



Record Management Handbook

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SCOPE

The University of Wisconsin is a public institution, which means all records created by a public employee, student, staff, or faculty, regardless of form or format, must be properly managed to ensure administrative records or records of historical value are kept according to State and Federal laws.

The purpose of the Handbook is to educate employees in the record management process to:

- Understand Wisconsin State law relating to records
- **Comply with record retention**
- Interpret a Record Schedule
- Understand the various formats that records come in
- **Manage the proper storage and handling of records**
- Learn the process for documenting and destroying records
- Learn the process for transferring records to the Archives
- **Identify your department Record Management Plan**
- Know who your Records Officer is

This training applies to all areas of the UW Green Bay community regardless of their location.

Included Sites in Records Management Requirement

- Green Bay Campus (Brown County)
- Manitowoc Campus (Manitowoc County)
- Marinette Campus (Marinette County)
- Sheboygan Campus (Sheboygan County)



RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND THE LAW

The State of Wisconsin Public Records Law requires that all public records shall be open to the public because people must be informed about the workings of their government. Therefore, every record here at the University is presumed to be available to the public per Statutory authority at [Wis. Stat. Sec. 16.61](#). This statute gives the State Public Record Board (PRB) authority to oversee how agencies store and dispose of records through Record Management.

Supporting the Wisconsin Statutes are UW System [Fundamental Activities of Record Management](#). Because all documents – or records – essentially belong to the public – every agency is required to have a Records Management program. Records Management is the official term for controlling all the documents we create AND STORE during the course of our daily work.

Further, [Wisconsin Executive Order #189](#) requires public records training for all employees and regular training for all supervisors, that our University requires every two years. Here at UW-Green Bay the Record Officer coordinates routine training for our campus.

Although most of us don't respond directly to a public record request, knowing what records are created within our department, where they are located, and understanding the retention requirements of each keeps the University in compliance with public records law.

Having administrative control of records throughout their life cycle ensures efficiency in the creation, use, handling, control, maintenance, and disposition. That's quite the list! That's why educating employees is an important step in ensuring the University remains in compliance with Public Records Law. In a nutshell, Records Management is understanding what constitutes a record, identifying how long we have to keep it through the approved Record Schedules, and how we manage and dispose of records.



It starts with you. Because we are state employees, our records are considered a state public record. We cannot discard any documents that may be deemed of administrative or historical value according. We consider these options through understanding the Records Management program here at UW-Bay. Records Management consists of two important functions:

- Record Retention
- Managing Records

We will discuss both of these elements throughout this Handbook.



GENERAL

Employee Responsibilities

In order to follow the state requirements laid out for us, all employees, paid or unpaid, volunteers, and students actively involved in University business have the following public record responsibilities:

- Recognize when you have a public record
- Understand what is not a public record
- Comply with record retention
- Manage records
- Complete records management training

Comply with Record Retention. Employees have a responsibility to follow the state approved Record Schedules that relate to records in and around your department. Many of us inherit records when we jump to new jobs. This means no purging old files unless you know the proper retention period for that record.

Manage Records. All employees have a responsibility to manage records that are created, duplicated, saved, or stored in the course of doing business for the University.

All employees must be aware of the requirements related to records management, AND regularly review departmental records and determine the proper method for removing such records, i.e. either transferring to the Archives or destruction.

Management Responsibilities

Supervisors and Managers have a secondary duty to ensure employees under your supervision are aware of record management requirements that include:

- Ensure staff have basic knowledge about records management through training
- Know program area business records and ensure they are managed according to an approved records schedule
- Safeguard confidential, sensitive, and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in a record
- Follow established business processes for Transfer Records to Archives and the Confidential Destruction Process
- Identify and transfer records prior to employee departures
- Have a method to identify legal holds that halt records disposition
- **Complete a Department Record Management Plan that identifies operational records and their location**
- **Identify a Records Custodian in your department and notify the Records Officer**



Definitions

Record: A document created, received, scanned, or copied by offices or employees that allows them to conduct University business. Records are not defined by their format and can be paper, electronic, cloud based, or media. Electronic records within a database system are defined as a single row of data within a database table or a PDF upload.

Database Software: a database or software system that houses – or creates records from a query – is the system for storing electronic records **IF** a record is contained within a database software. A record within a software system is not confined to a PDF upload.

Disposable Record: a record that does not meet the criteria of a record. These include duplicate records or convenience copies of correspondence, drafts of letters or reports, routing slips, or correspondence not related to your job duties.

Disposition: a specific method determined by a record schedule by which a record may be deleted, shred, or thrown away. A record disposition is only determined by the assigned record schedule.

Record Schedule: an assigned record schedule describes a record, the period of time it must be retained, and how it is to be disposed of. Record schedules are approved by the state Public Records Board and kept updated by the campus Records Officer. Employees must retain and dispose of records in accordance with a record schedule. Example, record schedule *UWADM001 Policies and Procedures* is a schedule within the *Administrative* series of schedules. Any records pertaining to policies and procedures are to be retained for the period noted and disposed of in the method noted.

Retention Period: a specific time period determined by a record schedule by which a record must be kept. The retention period is only determined by the assigned record schedule.

Inventory Management Worksheet: a document used to assess your department records. This form captures the type of records used by a department, the location of each record, the record schedule that matches the record, retention period, and the manner in which you will be able to safely dispose of a record. Entries on this worksheet are easily transferrable to the Confidential Disposal Form, should records be determined to be destroyed.

Confidential Destruction Process: a process initiated by the UWGB Records Officer (or designee) to coordinate the disposal of records that have passed their retention period and are approved for confidential destruction.

Confidential Disposal Form: a document used to report records that have passed their assigned retention period and are required to be confidentially destroyed per a record schedule. The CDF must be signed by a department supervisor and approved by the Records Officer.

Transfer to Archives: a document used to request records to be transferred to the Archives. Archives reviews all forms and coordinates with requestor for records transfer.

Records Management Plan: identified plan within each department or operational unit that documents the records created and used by employees within that unit, the associated record schedule, retention period and disposal method. Each RMP must also identify how records are stored.



