

Lesson 4 Disposition Script

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Hi, my name is Brian Smith, I am the Nevada State Records Manager. I will be going over Lesson 4: Records Disposition. Disposition is the action taken when temporary and permanent records are no longer needed for immediate access in current office space. It is critical for you, the records custodian, to know how to properly dispose of records so that you will not be held legally liable for improper disposition and to enable those who need the records in the future will be able to retrieve them. Disposition is the third and final stage of the records life cycle. Records disposition mainly consists of the transfer of records for short-term, long-term, or permanent storage at a National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facility. Now that you know why this lesson is important, let's take a look at our objectives for this lesson.

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By the end of this lesson each student should be able to: Given a record, determine the disposition instructions for that record based on the current Departmental Records Schedule, General Records Schedule and the BLM Combined Records Schedules. Now that you know what our objectives are, let's review what we will be covering to accomplish those objectives.

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In this lesson we will cover: Some General Disposition Information, How Disposition is Determined, Other Considerations Affecting the Disposition Process, and finally, How to Prepare and Transfer Records. Now that you know what we will be covering, let's begin by going over some general disposition information.

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Disposition-General Information

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All Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offices must economically and efficiently manage the Bureau's records by preserving permanent records and disposing of temporary records when they are no longer needed. Now, let's discuss why disposition is important.

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Disposition is important because it ensures BLM maintains and preserves records for as long as they are needed, complies with legal requirements, and reduces space requirements. BLM's records disposition program includes policies and practices for categorizing and scheduling all records; ensuring their proper storage, whether in BLM, commercial, or records center storage space; ensuring the authorized and prompt disposal of temporary records; and ensuring the timely transfer of permanent records to NARA. The NARA approved DRS/GRS/BLM

Combined Records schedule is the BLM's legal authority for the disposition of records. Now, we will discuss who is responsible for disposition.

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Designated records custodians are responsible for processing records for disposition, in consultation with the State Records Manager. Employees are to work with their records custodian and records manager to ensure all records are managed according to the DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedules. Each fiscal year, the records custodians and records managers should review their records to determine if they are eligible for transfer or destruction. When does disposition happen?

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When records are no longer needed for current Government business, and in accordance with the provisions of the DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedule, the disposition phase begins. We'll go into more detail about the DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedule later in this lesson. Let's look at the role the Federal Records Center plays.

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Federal Records Centers store records temporarily until they meet their final disposition, which is either destruction or transfer to the National Archives and Records Administration for permanent storage. BLM records transferred to Federal Records Centers are still within the legal custody of BLM. Federal Records Centers will not disclose records except to BLM staff. Retrieving records (temporarily or permanently) from Federal Records Centers is allowed as records are still under BLM's jurisdiction.

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When records become inactive and there is sufficient volume, transfer the records to the local Federal Records Center. The DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedule provides the cutoff dates when records can be transferred. Until shipment to a Federal Records Center is possible, make sure records are stored in a secure and protected environment. Refer to Lesson Two for further discussion of the safeguarding of records. Now that we have gone over some general records information let's discuss how the BLM determines records disposition.

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How to determine Records Disposition

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The DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedules were developed with the National Archives and Records Administration and are the only legal authority the BLM has to dispose of records.

An online version of the schedule can be accessed at this link. Coordinate with your State Records Manager or Administrator for records disposition questions. Let's explore the schedule.

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This is the BLM Records SharePoint site that contains the current DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedules we use to identify the disposition of BLM records. There are many ways to search for a record or Schedule: In the Combined Records Schedules – Schedule 1 through 32, in the individual Schedules, in the Subject Index and sometimes even in the Forms Index.

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Now let's turn our attention to some other considerations that can affect BLM records.

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A litigation hold is a directive issued by the Office of the Solicitor to preserve records that are relevant to pending or actual litigation. The Office of the Solicitor will provide the scope of our obligation and what actions are required to comply with their directive. Employees, in consultation with Records Managers, will take reasonable steps to ensure that information is not purged or otherwise inadvertently destroyed, and that information created in the future is also preserved.

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Frozen records are records whose scheduled disposition has been temporarily suspended because of special circumstances that alter the administrative, legal, or fiscal value of the records.

