatory. For information about the unlawful removal or destruction of records and associated criminal penalties, employees should consult [44 U.S.C. 3106](#) and [36 CFR 1228](#).

C. Break files into sets (in accordance with the records schedule) to ensure ease of transfer to a Federal records center.

D. Prepare the necessary paperwork for review and signature by the Records Officer or a Regional Records Coordinator before transferring records. For detailed instructions about records disposition see [283 FW 3](#).

2.7 How do employees dispose of records? Records disposition includes:

A. Transferring records to a Federal records center,

B. Transferring permanent records to the NARA,

C. Disposing of temporary records, and

D. Occasionally, donating Government records.

2.8 May the Service modify the records schedule? Yes, we may modify the records schedule at any time in accordance with [36 CFR 1228](#). We encourage Service program offices to review the records schedule to see if it meets their needs.

A. A program office should suggest changes to the Service Records Officer when:

(1) New record categories are needed.

(2) Existing record categories are no longer used.

(3) Permanent record categories can be changed to temporary.

(4) Temporary record categories either require longer retention periods or require permanent status.

(5) The existing paper records status has changed to an electronic format that altered the content of those records.

(6) Program changes assign responsibility for new records to the Service, or transfer the responsibility for existing records to another agency.

(7) The schedule no longer adequately describes existing program record holdings.

B. When we form a new or dissolve an existing office, the program office should contact the Records Officer to suggest changes. The Records Officer will review the request and submit a "[Request for Records Disposition Authority](#)" (SF-115) to NARA. After NARA approves the request, it will supersede any existing guidance for records associated with the program office.

2.9 What is the [Standard Form 115 \(SF-115\)](#)? The SF-115 is the "Request for Records Disposition Authority." We complete it to add, remove, or revise a record category.

For information on the specific content of this chapter, contact the Service Records Officer. For information about this Web site, contact Krista Holloway in the Division of Policy and Directives Management at Krista.Holloway@fws.gov.

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