What Defines a Record?

Most of us are familiar with what a record is. A more formal definition is:

A document created, received, scanned, or copied, by offices or employees that allows them to conduct University business. Records are not defined by their format and can be paper, electronic, cloud based, or media.

Whether you've just started in your position, or been at the University awhile, it's vital to be aware of all the records you are creating and handling.

An easy test: If a document helps you perform your job description or documents the history and/or administration of your office, it is probably a record and should be handled appropriately. This includes email and Teams messages!

Records come in a variety of forms:

Paper
Faxes
Copier prints
Diagrams
Notes
Reference Materials
Stock Copies (vendor catalogs, blank forms)

Electronic
Email
Computer Files
Database or Software Systems
Other Electronic Records:
SharePoint
Social Media Posts/Ads
CD
Flash Drive
Video

As most of our records are electronic, understanding the difference between an electronic record and what is within a database system becomes important.

Electronic records within a database system are defined as a single row of data within a database table or a PDF upload.

Database/Software System Records: A database or software system that houses records – or creates a document from a query – is the system for storing electronic records **IF** a record is contained within a database software. A record within a software system is not confined to a PDF upload.

PDF Uploads: documents scanned or saved as PDF to save on a shared file or upload to a Software System. To become the “original” in electronic form, the PDF must be clear, legible and easily located.



Email

Email is the electronic record created in the greatest quantity and used by the most people, but it is also one of the hardest formats to deal with from a records management perspective. Email retention is important as Microsoft Outlook retains emails as long as you have an open account, access it at least once a month, and do not exceed your storage limits.

- **Email Retention:** You essentially retain all of your emails for the duration of employment with the University. Note: the University's IT Department does not retain email records on a backup server. It is the responsibility of each individual to manage their email. **Remember, emails are records that need to be determined to be either a disposable record or matched with a record schedule for retention purposes AND you should review them annually.** You cannot arbitrarily just delete emails.

Determine the nature of the email content and determine if it is transitory or needs has relevant content that needs to be matched to a record schedule. The record schedule will determine how long the email needs to be retained.

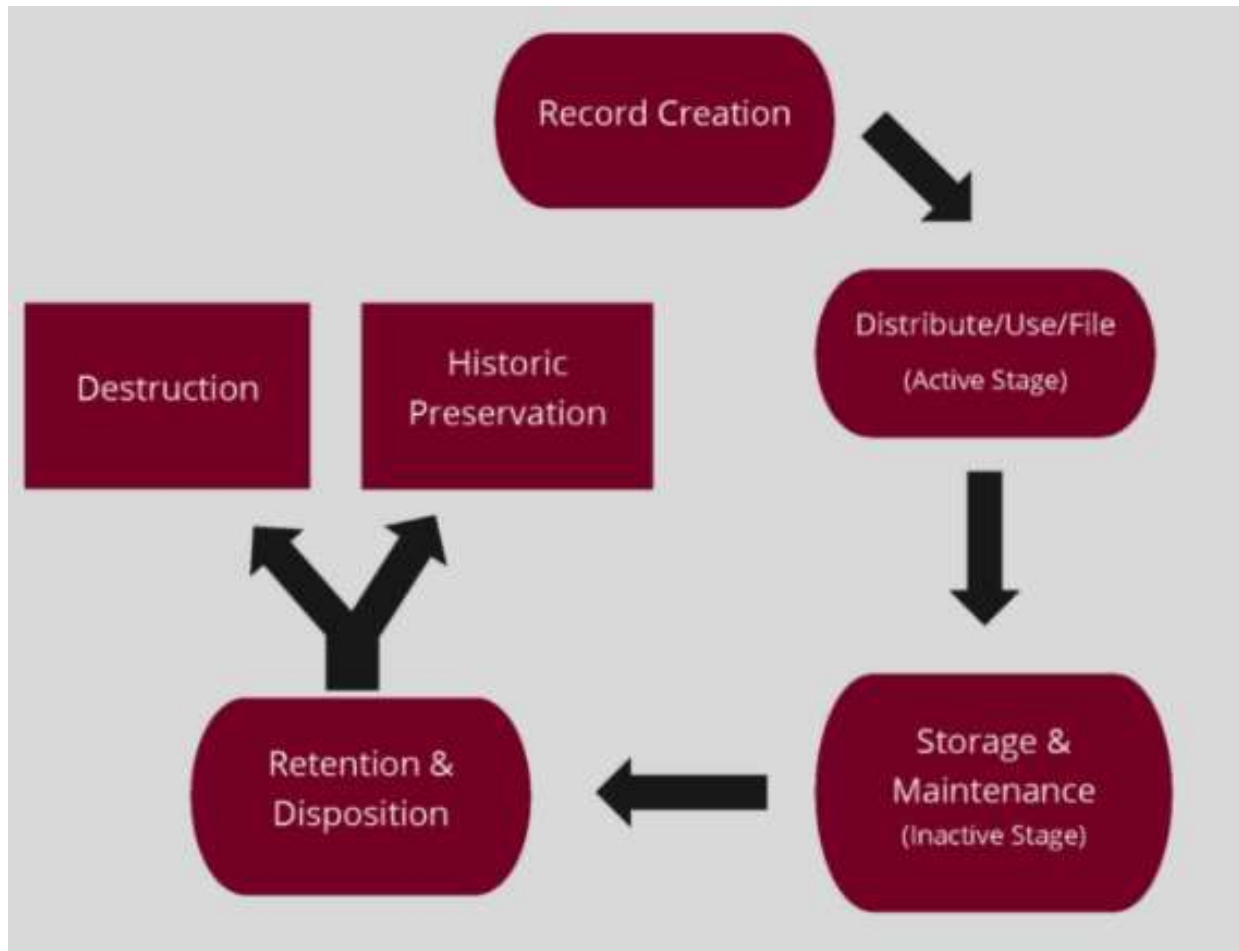
- **Printed Emails:** Once you've printed an electronic record – if you have the original stored on your computer or other shared drive – the paper version becomes a duplicate copy and can be disposed of immediately. As indicated earlier, the original email would need to be retained to determine content against a record schedule retention period.

