

Disposals

Objectives:

On completion, you will be able to:

- Define a disposal
- List out various kinds of disposals
- Describe the features of each kind of disposals
- Describe the contents to be noted on disposal jacket
- Define what is a premature disposal
- Describe the importance of an index slip

Why Disposing of files?

Any issue that arises in the office either with a letter or representation from public or with in the office needs to be settled. If it is not settled, it becomes a cause of dissatisfaction. Even the very purpose of establishing an office is to solve or settle issues. In the normal life also we would like to settle issues as early as possible so that we can be peaceful. Any pending issue causes inconvenience to us. Hence it is essential to dispose the files at the earliest possible opportunity.

What is a disposal?

The dictionary meaning of the word 'dispose' is:

- "to apply to a particular purpose".
- "to settle things"

The word 'disposal' is the noun form of dispose and it means:

- "the act of disposing" or "arrangement"

Disposal means settling things. In official parlance it is the act of settling the issues that arise in the office.

Types of Disposals

What do you understand by this? Why there should be many types of Disposals? There are various types of disposals. Each type is used for a specific purpose. Depending upon the nature of the case or issue the retention period of it is fixed. Based on the retention period there are various types of disposals. The various types of disposals that are used in an office are given below:

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|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. R. Disposal. | 2. D. Disposal. |
| 3. L. Disposal. | 4. K. Disposal. |
| 5. N. Disposal. | 6. F. Disposal. |
| 7. X. L. Disposal. | 8. X. N. Disposal. |

Let us now see the details like the retention period, purpose etc., of each of these disposals.

R. Disposal (R. Dis.): The letter “R” represents “Retention”. The full form is retention disposal. The file disposed or closed under this disposal is to be retained permanently. Files dealing with very important matters like lands, buildings, service matters etc., which are required for reference at any time are required to be disposed under this category. The intention is that the loss of it will effect the government unduly. However, presently this has been changed as 50 years. After 50 years, the State Archives department has to take up a review and if the file is still required to be microfilmed and retained.

D. Disposal (D. Dis.): The files disposed under D. Dis. are retained for a period of 10 years. People normally call it as a “Decade disposal”, because of its retention period. But, “D” refers to “Destroy” and D. Dis. is the “Destroy Disposal”. The word destroy refers to that it is to be destroyed after 10 years.

Similar to R.Dis., disposals under D.Dis. should also be reviewed at the end of retention period before it is finally destroyed.

L. Disposal (L. Dis.): “L” means, “Lodged”. The retention period of L. Dis. is one year. It will be destroyed after one year. Files, which do not require to be retained for longer periods such as leaves, increments, routine information etc., come under this category.

K. Disposal (K. Dis.): The above three are prescribed in the district office manual. This is not included among them. Later it was felt that in some departments depending upon the nature of its activity, there is need to retain files longer than one year and at the same time they need not be retained for 10 years. Government considering the position have agreed for having another disposal for the period above one year and below 10 years. “K” is being used in some departments for this disposal. Like “L”, “D”, “R” disposals the department does not give this name and there is no need to call it as “K” disposal.

Offices of heads of departments should list out their special records/registers including those created in their subordinate offices peculiar to the nature of work done by them. Based on the peculiar nature of work they can prescribe suitable periods of retention based upon their estimated period of utility for reference and get the special record retention schedules approved by the concerned administrative department of secretariat.

N. Disposal (N. Dis.): Like retention for R, destroy for D no indication is available for “N” Disposal i.e., the full form of N is not known. You may if you like call it a “Nil” disposal. In cases where the original is returned to the sender with an endorsement on the current received, we will not be having any papers with us. Such sending back the original is called “N. Disposal”.

F. Disposal (F. Dis.): “F” indicate “File”. It means that papers marked “F” are to be simply filed and no action needs to be taken on them. Papers marked “F” need not be registered. If marked “F.I.” they should be indexed.

X. L. Disposal (X. L. Dis.): “X” is an indication that the papers need not be registered. You know what is an “L. Dis.”. Adding X indicates that the paper need not be registered and only to be filed in the record room.

X. N. Disposal (X. N. Dis.): It is similar to X. L. Disposal. While in N. Disposal papers are registered and returned in original, in X. N. Disposal there is no need to register the papers excepting to return them.

Disposal Jackets

Earlier when the Maclean’s disposal system was in existence, a number used to be given to the disposal. In the Tottenham system there is no need to give a separate number when the file is disposed of. The current number given in the inward will continue for the disposal also. Only the letters “R, “D” etc., are to be prefixed to the disposals. The assistant enters the same in the last column of the personal register.

“R” and “D” disposals are put into brown paper “Disposal Jackets”. On the outside of the disposal jacket the following information be indicated:

Outside the disposal jacket

1. Disposal Number
2. Name of the department (marked boldly)
3. Name of the office
4. Number of current file pages

5. Number of Note file pages
6. Total pages in the disposal
7. Year of destruction (Whether requires to be reviewed before destruction)

The disposal number is indicated on the top. This is the original current number. Only the difference to be noted is that the number of the assistant i.e., A, B etc are to be removed and the current number and the year of it indicated. Instead of the assistant's number, the disposal nature i.e., "R" or "D" to be added before the current number.

The name of office and department to which the disposal belongs should also be indicated boldly on the outer cover sheet. The total current file pages and the note file pages and the total of them should be indicated. This helps that at a later date tampering with pages is not possible.

Whether it is D. Disposal or L. Disposal, it is to be retained for the specified period from the date of disposal. In both the cases it is to be decided while sending the disposal to the records whether a review is required or straight away it can be destroyed. On the outer docket itself it is to be mentioned whether the file required to be reviewed before destruction or straight away to be destroyed. However, the year of destruction to be indicated on the outer jacket.

Inside the disposal jacket

The very purpose of disposing the files and keeping them as records is to have precedents as and when a similar case arises in the future. It is very much necessary to keep track of the earlier and future references of such similar cases to help us. The inside of the disposal jacket should contain the information of the **previous disposals i.e., the back numbers** of the disposals and also the **future disposals**. Indication of the back and future disposals is called **chaining of disposals**.

Index Slips

The word index is discussed at various places starting from tappal stage. In many offices this is one of the most neglected area. Index Slip is a printed format. Whenever files are closed under D or R disposals the dealing assistant should fill up the index slip and send one copy of it to the fair copy section superintendent or the record assistant as the case may be.

INDEX SLIP

Disposal No.
Date of disposal
Current File P.Nos.
Note file P.Nos.
Total. P.Nos.

The practice is that whenever an indent for the disposal is sent, the record assistant keeps the index slip in place of the file and issues the record. Whenever the record is returned, the index slip is taken out and the record placed at its respective place.

All the index slips are consolidated and a year wise index of all records is prepared and circulated to all the staff in the office. The dealing assistant whenever he requires a disposal can go through it and indent for such disposal.

Premature Disposals

We are discussing all the time about disposals. What is this premature disposal? Did you ever come across such thing? The practice of closing a current merely because it has been pending a long time and opening a new current is most pernicious and is strictly prohibited. Closing a current like this is called "Premature disposal". You might have noticed in offices where a current is pending for a longer time, the assistant closes it and then opens a fresh file with a reminder either issued from the section or received from other office. Such irregular disposals falsify the statistics of pendency. They also make it impossible to watch for and enforce the submission of replies to references. This is only waste of time and such practices should be avoided.