

This guidance memorandum is to be used as a template for creating an ORGANIZATIONAL SOP. Changes will need to be made to fit your organization's specific mission.

A special thanks goes out to the Civilian Human Resources Agency for putting forth the effort in creating this SOP and providing a copy to U.S. Records Management and Declassification Agency for redistribution.

**Department of the Army
XXXXXXXXXX
YOUR ORGANIZATION (YRORG)
123 Any Avenue
A City, ST 12345
DATE**

YRORG Guidance Memorandum

**Information Management
Records Management Program**

1. Purpose.

a. This guidance memorandum (GM) provides policy for the administration of the YRORG Records Management Program to ensure that permanently valuable information is preserved and all other record information is retained, reviewed, and disposed of systematically and serves as the YRORG ARIMS record keeping standard operating procedure.

b. Records created and accumulated, including all forms of media and electronic records will be maintained in accordance with the Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS) as required by Army Regulation (AR) 25-400-2. ARIMS provides procedures for the systematic identification, maintenance, retirement, and destruction of Army information. It provides for establishment and operation of records holding areas (RHAs), and furnishes the legal authority for destruction of nonpermanent Army records by organizational elements.

2. References. References are listed in Appendix A.

3. Background:

a. The mission of records management is to create, maintain, and preserve information as records that document the role and activities of YRORG and its subordinate organizations in the conduct of their assigned missions. YRORG must capture, preserve, and make available evidence essential for Army decisions and actions; meets the needs of the American public; and that protects the rights and interests of the government and individuals. This program is to operate in accordance with applicable laws and regulatory guidance.

b. Records management functions include the development of plans, policies, and procedures to ensure Army-wide compliance with the laws, regulations, and policies governing

recordkeeping. Planning efforts should concern the controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and all other activities involved with respect to records creation, retention, use, and proper disposal of Army records.

4. YRORG Records Management Responsibilities

a. YRORG is responsible for ensuring the creation and preservation of official records throughout its subordinate units and activities. In executing the mission, objectives, and associated programs of records management, the YRORG HQ Secretary Director's Staff (SDS) will provide oversight of the program. YRORG Forward, Regions, and CPACs will execute the YRORG Records Management Program. All subordinate units' records management programs are subject to YRORG announced and unannounced Office Inspection Plan (OIP) inspections.

b. The YRORG Director will appoint in writing a records management Records Administrator/Records Manager (RA/RM) (the Secretary Director's Staff [SDS] position) who will work directly for the Director and facilitate the YRORG Records Management Program, providing RM support to HQ and RA oversight to the Regions/Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers (CPAC). The YRORG SDS will serve as the principal focal point in YRORG for records management matters. The RA/RM will coordinate with the RM assigned within the Regions to carry out the responsibilities of this official duty. The SDS will:

(1) Be dual-hatted as RA/RM for YRORG HQ, providing RM support to HQ personnel and RA oversight to the Regions/CPACs. Provide oversight of YRORG's collection of information and control of paperwork, information dissemination, statistical data, policies and coordination, and records management.

(2) Establish procedures and assign responsibility for records management, and ensure availability of training for records management personnel.

(3) Provide guidance and clarification necessary to carry out the provisions of the Armywide Records Management Program for key management controls for conducting program evaluations at least once every 3 years and for evaluation guidance and procedures. As HQ RA/RM, will conduct such program evaluation and staff assistance visits (SAV). See Appendix B for SAV information.

(4) Provide technical oversight to YRORG's Records Management Program by providing the tools and technologies to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements. The focus is on those policies, processes, and organizational responsibilities necessary to accomplish the primary records management tasks in governing legislation and other guidance.

(5) Advise the Director concerning the destruction of records in legal custody in an Army repository outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) during a state of war between the United States and another nation or when hostile action (by a foreign power, terrorist agents or public demonstrators) seems imminent.

(6) Maintain liaison and coordinate records transfer, retirement, and retrieval with Department of the Army (DA) RHAs, Federal Records Centers (FRCs), and local National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) offices.