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A records freeze is created when we receive a hold notice for records that are stored at a Federal Records Center. When we receive a hold notice, we suspend the normal disposition cycle of the records identified in the hold. So if you receive a hold notice for records stored at a Federal Records Center, you need to contact the Bureau Records Officer to initiate a freeze on them in conjunction with the hold you place on the records you have on-site. Now that you are aware of some things that can affect records disposition, let's look at how to prepare and transfer records to the FRC.

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The Records Disposition Review Board was created to provide Bureau-wide records disposition oversight and support. It is comprised of three State or Center Records Administrators/Managers and two senior advisors who maintain a comprehensive Records Disposition Procedures and Guidelines Handbook.

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Preparing Records for Transfer

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The following is a list of items you will need to transfer records to a Federal Records Center: Federal Records Center approved boxes; black Marker; shipping Tape; box List; Access to ARCIS, or Form SF-135, Records Transmittal and Receipt. Let's take a look at the required box you will need to use to transfer records to a Federal Records Center.

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Make sure that boxes are no taller than the sizes specified by the Federal Records Centers. They will not accept taller boxes. Box specifications and other useful information for interacting with Federal Records Centers can be found in the FRC toolkit at the above URL. Please mark each box with a wide felt tip marker, include the returned copy of the SF 135 and a detailed box list of each box in box #1 of the accession. When tape is used to seal the boxes, do not write any accession or box number on the tape or obscure these numbers with the tape. Please remember to use the standard box for retiring records. The part number is 8115-00-117-8249. The dimensions are 14-3/4" X 12" x 9-1/2. Next, we will look at how to complete a box list.

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Each list should contain the following information: the title/subject of the records; the schedule number and retention period; the closed date and accession number; every folder in each box needs to be listed separately on the box list; list all the folders contained in Box 1, and continue listing all the folders by box numbers; contents of each folder should not be listed on the box list; other information necessary to locate the record if retrieval is necessary. Place a copy of the box list and your approved SF-135 on top of the folders within the first box.

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Currently, Federal Records Centers use form SF135 to accept records transfers. Detailed instructions on filling out the SF135 can be found at the link listed on this screen. Most states fill out the form in ARCIS. Contact your State Records Manager to find your state's procedure. Now, let's wrap-up this lesson.

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Another form you will become familiar with is BLM Form 1270-4. This form is used to document the destruction of eligible temporary records. The form can be found on the BLM Records SharePoint site.

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In conclusion –

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If you remember, our objective for this lesson was for you to be able to do the following - Given a record, determine the disposition instructions for that record based on the current DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedules. Now that we have reviewed our objective, let's look at what we covered to get you to that objective.

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In this lesson we covered: The Purpose of Disposition - Provides evidence of the agencies functions, policies, decisions, procedures and operations. Why is Disposition Important - Ensures BLM maintains and preserves records for as long as they are needed. Who is Responsible for Disposition [All Employees]? When Does Disposition Happen - When records are no longer needed for current Government business. The Role of FRC - Provides temporary storage of records. BLM Policy on Temporary Storage of Records - When records become inactive and there is sufficient volume, transfer the records to the local FRC. Do not store records in basements, warehouses, or other inappropriate areas. DRS/GRS/BLM Combined Records Schedule - Issued by the Archivist of the United States and provides disposition of agencies records. Litigation Holds - A directive issued by the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) to preserve records, regardless of media, that are relevant to pending or actual litigation. How to Prepare and Transfer of Records - Items you will need to transfer records to the FRC include: FRC boxes, Black Marker, Shipping Tape, if boxes are shipped, Box List and SF-135, Records Transmittal and Receipt.

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Now that you are armed with the information you need to determine disposition instructions for BLM records, you can “take charge” at your field office or work site and assist the BLM in making sure records are disposed of properly; by doing so, you will be helping the BLM to accomplish its mission.

This concludes the fourth and final lesson in this records training program. Like with anything else, the more you work with records, the more knowledgeable you will become. If you have questions about any aspect of Records Management, be sure to contact your local Records Specialist, or your state Records Manager. And remember, proper records management is everyone's responsibility and is critical to our institutional memory and our nation's history.