

PROGRAM RETENTION SCHEDULES

If the general records retention schedules do not meet the needs of a particular official or agency then customized and individualized schedules are recommended. Development of these schedules is described on this website. The records officer or records manager for each agency or political subdivision should be able to assist officials or agencies in developing customized schedules.

The Records Management Division of the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records is also a source of assistance when developing customized records retention and disposition schedules. The Records Management Division has Records Management Analysts on staff to assist with the development of schedules.

FOLLOWING RETENTION SCHEDULES

Whether the general schedules are used or program schedules developed, the retention periods for the records series should be followed carefully and faithfully. The retention schedules comprise an approved routine records program so long as they are followed.

There is no danger of being accused of destroying documentary evidence if the schedules are followed carefully and not selectively. Records must never be destroyed for the purpose of eliminating potentially damaging evidence. On the other hand, the courts have recognized that records destroyed in the course of normal business and through a documented records retention program are legitimately not available if requested past their scheduled destruction date.

Approved schedules DO NOT pre-empt good judgment. Records required for legal or audit purposes beyond the recommended retention must be maintained until cleared by the appropriate authority before destruction.

Records subpoenaed or otherwise required by the court, pertinent to current or pending litigation or currently subject to audit should not be destroyed even if the approved schedule indicates they could be.

Similarly, if you believe records should be kept beyond their retention period because they have historical or archival value, contact Records Management Division to request an extension.