(7) Provide advice and assistance to security managers in developing and executing a program to reduce classified records holdings to the absolute minimum required.

(8) Advise staff and system development personnel on the integration of records management functions at the concept development stage and coordinate at each milestone. Ensure that records management requirements are documented and included in systems acquisition as appropriate. Keep abreast of and/or implement new information technology (IT) for access, storage, retrieval, and disposition of information. Ensure records management factors are considered for all command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I)/IT acquisitions.

c. Each Region Director will:

(1) Appoint in writing a RM and provide a copy of the appointment orders to the SDS. Appointment Orders are an official/ininspectable item and must be available to the RA upon request.

(2) Appoint in writing a Records Coordinator (RC) for each CPAC and provide a copy of the appointment orders to the SDS. A copy of the appointment order will be maintained by the Region's RM.

c. The RM will:

(1) Ensure adherence to the policies, procedures, and standards set forth in AR 25-400-2 and other appropriate guidance.

(2) Manage the records management program.

(3) Appraise the HQ or Region level records management program at least once every 3 years and ensure that necessary corrective action is taken.

(4) Manage and provide staff direction for the operation of the RHA, unless the RHA is controlled by the Installation Management Command or other command at the Region location. Serve as liaison between RHA and agency.

(5) Ensure records are properly arranged and packed prior to movement into the RHA or to a records center, as appropriate. Maintain liaison and coordinate records transfer, retirement, and retrieval with the installation RHA, FRCs, and local NARA offices.

(6) Ensure that records management factors are considered for all IT/C4I acquisitions.

(7) Ensure availability of training for records management personnel.

(8) Provide advice and assistance to security managers in developing and executing a program to reduce classified records holdings to the absolute minimum required.

(9) Provide technical assistance to VI RMs as required.

(10) Approve office record lists (ORL) submitted by record coordinators/action officers within their organization.

d. The RC will be designated at sub-elements as necessary for program execution and will:

(1) Maintain continuous custody of permanent or unscheduled VI records prior to their retirement. Prevent the accidental or deliberate alteration or erasure of VI records.

(2) Assist the RMs with records retention schedules, policies procedures, and manuals for records management, records imaging, vital records protection, preservation, and disaster preparedness.

(3) With action officers (AO), develop ORL for their agency level.

(4) With AO, coordinate retirement of 6+ (T, transfer) records to the RHA.

(5) Serve as the subject matter expert for the agency level's records, both hardcopy and electronic records. Provide consultation to the staff and ensure the implementation of recordkeeping procedures at the agency's level comply with Federal regulations and guidelines.

(6) Ensure records are properly arranged and packed prior to movement into the RHA or to a records center, as appropriate. Maintain liaison and coordinate records transfer, retirement, and retrieval with the installation RHA, FRCs, and local NARA offices. Resolve indexing problems with the RHA.

e. AOs are any individuals who create official records on behalf of the Army at all agency levels. ARIMS AOs will:

(1) Use this regulation and AR 25-400-2 to help determine if a hardcopy or electronic document/email is an official record.

(2) Register in ARIMS and maintain an active account.

(2) Create an ORL annually to be maintained for each office symbol within agency level.

(3) Create hardcopy and electronic folders in ARIMS to print labels and use the Bulk Archive Tool (BAT) respectively.

(4)

(5) Use the BAT to place the ARIMS electronic folder structure onto their share drive/share point, and submit 6+ (T, transfer) and permanent electronic records to the Army Electronic Archive (AEA)

(6) Ensure long term and permanent records are properly arranged and packed prior to movement into the RHA or to a records center, as appropriate.

(7) Ensure that all records go through the lifecycle management process from initial creation of the record to its final disposition.