Social Media

Social media integrates web technology, social interaction, and user-generated content. It typically features content that is shared, interactive, internet-based, personal, and informal. Social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies. Any posting on social media creates a record. . The State of Wisconsin Public Records Board webpage on [social media](#) tells us that information and posts typically NOT considered a public record are those that are access/reference copies, or duplicates of official records already being retained elsewhere.

Lifecycle of a Record

A records lifecycle describes the process by which a record is created, used, retained and disposed of. The UW System [Records Management](#) webpage contains additional information.



Records must be retained until the retention period has been met ascribed in an approved record schedule. **Department retention lists must not be used or relied upon.**



SECTION 1 – UNDERSTAND RECORD RETENTION

Under [Wis. Stat. Sec. 16.61](#), the State Public Record Board has approved agency Record Schedules or Record Disposition Authorization's (RDA's) for us to dispose of records. The record schedule - or RDA - provides agencies with the legal authorization to dispose of records eligible for disposition. Records may not be disposed of in a shorter period of time.

Therefore, you must refer to a record schedule before a document can be disposed of. Each "schedule" is assigned a specific number, record description, the length of time it is required to be kept, and what to do with it after that time has passed.

- Never assume a record can be destroyed
- Don't use old department logs or lists regarding retention
- ALWAYS use an approved record schedule

Number one rule of record management: use a Record Schedule to know **WHEN** you can dispose a record and **HOW** it is to be disposed.

Every record in your office is governed by a Record Schedule – UNLESS it is considered a Disposable Record. Record Schedules are approved by the State Public Records Board. Becoming familiar with record schedules that match your office records will save you time when you need to determine how long to keep a record AND the proper disposal method.

NEVER follow any direction relating to records except for an approved record schedule. It MUST BE an approved record schedule and not some other list your department uses.

Locate a Record Schedule

All the approved record schedules are listed on the [UWGB Record Management](#) website under the [Record Schedules List](#).

The searchable list looks like this:

Schedule Category	Sub-Dept	Schedule #	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	PII	Confident	Original Disposal
Administrative Records	Governance	ADMIN301	Boards, Councils, or Commissions	Records associated with boards, councils, commissions, or their subcommittees, that are established by legislation or Governor's Executive Order. May include, but not limited to, member listings, appointment notifications, charter or project mandate, operating rules, roles and responsibilities, agendas, meeting notes and attached documentation, interim reports,	EVT+5 Years	Date of meeting or approval of document	Possibly	Possibly	Transfer to Archives
Administrative Records	Governance	ADMIN302	Department Lobbyist and Lobbying Activities	Records used for filing lobbying time or expenditure and activity reports at the state level. May include, but not limited to, all accounts, bills, receipts, books, papers and other documents necessary to substantiate the expense statement, including records identifying the amount of time that is spent on lobbying each day as described by Wis. Stat. § 13.68(5).	EVT+3 Years	Date of submittal of expense statement	Yes	No	Destroy Confidentially
Administrative Records	Communication and Reporting	ADMIN354	Activity and Production Reports	not limited to, progress reports, workload reports, status of work assignments, backlog or production reports, and ad hoc reports.	CR+1 Year	Date of creation	No	No	Destroy



Match a Record to a Schedule

Use the Record Schedule List to locate a schedule that matches records you have in your area. You can search by filtering on the *Schedule Category* – a series of like records, such as Student Records or Fiscal and Accounting. A keyword search is also helpful.

Schedule Category Search Example

Your database has generated letters to students indicating their acceptance to the University. Using the record schedule list, filtering on *Schedule Category* for *Student Records* you can easily scroll through the records relating to students. UWSTU001 matches this description.

Schedule Category	Schedule #	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	PII	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Student Records	UWSTA027	Academic Misconduct Records	Notification of academic misconduct and documentation of sanctions or disciplinary action including correspondence, reports, requests for hearings, appeals and petitions.	EVT+6 Years	Date of creation	Yes	Yes	Transfer to Archives
Student Records	UWSTU001	Acceptance Letters (Enrolled Students)	Comprising this series are the university's copy of notification letters in any format sent to admitted freshmen or transfer students as a response to application to the university. Such letters may include an invitation to orientation and indicate any further steps needed to be taken by the admitted student.	EVT+5 Years	Date of graduation or last attendance	Yes	Yes	Destroy Confidentially
Student Records	UWSTU002	Acceptance Letters (Not Enrolled)	Comprising this series are the university's copy of notification letters in any format sent to admitted freshmen or transfer students as a response to application to the university. Such letters may include an invitation to orientation and indicate any further steps needed to be taken by the admitted student.	EVT+1 Year	Date of application	Yes	Yes	Destroy Confidentially
Student Records	UWSTU003	Applications for Admission (Enrolled Students)	any format by prospective students for admission or readmission to the institution	EVT+5 Years	Date of graduation or last attendance	Yes	Yes	Destroy Confidentially
Student Records	UWSTU004	Applications for Admissions (Not Enrolled)	any format by prospective students for admission or readmission to the institution.	EVT+1 Year	Date of application	Yes	Yes	Destroy Confidentially

Keyword Search Example

You have Council Minutes; using the record schedule list, search for “minutes”, “meeting” would locate the ADMIN301 schedule.

Schedule Category	Schedule #	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	PII	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Administrative Records	ADMIN301	Boards, Councils, or Commissions	Records associated with boards, councils, commissions, or their subcommittees, that are established by legislation or Governor's Executive Order. May include, but not limited to, member listings, appointment notifications, charter or project mandate, operating rules, roles and responsibilities, agendas, meeting notes and attached documentation, interim reports, presentations.	EVT+5 Years	Date of meeting or approval of document	Possibly	Possibly	Transfer to Archives

Once you have located a record schedule, review the schedule to determine how long to retain the record and the method for disposal after the retention period. The *Record Disposition* section describes the process for *Transferring to Archives* and the *Confidential Destruction Process*.



