

RECORD MANAGEMENT

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Activities involved in records Management

- Records management covers the activities concerning recording, retention, retrieval and weeding out of files.
- In pursuance of provisions of the Public Records Act, 1993 and Public Records Rule 1997, Department has to nominate Departmental Records Officer(DRO) who is not below the level of a Section Officer for overall management of records of the Department.
- Files should be recorded after action on all the issues considered thereon has been completed as per the record retention schedules.
- Files relating to casual leaves circulars of temporary nature may be destroyed after one year without being formally recorded.

Categorization of records

- There are three categorization of records i.e category A, B,C.
- **Category A:** Files which qualify for permanent preservation for administrative purpose and which have to be microfilmed because they contains:
- A document so precious that its original must be preserved intact and access to it in the original form must be restricted to the barest minimum to avoid its damage or loss.
- Material likely to be required for frequent reference.
- Files of historical importance.

- **Category B:** This category will cover the files required for permanent preservation for administrative purposes.
- **Category C :** This category files to be kept for a specific period only. This category will include files of secondary importance having reference value for a limited period not exceeding 10 years.

Procedure for recording

- After action on the issue(s) considered on the file has been completed, the dealing officer in consultation with his supervisory officer, should close and record the file in the following manner:
 - i) indicate the appropriate category of record and in the case of Category 'C' also specify the retention period and the year of review/weeding/ destruction on the file.
 - ii) Where necessary, revise the title of the file so that it describes adequately the contents at that stage.
 - iii) Get the files indexed(retention schedule) for Category 'A' & 'B' files.

- iv) Take extract from the file, copies of important decisions, documents, etc, as are considered useful for future reference and add them to the standing guard file /standing note/ precedent book.
- v) Remove from the file all routine slips, working sheets, rough drafts, surplus copies etc and destroy them.
- vi) Enter in the file number register for watching the progress of recording.
- vii) Write the word 'recorded" prominently in red ink, across the entries in the file numbering register.

- viii) complete all references and, in particular, mark previous and later references on the subject on the file covers.
- ix) Indicate the page numbers and other reference in ink.
- x) Prepare fresh file covers, where necessary, with all the entries already made thereon.
- xi) Hand over the file to the MTS who will repair the damage papers if any, stitch the file and, show it to the person entrusted with the responsibility by the section officer for making entries in the register.

Record retention schedule

The General Financial Rules 2017 issued guidelines for keeping the records of accounts section:

Sl. No.	Main Head	Sub-head	Retention period
1	Payment and recoveries	Expenditure sanction	2 years
		Cash Books maintained by DDO	10 years
		Contingent expenditure	3 years or 1 year after completion of Audit
		Arrear claims	3 years or 1 year after completion of Audit
		GPF Membership	1 year
		GPF Nomination	1 year after final settlements
		Adjustments of missing credits of GPF Accounts	1 year
		Part final withdrawal from GPF ie. For House building, education of children	1 year
		GPF annual statement	1year
		TA/Transfer TA claims	3 years or 1 year after completion of Audit

Sl. No.	Main Head	Sub-head	Retention period
2	Budget estimates/ Revised Budget estimates	--	3 years
3	Service Book of the :	--	3 years after issue of the final pension gratuity payment order
	a) officials entitled to retirement benefits / terminal benefits		
	b) Other employees	--	3 years after they have ceased to be n service
4	Leave Account of the :	--	3 years after issue of the final pension gratuity payment order
	a) officials entitled to retirement benefits / terminal benefits		
	b) Other employees	--	3 years after they have ceased to be n service
5	Service records	Nominations relating to family pension and DCR Gratuity	1 year after settlements of benefits.
		Civil list Gradation/ Seniority list:	3 years
		In case of Departments preparing and bringing out the compilation	
		In case of other Departments (i.e those supplying information for such compilation).	1year
		Alteration of Date of Birth	3 years
		Verification of Service	5 years

Sl. No.	Main Head	Sub-head	Retention period
6	Expenditure statement	In case of lower formations	To be weeded out at the end of the financial year
		In respect of Department, it self	To be weeded out after the appropriation accounts for the year have been finalized.
		Register of monthly expenditure (GFR-9)	To be weeded out after the appropriation accounts for the year have been finalized
7	Surety Bonds executed in favour of a temporary or a retiring Government servant	--	3 years after the Bond ceases to be enforceable.
8	a) Pay bill register	--	35 years
	a) Office copies o pay bill related schedules (in case pay bill register not maintained)	--	35 years
	a) Office copies o pay bill related schedules (in case pay bill register maintained)	--	3 years
	a) Acquittance Roll	--	3 years or 1 year after completion of Audit.
9	Bill register	--	5 years
10	Paid cheques returned by bank	--	5 years
11	Files, papers and documents relating to the contracts , agreements	--	5 years after the contract / agreement is fulfilled or terminated.
12	Sub-vouchers relating to the Secret Service Expenditure	--	3 years after expiry of the financial year in which the expenditure was incurred, subject to completion of Audit.