5. YRORG Records Management subprograms are delegated as follows:

a. YRORG HQ Resource Management Division will execute Official Mail and Distribution, along with Army Addresses. They will also execute and coordinate with all staff elements Office Symbols, Abbreviations, Brevity Codes, and Acronyms.

b. YRORG HQ Resource Management Division will execute Freedom of Information,/Privacy Act Program, Vital Records Program, and Management Information Control Program.

c. YRORG HQ SDS will execute the ARIMS Program for HQ and subordinate agency activities.

d. The Agency Historian will be responsible for identifying and preserving critical documents and digital data of historical significance of YRORG responsibilities, policies, and mission.

6. What is a record?

a. A record is the product of data compilation, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the United States Government under Federal law in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved, or are appropriate for preservation by DA as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of DA, or because of the informational value of the data in them. Records include the following:

(1) All documents, books, papers, maps, photographs, and graphic art.

(2) Machine readable items such as hard disks, magnetic tapes, punched cards, floppy disks, printouts, aperture cards, roll microfilm, microfiche, laser disk, optical disks, optical cards, other optical recording media, databases, and also includes electronic mail that shows time, date, sender, and addressees.

(3) Film slides, overhead transparencies, and motion picture films.

(4) Audio and video recordings.

(5) Any other documentary materials regardless of physical form or characteristics.

b. The following are **not** included within the statutory definition of the word **record** (AR 25-55, para 1-402):

(1) Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience or reference, and stocks of publications and processed documents. Extra copies of such materials should be kept to a minimum.

(2) Objects or articles such as structures, furniture, paintings, sculptures, three-dimensional models, vehicles, and equipment, whatever their historical value or value as evidence.

(3) Commercially exploitable resources, including but not limited to:

(a) Maps, charts, map compilation manuscripts, map research materials and data if not created or used as primary sources of information about organizations, policies, functions, decisions, or procedures of DA.

(b) Computer software, if not created or used as primary sources of information about organizations, policies, functions, decisions, or procedures of DA. This does not include the underlying data processed and produced by such software, and which may in some instances be stored with the software.

(4) Unaltered publications and processed documents, such as regulations, manuals, maps, charts, and related geographical materials, which are available to the public through an established distribution system, with or without charges.

(5) Intangible information, such as an individual's memory or oral communication.

(6) Personal records of an individual not subject to agency creation or retention requirements, created and maintained primarily for the convenience of an agency employee, and not distributed to other agency employees for their official use.

(7) Information stored within a computer for which there is no existing computer software program to extract the information or a printout of the information.

7. Vital records.

a. There are two types of vital records:

(1) Emergency operating records. These are records essential to the continued functioning of the agency before, during, and after a national security emergency or under emergency or disaster conditions. They include mobilization plans and policies for emergency preparedness, contingency planning, assessing damage, and implementing disaster recovery procedures.

(2) Rights and interests records. These are records essential to the preservation of the legal and financial rights and interests of individuals including retirement records, finance and accounting records, medical records, payroll records, personnel action records, and records related to contracts.

b. Vital records will be handled in accordance with the YRORG Continuity of Operations Plan.

8. VI records management.

a. Original Army multimedia/VI productions and products with their associated administrative documentation are controlled as official records throughout their life cycle and disposed of per General Records Schedule 21, AR 25-1, this regulation, and DA Pamphlet 25-91.

b. For contractor-produced VI records, the contract will specify the Army's legal title and control of all such VI media and related documentation.

c. Because of their extreme vulnerability to damage, VI records will be handled in accordance with commonly accepted industry practices. For further information, consult the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Inc., at <http://www.ansi.org> or the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) at <http://www.smpte.org/home> .

9. Application of ARIMS.

a. ARIMS applies to:

(1) All unclassified Army record information, including For Official Use Only (FOUO), regardless of format or medium (paper, electronic, microfilm, etc.).

(2) All classified Army record information through SECRET. Records that are TOP SECRET may be set up under ARIMS or in any other manner that will make accountability and control easier. Regardless of the arrangement used, however, the disposition instructions in the ARIMS Army Consolidation Records Schedule (ACRS) will be applied to TOP SECRET records. The security classification of a record does not change its retention value.

b. ARIMS does not apply to items that are not considered records (see para 6b above).