Record Schedule List Descriptions

There are three key pieces of information you should identify on a record schedule:

Record Title	This title should match, or mostly match, your record content/description
Retention Period	The duration with which you must retain a record
Disposal Method	Method for which a record can be disposed (transfer to archives or destroy)

List Descriptions	Explanation	Example
Series Title	The category or series the schedule relates to.	Administrative Records
Record Schedule Number	The schedule number that has been assigned by the State PRB.	ADMIN301
Record Title	Record description.	Boards, Councils, or Commissions
Description	Full description of the record.	Records associated with boards, councils, commissions, or their sub committees....roles and responsibilities, agendas, meeting notes....
Retention Period	Duration a record must be kept.	EVT + 5 Years The record can be disposed of five years after the date of the meeting or approval of document
Time Period	The event plus time period a record must be kept.	EVT+5 Years
Event	The event or situation that initiates the time period.	Date of Meeting or Approval of Document
Disposal Method	The manner in which a record can be removed or disposed.	Transfer to Archives
Descriptors	Identifying information about the record that determines the method of destruction.	
PII	A record that includes Personal Identifiable Information	Possibly
Confidential	A record that includes confidential or sensitive information	Possibly If the confidential description is YES or POSSIBLY, the record is confidential, and must be destroyed confidentially, not through a regular recycle or shredder.



Common Record Schedules

The most commonly used schedules pertain to communication, such as memo's, correspondence, including email and other records you save. Keep in mind that emails and documents scanned or saved to a network drive also need to be managed.

Internal Communication between units regarding operations are to be retained for 3 years and then destroyed confidentially.

External Communication also include photographs, social media, and are to be retained for 3 years and then transferred to the Archives.

Transitory records have no documentary value and may be destroyed confidentially at any time.

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
NA	None	Disposable Records	W/ State Legislative 16.61 notes that disposable records are 1) Duplicate copies of materials the original copies of which are in the custody of the same state agency and which are maintained only for convenience or reference and for no other substantive purpose. 2) Drafts, notes, preliminary computations and like materials prepared for the originator's personal use copies of which are in the custody of the same state agency and which are maintained only for convenience or for reference. 3) Routing slips and envelopes. These records can be disposed of at any time - if any PII data contained, be sure to dispose of confidentially.	When no longer needed		Possible	Destroy
Communication and Reporting	ADMIN350	Internal Communications	Records that document communication within an entity/unit between staff regarding its operations. These communications may be provided through a variety of methods such as, but not limited to, documents, photographs, audio, and video. Applies to the sender of the original record and not the recipient	EVT+3 Years	Date disseminated	No	Destroy Confidentially
Communication and Reporting	ADMIN351	External Communications	Records that document communications regarding business services and information outside the entity/unit. These communications may be provided through a variety of methods such as, but not limited to, documents, photographs, audio, video, and social media. Applies to the sender of the original record and not the recipient.	EVT+3 Years	Date disseminated	No	Transfer to Archives
Communication and Reporting	ADMIN352	Transitory Records (Business)	Records that are non substantive, required only for a short time, have little or no documentary or evidential value, and are not required to meet legal or fiscal obligations. These records shall not be used to initiate, sustain, evaluate, or provide evidence of decision-making or public policy. Both of the statements/ conditions above must be met for the records to be considered transitory and applies regardless of the format of	EVT	Created or received date	Possibly	Destroy Confidentially



Disposable Records

The State has built in an exception for those records that are considered *disposable*. Under [Wis. Stat. Sec. 16.61](#), disposable records are not subject to a record schedule (e.g. the retention period).

This means that any “disposable” record can be destroyed immediately and has no set record schedule to follow. Be watchful for any disposable records that contain PII or confidential data, as these records would not go into a recycle bin.

Examples of disposable records include:

- Duplicate copies of records
- Drafts and notes
- Routing Slips
- Forms that are blank and unused

The original record or master would be the document that must be retained according to a record schedule. If you have a copy of a record, and you know the office that is maintaining the master record, then your copy becomes “disposable”.

Records Involved in Litigation, Claims, Audits, Open Public Record Requests

A state record may not be destroyed if any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, open records request, administrative review, or action involving the record is initiated before the retention period expiration. The record must be retained until completion of the action and the resolution of all issues that arise from it, or until retention period expiration, whichever is later. Any record subject to federal audit must be retained until the expiration of the audit period or the retention period expiration, whichever is later.



SECTION 2 – DISPOSING OF RECORDS

There are only two options for disposing of a record according to a Record Schedule.



Records identified as “transfer” can be done so anytime after the retention period has passed following the steps in the Transfer to Archive section.



Records identified as “**destroy**” can be done so anytime after the retention period has passed following the steps in the Destruction of Records section.

Records identified as “**destroy confidentially**” can be done after the retention period has passed, AND they follow UWGB’s confidential destruction process that is initiated by the Records Officer.

Prior to destruction, user must verify there are no pending records requests, audits, or lawsuits that require you to hold on to it.

Below reflects the two disposal methods noted in the Disposal Column: Transfer or Destroy

Schedule Category	Sub-Dept	Schedule #	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	PII	Confident	Original Disposal
Administrative Records	Governance	ADMIN301	Boards, Councils, or Commissions	Records associated with boards, councils, commissions, or their subcommittees, that are established by legislation or Governor’s Executive Order. May include, but not limited to, member listings, appointment notifications, charter or project mandate, operating rules, roles and responsibilities, agendas, meeting notes and attached documentation, interim reports,	EVT+5 Years	Date of meeting or approval of document	Possibly	Possibly	Transfer to Archives
Administrative Records	Governance	ADMIN302	Department Lobbyist and Lobbying Activities	Records used for filing lobbying time or expenditure and activity reports at the state level. May include, but not limited to, all accounts, bills, receipts, books, papers and other documents necessary to substantiate the expense statement, including records identifying the amount of time that is spent on lobbying each day as described by Wis. Stat. § 13.68(5).	EVT+3 Years	Date of submittal of expense statement	Yes	No	Destroy Confidentially
Administrative Records	Communication and Reporting	ADMIN354	Activity and Production Reports	business of the unit of government. May include, but not limited to, progress reports, workload reports, status of work assignments, backlog or production reports, and ad hoc reports.	CR+1 Year	Date of creation	No	No	Destroy



Transfer Records to Archives

- **Records retained permanently at the Archives reduce the volume of records kept in YOUR OFFICE.**
- Records marked for destruction help reduce the volume of unnecessary records kept at the University.

