

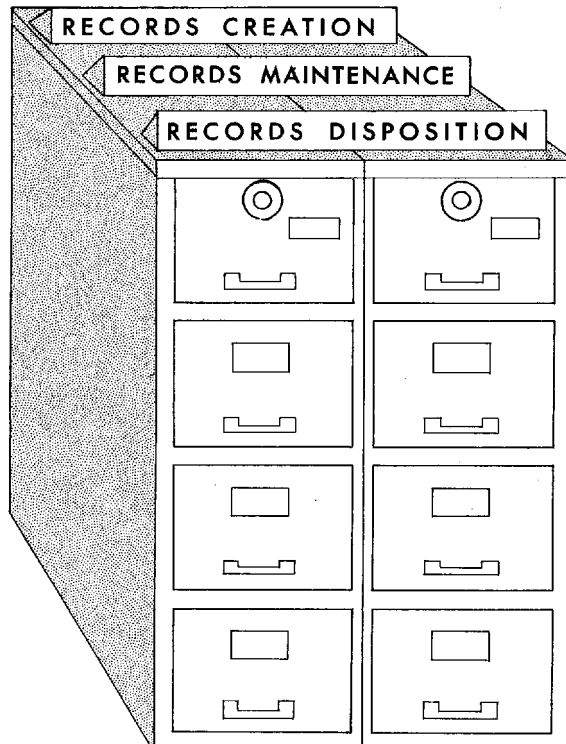
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# THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GUIDE

A BRIEF ON THE FUNCTIONAL  
AREAS OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT



GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE

RECORDS MANAGEMENT & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH

SEPTEMBER 1953

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**FOREWORD**

This pamphlet has been prepared in response to requests for a concise outline of the scope of the Agency Records Management Program. It is not intended that it serve as an operating handbook, but instead, is designed to provide information for the use of Area Records Officers in presenting the Program to operating officials and other area personnel. Accordingly, program objectives and the methods to accomplish them have been stated in broad terms.

The Guide is written functionally; therefore phases of the Program are not necessarily outlined in the order in which they will be undertaken. However, the Guide will familiarize Agency personnel with the areas to be covered and will provide the Area Records Officers with a basis for scheduling the various steps of the Program.

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SECTION I

AN INTRODUCTION TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records are defined by statute, and Federal agencies are required by law to establish and maintain an active and continuing Records Management Program. Authority to destroy records is obtained from the Congress through the National Archives and Records Service in accordance with its prescribed standards and procedures. In CIA, this authority is obtained by the Records Management and Distribution Branch, General Services Office.

Records Management is a specialized field of work and deals with problems and practices relating to the creation, maintenance, organization, and use of records in the conduct of current business, and in the preservation, elimination, transfer or other disposition of those records which are not currently required or are seldom used. Although the need for adequate management over the accumulation of records exists from the time they are created or received until their final disposition, it is recognized that it is not possible to have such management absolutely alike in all areas because of the differences in organizational structure and substantive functions.

The essential guides and sources of detailed information for implementing the Agency Records Management Program will be published in Agency Regulations, Notices and Handbooks developed in cooperation with operating and staff officials.

There are presented in the following sections definitions and a general outline providing the reader with an over-all picture of the functional areas of records management. These areas are: Creation of Records; Organization, Maintenance

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and Use of Records; Disposition of Records; and the Vital Materials Program.

SECTION II

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this guide, the following definitions apply:

Records include all books, papers, maps, photographs, films, recordings or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, made or received by any portion of the Agency in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved, or appropriate for preservation, by the Agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, personnel, decisions, procedures, financial or legal transactions, operations, or other activities, or because of the informational value of data contained therein.

Non-record material includes library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications or processed documents.

Forms are printed or reproduced documents with blank spaces provided for inserting specific information. Form letters are printed or reproduced letters to furnish information for repeated mailings or one mailing to numerous destinations. Form letters with or without blank spaces, except for actual intelligence information produced therein, are considered forms.

Reports are all requirements for written data, one time or recurring, established to provide administrative or management control of operations.

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Correspondence includes all memoranda, letters, and dispatches sent ~~to~~ or received by a person in the Agency in the execution of his official duties.

SECTION III

CREATION OF RECORDS

REPORTS MANAGEMENT

Objectives

1. Eliminate and prevent unnecessary or duplicate reporting.
2. Insure that instructions, forms, and procedures for necessary reports are clear and complete to provide simple and direct reporting methods.
3. Insure that required reports provide adequate data and that realistic reporting intervals are established.
4. Provide a central reference point for information on reports.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Conduct an initial reports inventory and establish reference and analysis files.
2. Establish controls for the clearance through the Area Records Officer of all proposed reporting requirements.
3. Review and analyze all new reporting requirements placed by the office upon other CIA elements and other Government agencies.

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4. Analyze all reports prepared by the office to insure that reports are prepared in the most efficient manner, and to develop recommendations for submission to requiring offices or agencies.
5. In view of changes in organization and requirements, conduct periodic surveys to insure the necessity for each existing report and the adequacy of Reports Management records.

**FORMS MANAGEMENT**

Objectives

1. Insure the need for each existing form and each proposed form.
2. Reduce the number of forms by consolidating those serving like functions, eliminating obsolete or ineffective forms, and using standard Government forms when appropriate.
3. Simplify, standardize, and improve essential forms according to Agency standards.
4. Insure that forms are reproduced, stocked, and distributed as economically as possible.
5. Insure that procedures for use with specific forms (or groups of forms) provide for maximum efficiency and utilization of personnel.
6. Provide a central reference point for information on forms.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Conduct an initial forms inventory and establish reference and analysis files.