10. Record instructions. Records are identified by record instructions, which include the following components:

a. Record number (RN). RNs are created as indicated in paragraph 11 below.

b. Title. The title is assigned based on the record contents.

c. Authority number. This is the number NARA assigns to the records schedule using a Standard Form (SF) 115, which approves the disposition for the record.

d. Privacy Act (PA) number. If the records are being filed under a PA system notice, this is the number of that notice.

e. Description. The description identifies the specific type of record authorized for filing under a specific RN.

f. Disposition. The disposition contains the instructions for the actions taken with non-current records. It provides instructions on when to destroy, delete, or otherwise dispose of short-term records; when and where to retire, destroy, delete, or otherwise dispose of temporary long-term records; and when and how to transfer permanent records to NARA.

11. Record numbers.

a. Under ARIMS, records are identified according to the primary directive that prescribes those records be created, maintained, and used. For the most part, RNs are based on an Army regulation number; however, in the absence of an AR, the number may be based on a DA pamphlet, engineering regulation, or some other directive. If no directive can be pinpointed, the number is based on the functional category number under which the program falls (for example, 25 for information management, 40 for medical, and so on). In DA Pamphlet 25-403, table 1-1 lists the prescribing

directive functional categories and figure 1-1 shows the relationship between file numbers and prescribing directives. Only RNs listed in the ARIMS ACRS crosswalk are authorized for use.

b. An alphabetic or alphanumeric suffix is added to the prescribing directive number to distinguish several records prescribed by a single directive and to separate between differing agency/office responsibility levels when more than one disposition instruction is needed for the same record title.

c. Deviations from the above principle for creating RNs:

(1) General correspondence files. Each functional category contains an RN for general correspondence files; the RN is the functional category number. These RNs should not be used as a catchall place to dump records, as this could result in some records being destroyed prematurely.

(2) Office administrative housekeeping files. Housekeeping records use a 1 and an alpha character(s) as their numbers. Housekeeping records relate to the day-to-day administration of an office and personnel. They do not relate to the office's actual mission.

11. Disposition codes. Under ARIMS, all records are categorized as 0-6, 6+, or permanent files unless they are identified as unscheduled (U). 0-6 records are kept within the current files area (CFA); 6+ are transferred to the RHA or AEA no later than 7 years after cutoff, and permanent records are transferred to the RHA, AEA, or FRC. Disposition standards for each disposition code are summarized in AR 25-400-2, table 7-1. The categories are further defined below:

a. 0-6 (short term) records. Short-term are temporary records that have no value beyond the business process and can have retention periods from 1 day up to and including 6 years. Normally, all 0-6 records are kept and destroyed within the CFA.

b. 6+ (long term) records. Long-term are records with retention periods over 6 years and up through permanent. They have a value beyond the business need, such as for legal, historical, research, or lessons learned purposes. Long term records are transferred to an Army RHA or the ARIMS AEA when no longer needed for business purposes, where they are destroyed at the end of their retention period, transferred to an FRC (if applicable), or transferred to The National Archives if they are permanent.

c. U records. U records have never been formally appraised by NARA, which means they do not have an approved disposition. U records are maintained in the CFA until an approved disposition is received and the record category is changed to a 0-6 or 6+, as appropriate.

12. Office records lists (ORLs).

a. ORLs are lists of record series/subseries/duration used within a specific office. ORL format is shown in AR 25-400-2, table 5-1.

b. In accordance with AR 25-400-2, all ORLs will be prepared using Records Management Assistance (RM-Assist) within ARIMS. RM-Assist is linked to the ARIMS ACRS for ease in searching and selecting applicable record titles to populate an ORL with that information automatically.

13. Labeling.

a. Folders, binders, and containers used to store official records will be labeled.

b. File labels may be generated using RM–Assist (if there is an approved ORL on file), by typewriter, or individual personal computer. File labels for 0-6 records may be handwritten, using pens or markers, but they must be legible. At the same time the file label is printed for 6+ records, RM–Assist also prints a barcode label, which will be used for indexing and tracking the records once they are transferred to the RHA.

c. See DA Pamphlet 25-403, paragraph 3-8, for labeling requirements and sample labels.