From review of the record schedules pertaining to our records, we'll know if our records are ready to be **Transferred to Archives** if your records have passed the Retention Period and the Disposal Method denotes "transfer". You may transfer records to Archives at any time if these conditions are met.

Electronic Records	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fill out the Transfer Records to Archives form. This can be found on the Records Management website. You will need to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Department Name ▪ Date span of records ▪ Pertinent Details should include records are electronic and will be on a flash drive 2. Submit request. 3. Save a copy of the email confirmation for your records. <p>The Archives will follow up with you to coordinate the date/time of records transfer. You will be requested to transfer either through saving to a flashdrive or uploading to SharePoint.</p> <p>Requestor may also contact archives directly at archives@uwgb.edu.</p>
Paper Records	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go through the records. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove items from 3-ring binders and transfer them into regular (non-hanging) file folders ▪ Remove items from hanging file folders and transfer them to regular file folders ▪ Maintain the original order and file folder labels used in your office 2. Box your records in standard banker boxes (10" x 12" x 15"). The correct boxes may be purchased through the standard state office supplier. You should not transfer the records to the archives in paper boxes, file cabinets, plastic storage bins, etc. Boxes must be properly labeled and fit on standard archives shelving. 3. Leave files in file folders as you had them originally labeled in your office. 4. Clearly label boxes with permanent marker, including this information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Name of the creating department or academic unit ▪ Name/title of the records series ▪ Date span of the records series ▪ Record Schedule # (if known) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">UW System Schedule</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Business and Finance UWADM001 Policies and Procedures 01/01/2017 – 12/31/2021</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">UWGB Schedule</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Business and Finance UWADM018 Agendas/Minutes 01/01/2020 – 12/31/2021 RDA #274 Department Committee Records</p> </div> </div> 5. Fill out the Transfer Records to Archives form. This can be found on the Records Management website. You will need to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Department Name ▪ Any pertinent details Archives should know about ▪ Number of Boxes ▪ Date span of records within each box <p>The Archives will follow up with you to coordinate the date/time of records transfer. Requestor may also contact archives directly at archives@uwgb.edu.</p>

EXAMPLE



In using this form, you are acknowledging that the records you are sending to the Archives have passed their retention period ACCORDING TO AN APPROVED RECORD SCHEDULE and the disposal of such records requires transfer to the Archives.

Today's date

Transferring Department Name

Contact Name & Email: Jane Smith, smithj@uwgb.edu

Pertinent Record Details Archives Should Be Aware of?

Example: 1 Director Subject Files, 1989-2005 Yes

	Box #	Brief Content Description	Date Span	Contains Confidential Data?
Box	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Box	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Retrieving Records from the Archives

Records are easily retrieved from the Archives. Call or email Archives at archives@uwgb.edu and let them know what you need. The Archives will retrieve it for you, and let you know when it's ready. You can use your files in the Archives, or check them out and take them back to your office. Simply return them when you are finished, and the records will get back in the right place.



Destruction of Records

- Records retained permanently at the Archives reduce the volume of records kept in YOUR OFFICE.
- Records marked for destruction help reduce the volume of unnecessary records kept at the University.**

From review of the record schedules pertaining to our records, we'll know if our records are ready to be **Destroyed** if your records have passed the Retention Period and the Disposal Method denotes "destroy". You may destroy records if these conditions are met.

There are two ways to destroy a record:

Recycling of General Records

Only recycle general records if the assigned retention period has passed and the Record Schedule indicates the record is NOT a confidential record or contains PII. Place records in your regular recycling or waste receptacle.



Confidential Destruction

Some records contain social security numbers, credit card numbers, medical information, or other personal and confidential information.

Records to be confidentially destroyed need to be documented. The *confidential destruction process* is initiated by the UWGB Records Officer (or designee) twice a year. Records are disposed of upon approval.

Before completing the destruction process, you must:

- Confirm there are no pending record requests, audits, or lawsuits that require you to hold the record.
- Confirm your record against a record schedule retention period to verify the disposal method.

From review of the record schedules pertaining to our records, we'll know if our records are ready to be disposed of in a **general recycle bin** or must go through the **Confidential Destruction Process**.



In this example, records would be destroyed in a **recycle bin**. Can you explain why? *Hint: because the disposal method is listed as “destroy” and Confidential is marked as “no”.*

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Training and Events	ADMIN453	Training Course Materials	Materials prepared and used by staff to provide routine training targeted to internal and external audiences. Records may include, but not limited to, presentations, handouts and other materials	EVT+3 Months	Date materials are superseded or obsolete	No	Destroy

In this example, voting material records can be destroyed, but must be done so **confidentially**. Can you explain why? *Hint: because the disposal method is listed as “destroy confidentially” and Confidential is marked as “yes”.*

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Governance	ADMIN305	Public Record Requests and Responses	Records relating to requests for public records as specified under the provisions of Wis. Stat. §§ 19.35-19.37 and the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Includes original request, notice of scope changes to the request.....	EVT+3 Years	Date response is provided or request is abandoned or withdrawn.	Yes	Destroy Confidentially

Although the disposal method may be “destroy”, the RETENTION PERIOD MUST HAVE PASSED – watch your document dates!



Confidential Destruction Process

If your records are not identified as being confidential by a record schedule, nor are they sensitive in nature, we can immediately take them to the recycle bin.

Otherwise, we must follow the Confidential Destruction process. The Records Officer will send out email communication announcing the Confidential Destruction process dates. Once you receive your notice, get your records ready!

Your part in the confidential destruction process is as follows:

1. Confirm Records Ready for Disposal

All records for disposal must match an approved record schedule that has passed the assigned retention period. You should use the [Record Schedule List](#) to quickly search for a record schedule. Records that may be destroyed include:

- CONVENIENCE COPIES that are no longer needed by the department, **or**
- OFFICIAL RECORDS (paper, email, electronic) past their retention period date, **and**
- The record has no pending record requests, audits, or lawsuits that would require retention, **and**
- The Record Schedule Retention is: Destroy Confidentially.

