

GOVERNMENT RECORDS SERVICE GUIDE

OFFICE RECORDKEEPING SYSTEM

Employees need to create and keep complete and accurate records sufficient to document their decision-making and work activities. This applies to all types of government records, including documents in all formats and workspaces that provide the best evidence of government business activities, transactions, policy or decisions. These records must be managed in accordance with government records management policy and standards.

In the BC Government, the requirements for establishing office recordkeeping systems are set in the following legislation, policy and standards:

- [Information Management Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Core Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 12](#)
- *Administrative and Operational Records Classification Systems (ARCS and ORCS)*



An office recordkeeping system is a shared ARCS/ORCS-based filing system in which records are captured, protected, retained and destroyed in accordance with approved retention schedules.

ARCS and ORCS combine a records classification/filing system with retention and disposition schedules for government records. What does this mean?

- A **classification system** identifies and describes the records created by offices.
- A **records retention and disposition schedule** is the timetable governing the life span of a record from creation, through active use within an office and retention in offsite storage, to destruction or transfer to the government archives.

Types of office recordkeeping systems: limitations and capabilities

- **Hardcopy:** ARCS and ORCS paper files. Printing and filing records can be a suitable approach for some types of records, but is not viable for many categories of government records. It is also not consistent with key government goals of electronic operations, reduced carbon emissions, and enhanced information sharing.
- **LAN (Local Area Network), shared drives, and SharePoint sites:** These can be organized and administered in accordance with ARCS and ORCS. This method is viable for limited volumes and types of electronic records, and is suitable as an interim approach pending use of a fully-functional recordkeeping system (i.e., EDRMS TRIM).
- **EDRMS (TRIM):** A comprehensive recordkeeping system with a full range of records management tools including a classification table with linked retention schedules (ARCS and ORCS), and sophisticated searching and retrieval functions. EDRMS TRIM enables integrated management of both physical and electronic records and is the approved government standard.

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Storing records in employee-specific network drives or email folders is not equivalent to filing them in the office recordkeeping or shared filing system. This results in:

- Restricted access – co-workers who require records do not have access to the drive and its contents
- Incomplete records – key records may not be classified and filed
- Difficulty searching – records may be missed when responding to requests under *FOIPPA* or during the legal document discovery process

Responsibilities

- **Employees** are responsible for documenting their work by ensuring key records they create or receive are filed in their office recordkeeping system.
- **Program areas** are responsible for maintaining a shared office recordkeeping system that is organized and administered in accordance with government records legislation and policy.

Additional Information

Contact your [Records Officer](#) or check out the rest of the Records Management website.