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2. Establish controls for the clearance through the Area Records Officer of all proposed new and revised forms.
3. Review and analyze all requirements for forms and the procedures related to their use.
4. In view of changes in organization and requirements, conduct periodic surveys to insure the necessity for each existing form and the adequacy of Forms Management records.

CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT

Objectives

1. Simplify and speed up the preparation and handling of correspondence.
2. Improve the quality of correspondence and adequacy of documentation.
3. Enable faster training and increased utilization of personnel.
4. Create better public relations.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Conduct surveys to determine the types and volume of correspondence prepared.
2. Provide measures for the continuous review of correspondence practices.
3. Develop and maintain uniform correspondence procedural and style policies and practices.



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4. Develop and employ the use of pattern paragraphs, letter guides, and form letters.
5. Develop and maintain quality standards for improving letter content and letter writing aptitudes.
6. Review copy requirements to prevent the preparation of nonessential copies of communications.

SECTION IV

ORGANIZATION, MAINTENANCE AND USE OF RECORDS

MAIL CONTROL

Objectives

1. Provide for the prompt and systematic flow of correspondence from originators to action or information addressees.
2. Insure that action is accomplished within established time limits.
3. Provide receipt control for the exchange of classified matter, negotiable instruments, etc.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Conduct surveys to determine the types and volume of correspondence handled, production rates of machines and personnel, and the process steps affecting the flow of work.
2. Develop recommendations regarding the functional organization and staffing of the office, correspondence

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- processing steps and techniques, forms, and the utilization of labor saving equipment.
3. Install the revised system, train area personnel in its use, and conduct periodic follow-up to insure adequacy of the system.

REFERENCE SERVICE

Objectives

1. Locate file stations realistically and insure that the contents of files are adequate for the reference services required.

Method of Accomplishment

1. To determine the best locations for file stations, consider: The degree to which administrative responsibility or control is delegated; the possible elimination of duplicate files; the quality of filing standards desired; the accessibility of files to users; any restrictions on the use of classified material; and the flow of material to the files.
2. To provide adequate reference service, determine: The volume and kinds of papers filed; manner in which requests for file material are made; impact of work flow on files; trends indicative of future reference requirements; and the adequacy of personnel, supplies, forms, and equipment.
3. Develop recommendations, install the revised system, train area personnel in its use, and conduct periodic follow-up to insure its adequacy.

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**MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT**

Objectives

1. Develop a classification plan for the standardized filing of both general administrative material and records dealing with the operational activities of the office.
2. Develop filing standards for the orderly maintenance and preservation of current records.
3. Provide auxiliary records or indexes (filing media) to facilitate reference to primary records.
4. Develop specialized systems for records pertaining to the operational activities of the office.

Method of Accomplishment

1. To develop a classification plan:
  - a. Analyze the content of records to determine definitive subject categories (primary, secondary, tertiary, etc.).
  - b. Apply the Subject-Numeric System of the Agency Filing Manual to general administrative records, and develop such special systems necessary for filing records of operational activities, of the office.
2. To develop filing standards:
  - a. Determine what material on specific transactions or subjects are to be kept together, the arrangement of folders, and the methods of labeling folders, guides, and file drawers.

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- b. Install revised system, prepare written instructions, arrange for equipment and supplies, train area personnel, and conduct periodic follow-up to determine adequacy of system.
3. To provide adequate finding media:
  - a. Consider volume and complexity of records and the organizational structure of area served to determine type of index or guide needed.
  - b. Develop necessary forms and written instructions to implement the system, and procure equipment for its installation.
4. Analyze operational records to determine the extent that machine methods and other specialized forms of record keeping can be employed.

**EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES STANDARDS**

Objectives

1. Effect standardization of filing equipment and filing supplies.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Conduct surveys, provide guides, and establish control measures to insure that filing equipment and supplies conform to prescribed Agency standards.

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SECTION V

DISPOSITION OF RECORDS

Objectives

1. Provide for the economical and systematic disposition of Agency records including their preservation, retention, transfer, and disposal according to Federal statutes and regulations.
2. Release high cost office space and filing equipment no longer needed in the daily routine of business.

Method of Accomplishment

1. Prior to conducting a records disposition survey, obtain background information regarding the organizational structure of offices to be surveyed, their functions and missions, and the flow of work within and between offices concerned.
2. Plan the disposition survey, taking into consideration the availability of personnel, and the size and complexity of the organization. Determine in advance the basic records unit to be inventoried (i.e., whether each separate form, or a group of records serving the same purpose, will be reviewed), and specify the criteria to be used for describing each unit of record. Consider also the possibility of obtaining information of value for records management functions other than records disposition.
3. Conduct the inventory and record all pertinent information which will be needed to determine retention periods and the disposition of records.

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4. Evaluate records in terms of their immediate usefulness to the Agency for administrative, legal, fiscal, and other operating purposes. Clear recommendations with operating officials.
5. Develop records control schedules in the form of directives to provide for the disposition of record and non-record material by either permanent preservation, microfilming, destruction, or transfer to less expensive records storage in the CIA Records Center. Obtain approval of schedules from operating officials and the CIA Records Officer.
6. Maintain records control schedules up to date in view of changes in organization and requirements.
7. Conduct periodic follow-up to insure that records control schedules are adequate and that the disposition of records is being effected in accordance with schedules.

SECTION VI

VITAL MATERIALS PROGRAM

Objectives

1. Provide for the secure transfer, storage, and ultimate disposition of materials essential to the Agency on a continuing basis and which in the event of destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss.

Method of Accomplishment

1. In collaboration with the CIA Vital Materials Officer and operating officials:
  - a. Identify vital materials and determine their disposition.

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- b. Develop schedules for deposit and disposition.
- c. Initiate the transfer of vital materials to the repository.

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