2. Document Record Disposition

Using a [Confidential Disposal Form](#) (CDF), list the record schedule number, dates, record description, retention period, retention disposal method, and if record is an Original or Copy.

Example of CDF entry that must match one of the Record Schedules for retention and disposal

Box or E-File #	Record Dates	RDA Number	File Description	Retention	To Archives	Destroy	Confidential?	Original or Copy?
1	2005-2020	ADMIN352	Transitory Department Records	EVT+0			X	Original

3. Obtain Departmental Approval

Once the CDF is complete, obtain approval signature from your Department Supervisor and email this form back to Records Management at maines@uwgb.edu.

You will be sent a calendar appointment as a placeholder with directions to bring your records to the Mail Room Loading Dock on that day for collection.

4. Prepare Records for Disposal

Any electronic records may be deleted now. You do not need to remove staples or paper clips before placing records in boxes. DO NOT purchase new boxes for this process as they will be destroyed. Binders or hanging folders are not allowed and should be removed before placing in the disposal box.

5. Bring Records to the Mail Room Loading Dock on Scheduled Date

On the designated date and time, take your records to the Lab Sciences Mail Room Delivery Dock. These will be disposed of for you. The Records Officer (or designee) will be available should questions arise.

You must stay with your records until they are loaded onto the shredder truck.



Electronic Records Disposal

Any record considered disposable may be deleted at any time. Remember, disposable records are duplicate copies, drafts, notes, etc.

When disposing of electronic records, these must also follow either the *Confidential Destruction Process* or *Transferring to the Archives* at the proper time.

Action	Description
Transfer to Archives	If transfer to archives is required, follow the Transfer to Archives section by completing a <i>Transfer to Archive</i> request and coordinating with the Archives. In this case, you have no boxes, but most likely will need to move your records to a flash drive or to deliver to the Archives.
Destroy Records	<p>If destruction is required, follow the Destruction of Records section. In most cases where electronic records are ready for disposal and are not confidential, they can be deleted immediately (as long as you have verified the record schedule retention period has passed and the disposal method is “destroy”). Otherwise, you are required to document the destruction on a <i>Confidential Disposal Form</i> and obtain approval prior to deleting any records. This includes any transitory records per the record schedule ADMIN352.</p> <p>If your records are not confidential, and have passed the retention schedule, feel free to press delete!</p>



Let's Review

In the record schedule example below, records would not be transferred to the Archives, but destroyed. Can you explain why? *Hint: because the disposal method is listed as "destroy".*

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Training and Events	ADMIN453	Training Course Materials	Materials prepared and used by staff to provide routine training targeted to internal and external audiences. Records may include, but not limited to, presentations, handouts and other materials	EVT+3 Months	Date materials are superseded or obsolete	No	Destroy

In this next example, records of meeting minutes require transfer to the Archives. Can you explain why? *Hint: because the descriptor is listed as "transfer to archives".*

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Event	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Governance	ADMIN301	Boards, Councils, or Commissions	Records associated with boards, councils, commissions, or their sub committees, that are established by legislation or Governor's Executive Order. May include, but not limited to, member listings, appointment notifications, charter or project mandate, operating rules, roles and responsibilities, agendas, meeting notes and attached documentation, interim reports, presentations.	EVT+5 Years	Date of meeting or approval of document	Possibly	Transfer to Archives

From the Examples on this Worksheet are all the records ready for Disposal (assuming the Event is the record creation date)? If not, which box must be retained awhile longer? See answers below.

Media	Department Record Description	Dates	RDA #	RDA Record Schedule Title	Retention	To Archives	Destroy	Confidential?	Original or Copy?
E-File	Emails re Purchasing	2009-2015	ADMIN351	External Communications	EVT+3 Years	X			O
Paper	Staff Progress Reports	2005-2020	ADMIN354	Activity Reports	CR+1 Year		X		Both
E-File	Department Desk Instruct	2008-2020	ADMIN453	Training Course Materials	EVT+3 Months		X		Both

Answers

Box #	Record Date	Retention	Ready for Disposal?
Box 1	2009-2015	EVT+3 Years	Yes
E File 1	2016-2019	EVT+3 Years	No, end of 2022 will be 3 years for the 2019 records
Box 2	2010	EVT+6 Years	Yes



SECTION 3 – MANAGE DEPARTMENT RECORDS

How your records are stored is critical in records management. Have you ever started a new position and inherited someone else’s files? Sometimes, you are told “it’s all in the file”. Where exactly?

Managing records seems obvious to everyone, however, managing records for the operational area makes the most sense so that the department is not keeping files individually but in the same place. Using a shared operational unit network drive makes sense as people come and go.

A record can be impossible to find because it is hidden in so many other things!



A typical situation: Your predecessor Amy worked in the department for 5 years. When you start your new job, you receive a flash drive with all of her files. You look through them enough to find the important stuff. You start saving records to your own drive and also use a department SharePoint.

Soon, you’ve been at your role for over a year and Amy’s files are a thing of the past. You’ve been asked to look at the Syllabi records. We know that Syllabi need to be retained in the department for 10 years, and then transferred to the Archives.

When it’s time to think about verifying where all the Syllabi for the last 10 years are – how is this managed? Remember Amy’s flash drive?

You’re responsible for these records. What do you do?

This scenario may strike a chord with many of us. Recall that the State requires us to maintain records and dispose of them only through an approved Record Schedule. This is because records, by law, shall be open to the public.

Managing your office records is critical in reducing waste in finding records and being efficient about actively disposing of records at the proper time. [Supervisors should include record management during employee exits – such as saving emails and verifying electronic records.](#)



Establish Retrievable Records

All documents must be easily retrieved and located. In the event of a public record request – or litigation – departments have a responsibility to locate any document. This means that employees are accountable for the records they create and save.