14. ARIMS Online

a. Background.

(1) ARIMS is provided by the US Army Records Management and Declassification Agency (RMDA) at <https://www.arims.army.mil/>. Its primary purpose is to provide authorized Army personnel with Web-based tools and technology to manage both hardcopy and electronic Army records. For more information, the ARIMS Web-Based Training Module, User’s Guide, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and the Quick Reference Guides can be accessed from the site.

(2) Portions of ARIMS are available to the general public. You do not have to be a registered user to search, sort, and/or view information in the ACRS; submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for Army records; read the FAQ on the Help/Downloads page; or use the Online Help Desk to submit a query or search the ARIMS Online Knowledge Base.

(3) Many ARIMS functions require users to be registered. Registrants with valid Army Knowledge Online (AKO) accounts not requiring sponsorship (Active Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, and DA Civilians) are processed instantly. Others who create, maintain, use, and/or manage Army records (Army contractors, Local Nationals, members of other military services, etc.) can be granted access to ARIMS by submitting the AKO e-mail address of a valid ARIMS sponsor.

b. Components.

(1) Search. The Records Retention Schedules reflect all NARA approved retention and disposition information for Army records. The quick reference and detailed crosswalks allow users to legacy record numbers with new ACRS category, sub-category, and retention period. Use the ‘Search for Records’ to search the Master Index for records stored in the AEA or at an Army RHA and to request access to records belonging to other Army activities and organizations.

(2) ORLs and Folders. The ORLs module allows you to create, update, rename, copy, and view ORLs for the offices/units you are authorized to access. The Folders module allows users to create, list, and delete hardcopy and electronic folders created in ARIMS.

(3) Upload. Use this page to deploy the BAT. The BAT can be used to upload multiple documents or emails into the ARIMS Army Electronic Archive.

(4) Manage. Use 'Manage Hardcopy' to generate a SF-135 Transmittal and Receipt of Hardcopy Records when transferring hardcopy records to a RHA. Use 'Records Request' to request access to electronic records in the AEA that require approval.

15. Preparing Records for Transfer or Retirement.

a. RMs or designated RCs will organize, pack, receipt, and send records to their installation RHAs for retention or forwarding to a FRC. They will prepare receipts using the SF 135 (records Transmittal and Receipt) or equivalent, or the ARIMS 'Manage Hardcopy' module and sign these documents as liaison officials. The originating office remains the legal custodian of the records even when records are retired to an FRC and will be required to provide the necessary documentation for locating and retrieving the records. The originating office or unit remains the legal custodian of the records even when records are retired to an FRC and will provide input or review of these receipts when requested to enable retrieval of these records if needed at a future date. For example, if the originating office receives a FOIA request for records that were transferred or retired, that office is responsible for locating the records and retrieving them for review.

b. The SF 135 is the transmittal and tracking document for records sent out of the office files area. It accompanies records until they are destroyed or sent to the National Archives. The SF 135 may be used to send records that will be destroyed at the RHA; it must be used for records that will be transferred to the FRC.

16. Steps for Transfer to RHA. As per AR 25-400-2, Chapter 7, Section 7-1 (Dispositions Standards), K (Keep) records, which are now 0-6 year records, will be maintained at the office level that owns those records for a maximum of 6 years once the records are inactive and no longer needed for business. If a space for retention issue exists, the records may be forwarded to the RHA using the appropriate procedures and guidelines. T (Transfer) records, which are now 6+ or Permanent records, will be brought to the RHA at one year intervals.

a. Determine what files to turn-in. These are files with a retention period of 6 years or more. Normal procedures are to hold these files in the current files area until no longer needed for business and then turn them into the RHA. Ensure the file folders are properly labeled. The RM can/will assist in this process.

b. Get proper box as listed in AR 25-400-2, paragraph 9-13b.

c. Place the files for shipment in the boxes in numerical/alphabetical order starting with box one and continue through the shipment. Ensure files are facing towards the front of the box. Do not seal the boxes, just inter-flap the top. Place your box numbers in the upper right corner of the end of the box (i.e., 1 of 1, 1 of 10, 4 of 10, etc. The first number is the box number and the second number is the total number of boxes in your shipment.).

d. Prepare SF 135. This form is available via the ARIMS website. Include and attach an inventory list of each folder inside each box. Once the box is fully packed, provide to the RHA. If mailing to the RHA, files containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will be shipped Certified and Return Receipt.