- The Department Of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances prescribed the Record Retention Scheduled in respect of records common to all Ministries/ Departments. The said guidelines are available in the DOP&T website
- In respect of records relating to establishment, housekeeping matters etc, common to all departments, follow the schedule of periods for retention of records issued by the Department Of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances.

Custody of records

- Recorded files are to be kept serially arranged in the sections for not more than three years, after which they are to be transferred to the departmental record room.
- In the event of transfer of work from one section to another, the relevant files also are transferred, after being listed in duplicate. One copy of this list will be retained by the section taking over the files for its record and the other acknowledged and returned to the section transferring them.
- Files transferred by a section to the departmental record room will be accompanied by a list of files in duplicate. The departmental record room officer will that all the files mentioned in the list have been received, retain one copy of the list and return the other, duly signed.

- The departmental record room will maintain a record review register.
- Record rooms will be properly ventilated, with adequate lighting and fire safety equipment and avoid exposure to moisture. The records will be arranged serially section-wise and will be regularly dusted. For the purpose of preservation, the records will be periodically fumigated.

Record keeper duties

- When a file is recorded, entry should be made in the file register and charge register. Every officer dealing with records should have a separate file for recording files. This will be a permanent current file for the officer.
- When recorded records are sent to the record room, a list in triplicate should be prepared. Triplicate will be the office copy on the file. The list should have following columns:
 - 1. Sl. No.
 - 2. File No.
 - 3. Subject
 - 4. Date of recording and classification
 - 5. Remarks
- The record keeper should receive the records, verify with list, acknowledge receipt on the duplicate list, sign in token of receipt indicating his name, designation and date.

On receipt of the duplicate copy of the list of files, officer who had sent the list to Record Keeper, may replace the triplicate copy of the list with acknowledged duplicate copy on his Record file.

- The record keeper should store files according to their classification.
- Record of each classification will be bundled and neatly tied in cloth.
- Different colored plain cloth for each classification of the file should be used.
- On top of the bundle, list of files in the bundle may be pasted and pinned to the bundle.
- In the record register details of each file will be entered and the place where the file kept will be indicated so that tracing a file or a register will not be difficult.
- The record keeper will assign number to racks and for each bundle space on the racks.

Review and weeding of records

- A category 'C' file will be reviewed on the expiry of the specified retention period and weeded out unless there are sufficient grounds warranting its further retention. Justification for retaining a file after review will be recorded on the file with the approval of branch head. Retention after a review will be for a period not exceeding 10 years including the period already retained.
- Beginning in January each year, the departmental record room will send to the section concerned the files due for review in that year.
- Files received for review will be examined by the Section Officer of the concerned and those files which are no longer required will be marked for destruction and other files may be marked for further retention.

- Files referred for destruction may be destroyed only after submission of the report by the Commission or completion of enquiry or implementation of the judgement/ order of the court(s) with the approval of the Joint Secretary/ Head of Department.
- The Departmental record room officer make a list of files which are going to be destruct and the same informed to the concerned section after destruction.
- A special drive may be launched annually to record / review all Category 'C' files and to weed out those no longer needed.
- Routine files/records will be manually torn into small pieces and disposed of.
- Classified files will be destroyed by use of shedder.

Requisitioning of records

- No records will be issued from record room except a signed requisition received from the section.
- The requisition will be kept in the place of the file issued to sections.
- Files obtained by a section from record room will normally be returned within 6 months
- The record room will maintain a simple register for keeping the record of the files issued to sections.
- On return, the requisitioned file will be restored to its place and the requisition returned to the section concerned

Record management in e-office module

- In e-file the facility of recording a file is given for the files on which processing is done physically. An electronic file on which action is complete is closed and kept in a separate folder(closed folder). This may be closed by the creator of the file after getting approval from the Competent Authority.
- The closed file may be seen by the official who has closed the file and official who as authorized the closure of the file. The closed file can be reopened by the official who has closed the file with the approval of the competent authority.
- In e Office the Record Management System is inbuilt with provisions for all aspects related to Record Management. The system would indicate the list of files that are due for review as per the categorisation of files at the time of recording by the creating section. It would also indicate the location of the files after review by the creating sections or if they are due for appraisal at th end of stipulated time period. It would also indicate the final disposal of e-files after appraisal they are to be transferred to National Archives of India are to be weeded out