Examples of poor record keeping include:

- Storing records indefinitely, including your email and work computer
- Saving records from emails or other sources onto a work computer outside of the department record or storage system
- Deleting emails every 6 months without accounting for the content
- Scanning records and destroying the paper copy without a quality control check that verifies the document is an accurate representative of the paper copy (e.g. is it cut off, slanted, or image not clear?)

In order to have retrievable records, every department should set standards for WHERE records are located within an operational area, and HOW they are named.

Set Office Standards

Remember Amy's flash drive? Setting office standards ensures we meet state requirements are actually *managing* our department records.

File Naming Conventions

The goal of naming records is to find them later! Having a system set up with good naming conventions - for BOTH paper and electronic records - will make it easy to store and retrieve records later. Avoid acronyms unless it is commonly used and also contains other relevant information. There's nothing worse than trying to find a 10-year old facility use plan that was filed as "J. Doe's Files" or "PE Reviews" and sifting through hundreds of records to find the right one. Formatting standards are necessary for both paper and electronic record files.

Pick a file structure that suits the needs of your office and consistently use that structure. Everyone in the department should be aware of, and use, the identified naming conventions the department sets up. This avoids confusion in locating records, and for new employees will maintain a consistent style.

More Specific

Clery Act Crime Report Data 2015
Library Policy & Procedures
Financial Aid Applications 2018

Less Common

Police Reports
SOPs
FAA

Folder Name

Committee Meetings

Sub-Folders

Graduate Research

Technical Issues

File Names

GRC Committee Minutes 01252018
GRC Action Plan 2018
TIC Minutes 03012020



Email Standards

Email is the electronic record created in the greatest quantity and used by the most people, but it is also one of the hardest formats to deal with from a records management perspective. Email retention is important as Microsoft Outlook retains emails as long as you have an open account, access it at least once a month, and do not exceed your storage limits. You essentially retain all of your emails for the duration of employment with the University. However, before deleting any, you'll need to determine if these records are transitory or require to be retained per a record schedule.

Create Good Subject Lines

When sending emails, think about how you can best locate this email later. The subject line is the most critical component. Email subject line examples:

FYI: Bellin Contract Proposal
Request Review: GRC Minutes 01252018
Invoice Payment Smith Factory #15530

Create Email Folders

Once an email is received, users may save the email into a folder to review or recall at a later date. Setting up email folders will be beneficial in locating an email or when you are needing to transfer records to the archives. These saved email records most likely do not fall into a transitory schedule and should be reviewed before arbitrarily deleting.

Contracts
Meetings
Purchasing



Digitizing Records

Did you know that anytime you scan a record you have “digitized” it? The record is now stored electronically and the paper record becomes a “copy” that can be disposed of.

There are associated costs in the production of digital files, and current technology records we have in place now, may not be necessarily accessible in the future. Hardware and software required to read such files may become obsolete. Careful planning with IT staff and the Records Officer will be necessary before you take the next step toward digitization. You should also consider the **Safely Storing Records** section if you are thinking about digitizing or scanning records. Read more on digitizing at UW System [Digitization of Information](#).

Safeguard Records

Every employee has a duty to safeguard records pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code 12 (2001) to protect from unauthorized access, manipulation, modification, and physical loss. We also have a responsibility to be aware of records that contain confidential, sensitive, or personal identifiable information (PII). This means we must take steps to safeguard the records we are handling.

Stop and evaluate if the record you are handling contains the any private information. Since most of our work is electronic these days, you may need to consider removing restricted information before forwarding.

- Be cognizant of your surroundings when you are working on your computer with sensitive information
- ALWAYS lock your computer before stepping away from your desk
- Be aware your email is not considered safe if sharing documents outside of the University to another server
- Always follow the University’s [Information Security Policy](#)



Keep an eye on your records. Always be conscious of the records that pass your desk – and your computer. Are these records relevant to University business? If so, consult your Record Schedules for retention before you shred or delete!



Know where your records are. How long has it been since your department reviewed records being stored in your area? Is your storage area overflowing? Do you have so many electronic folders in SharePoint scrolling has become tedious? It may be time to assess your records. A good rule is to set aside time, at least quarterly, to take a look.



SECTION 4 –DEPARTMENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

As part of UW System Policy adopted in 2024, all departments are required to have a Records Management Plan (RMP). This Plan informs employees of the various records the department uses AND where they are located.

UWGB records departments use the [Inventory Management Worksheet](#) to inventory records and note where they are located. This process includes looking at your saved electronic files and emails.. The worksheet will allow you to note all the records, the record schedule, retention period, and disposal method.

An RMP is required by all departments to complete and review annually. Once the Inventory Worksheet is complete, the annual review process will produce efficient and fast results in determining which records are ready for archiving or destruction.

Here are four types of record formats to consider, but certainly not all the records you might have.

Paper Documents	Paper documents are the easiest records to inventory in the department. Most are already filed according to department standards and can be easily listed within the Inventory Worksheet.
Computer Files	This category consists of departmental shared files as well as those files that are stored on every employee’s work computer. Listing these documents on an Inventory Worksheet will take the most time initially, but annually you will only need to consider adding date ranges.
Emails	Every employee should be aware of the emails they have within Outlook and have created file folders or other standards in which to save important emails. When adding emails to the Inventory Worksheet, be concerned with the email <i>content</i> to match with a record schedule.
Database Records	The systems and databases we use convey multiple documents within them. A system may have 100 GB of storage capacity, but records within a database or system also fall under records management. Don’t wait until storage capacity is an issue before your department looks at the data/records contained within to determine what should be appropriately disposed of. Your department will want to list the records stored and work with your Business or IT Analyst to determine the best method for disposing of data once a retention period has been met.



1. Locate your records and evaluate the content
2. Open a blank [Inventory Management Worksheet](#)
This worksheet mirrors the Confidential Disposal Form so you can easily copy and paste records set for destruction onto the CDF.

3. Complete the Inventory Worksheet

- a. Enter records to be inventoried: Record Media, Record Description, Dates

Media	Department Record Description	Dates	RDA #	RDA Record Schedule Title	Retention	To Archives	Destroy	Confidential?	Original or Copy?
E-File	Emails re Purchasing	2009-2015							0

- b. Locate a record schedule related to these documents.
Use the [Record Schedules List](#) to locate a record schedule that matches the document you have by searching within the List. You will need the TITLE and RECORDS DESCRIPTION to match the document you have.