17 Point of contact for this GM is the YRORG HQ SDS at usarmy.apg.YRORG.mbx.hq-dir@mail.mil.

JOHN A. SMITH
CDR/Director, YOUR ORGANIZATION

Appendix A, References

AR 25-1 Army Knowledge Management and Information Technology

AR 25-55 The Department of the Army Freedom of Information Act Program

AR 25-400-2 The Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)

AR 380-5 Department of the Army Information Security Program

YRORG Continuation of Operations Plan, Version 1, Date

DA Memo 25-51 Records Management Program

DA Pam 25-91 Visual Information Procedures

DA Pam 25-403 Guide to Recordkeeping in the Army

General Records Schedule 21 Audiovisual Records

SF 115 Request for Records Disposition Authority

SF 135 Records Transmittal and Receipt

Appendix B, Management Control Evaluation Checklist

B-1. Function. The function covered by this checklist is the administration of the YRORG Records Management Program.

B-2. Purpose. The purpose of this checklist is to assist the agency in evaluating the key management controls outlined below. The checklist is not intended to cover all controls.

B-3. Instructions. Answers must be based on the actual testing of management controls (such as document analysis, direct observation, sampling, simulation). Answers that indicate deficiencies must be explained and corrective action indicated in supporting documentation. These key management controls must be formally evaluated at least once every 3 years. Certification that this evaluation has been conducted must be accomplished on DA Form 11-2-R (Management Control Evaluation Certification Statement).

B-4. Test questions.

- a. Does the headquarters Records Administrator provide program direction to a network of records managers and records coordinators?
- b. Does the Records Administrator routinely communicate with all records managers?
- c. Are all employees informed of the identity and role of the records manager and the records coordinator serving their offices?
- d. Is the Records Administrator involved in the development of electronic recordkeeping systems, including procurement of computer equipment?
- e. Has the Records Administrator received training in Federal records management regulations, policies, and procedures?
- f. Do records managers, records coordinators, admin staff, file clerks, and others with regular records duties receive training on records maintenance, filing procedures, and records disposition?
- g. Does the Records Administrator, with the assistance of records managers and records coordinators, periodically evaluate records management practices and prepare written evaluation reports?
- h. Are evaluated offices required to respond to the evaluation reports promptly?
- i. Does the Records Administrator or records manager follow up to determine if offices implement necessary corrective action or recommendations for improvements?
- j. Has the agency provided guidance for all employees on the definition of Federal records and nonrecord materials, including those created using office automation, and the ways in which they must be managed?

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k. Does the agency provide to contractors the regulations and procedures governing Federal records and ensure contracts identify which contractor-created records are Federal records?

l. Do agency contracts involving development of electronic systems specify the delivery of systems documentation to the command along with the final product?

m. Is access to all records, regardless of media, limited to authorized personnel?

n. Are permanent series of records identified and maintained separately from temporary records?

o. Has the agency established and implemented regulations or procedures for the storage of classified, Privacy Act, and other restricted records?

p. Has each office designated official file locations (file stations)?

q. Is a file plan for each series of records maintained at each file station?

r. Does each office have procedures for filing, charging out, and refiling its records?

s. Has the agency identified its vital records (emergency operating records and legal and financial rights records)?

t. Does the agency periodically review its vital records plan and update it as necessary?

B-5. Comments. Help make this a better tool for evaluating management controls. Submit comments to Director, YRORG (ABCD-EF), usarmy.apg.YRORG.mbx.hq-dir.civ@mail.mil, 123-555-1234.