Record Description: emails on purchasing
Record Schedule: External Communications ADMIN351

Sub-Dept	Schedule	Title	Records Description	Retention Period	Confidential	Original Disposal Method
Communication and Reporting	ADMIN351	External Communications	Records that document communications regarding business services and information outside the entity/unit. These communications may be provided through a variety of methods such as, but not limited to, documents, photographs, audio, video, and social media. Applies to the sender of the original record and not the recipient.	EVT+3 Years	No	Transfer to Archives

- c. Enter the Record Schedule Number, retention period and disposal method.

Media	Department Record Description	Dates	RDA #	RDA Record Schedule Title	Retention	To Archives	Destroy	Confidential?	Original or Copy?
E-File	Emails re Purchasing	2009-2015	ADMIN351	External Communications	EVT+3 Years	X			0

Your department may wish to utilize the Record Officer for assistance with this step. If so, forward your RMP to the Records Officer to finish compiling data for the RDA and Retention columns.

- d. Continue adding records.
- e. Forward a final copy to the Records Officer.

Once the Worksheet has been completed, you can now determine which records in the office are past the retention period and can follow steps for disposal. Save the Worksheet where everyone in the department would have access.



MANAGEMENT OF A RECORD SCHEDULE

This section is informational only for employees. The Record Officer for UWGB maintains and coordinates all record schedules. State agencies are statutorily required to provide records schedules for ALL records not already covered by an existing records schedule. By law, record schedules have to be submitted one year after each records series has been received or created.

Whose Responsible for the Record Schedule

The record schedules that are created for UWGB are continuously monitored by the Records Officer. After 10 years, the record schedule sunsets, and a new one must be resubmitted for Public Records Board approval or to make it obsolete. There may be instances where a record unique to UWGB has required an amendment.

All such forms are kept by Records Management.

EXAMPLE - Record Schedule of Weidner Center Valet Parking Ticket Stubs

These records are still generated and specific to UWGB. Recently, the Records Officer worked with the department to amend the existing schedule to reflect our most current method of retention and disposal of this record.

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC RECORDS BOARD PRB-001 (R09/2016) PAGE 1 OF 3		http://publicrecordsboard.wi.gov	
Records Retention / Disposition Authorization			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read instructions provided on pages 2-3 before completing. In accordance with Wis. Stat. § 18.61, this form must be completed and approved by the Agency and the Public Records Board (PRB) within one year of creation of the records series and prior to disposition of any public record. Agency Records Officer: Forward original to the PRB. Maintain an agency copy during the PRB review process. 		1. RDA # 496	2. Record Series Title Valet Parking Ticket Stubs
		3. RDA Status (Check One): <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Amended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renewal	
		4. Agency #: 285D	5. Unit #: 8-3000
Division Name Weidner Center for the Performing Arts		Subdivision Name	
7. Record Series Year of Creation 1993	8. Medium for Records Storage (Check all appropriate) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronic/Digital <input type="checkbox"/> Microform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		
9. Retention Time Period - Specify Actual Period Yrs: <input type="checkbox"/> Mo: 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Wks: <input type="checkbox"/> Days: <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent* <input type="checkbox"/>		10. Event that Initiates the Start of the Retention Time Period (Check One) Creation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (CR) <input type="checkbox"/> (FIS) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
*If selecting Permanent, cite supporting statute, code, other legal authority, or sufficient justification in Box 12, Record Series Description.			
11. Disposition (Check One): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Destroy <input type="checkbox"/> Destroy Confidential <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer - State Archives (WHS) <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer - UW Archives <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer - Other Location (Specify):			
12. Records Series Description Replaces RDA 315. Valet parking ticket stubs contain date, vehicle license plate number, patrol signature, parking lot location, diagram to indicate prior damage to vehicle. Arranged chronologically by performance. Ticket stubs are entered into database for valet sales. Paper valet stubs are kept for 11 months and then destroyed.			



FORMS

Don't forget the essentials! There are four (4) forms that have been covered in this training module that you will need as you work through records management.

Form	Use Description
Inventory Management Worksheet	Assess your records that are ready for disposition. This form will reflect the records that are ready for disposal – either by transferring to the Archives or destroying.
Transfer Records to Archives Form	Upon assessment using the Inventory Management Worksheet, records requiring transfer to the Archives will need to be submitted via this online form before to the Archives.
Confidential Disposal Form	During the confidential destruction process at UWGB, use this form to report the records that can be confidentially destroyed. It requires signature by the Department Supervisor and review by the Records Officer (or designee). Upon approval, staff are authorized to take their records to the Mail Room on the designated destruction date.
Records Disposition Authorization	This form is only used by the Records Officer to create or amend a new records schedule.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

[UW System Records Management](#)
[Regent Policy 3-2 Public Records Management](#)
[State of Wisconsin Public Records Board Best Practices](#)

For additional questions, contact:
 UWGB Records Officer
 Sandi Maine-Delepierre
 920-465-2781
maines@uwgb.edu



RECORD MANAGEMENT SUMMARY MATRIX

What	Why	How	When
Assess Records	To determine which records are ready for disposal.	Use the Inventory Management Worksheet	At least annually
Transfer to Archives	Retention period has passed and the Record Schedule disposal method indicates Transfer to Archives.	Transfer to Archives Process	Any time AFTER the retention period AND when the disposal method says "Transfer to Archives"
Destroy Records	Retention period has passed and the Record Schedule disposal method indicates Destroy or Destroy Confidentially.	Recycle Bin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any time AFTER the retention period AND ▪ When the disposal method says Destroy AND ▪ There are no PII or Confidential descriptors
		Confidential Destruction Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AFTER the retention period AND ▪ When the disposal method says Destroy AND ▪ When the descriptor says YES to PII or Confidential AND ▪ The Records Officer or designee has notified you of the Confidential Destruction process dates ▪ Your CDF form has been approved