

# GOVERNMENT RECORDS SERVICE GUIDE

## DEPARTING OR TRANSFERRING EMPLOYEES GUIDE

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### OVERVIEW

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This guide provides advice on records transfers, disposition, and related activities following an employee transfer or departure. See the last section for a sample exit checklist covering records.

NOTE: This guide covers records of continuing programs, not defunct programs.

It is each employee's responsibility to properly manage their records prior to transfer or departure.

### OWNERSHIP OF GOVERNMENT RECORDS

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Electronic and paper records created or received in the course of government business are the property of the provincial government, not of individual employees.

All business records under the control of an employee leaving government or transferring to another government organization must be retained and/or disposed of in accordance with approved records retention and disposition schedules (e.g., *ARCS* and *ORCS*).



#### ***Email and Computer Files***

Departing employees need to review their email, text messaging and voice mail accounts, as well as any electronic records stored on employee-specific drives. The records should be handled as follows:

- **CLASSIFY and FILE** (or submit for filing) official file copies. What you need to know:
  - **Official file copies:** Documents that are not duplicates, that document decision-making, set policy or procedures, require a reply or action, or reflect ministry or agency business processes.
  - **Electronic filing:** If your office does not have an electronic document and records management system (i.e., government-standard [EDRMS TRIM](#)), file the records on a shared filing system (e.g., LAN).
  - **Accessibility:** Remove any encryption, passwords or access restrictions on records you are filing (such as .pst files), to ensure that they are accessible to authorized staff. Access restrictions can be placed at the file/folder level in the recordkeeping system (e.g., TRIM and shared drives) rather than on individual documents.

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- **DELETE** documents that are [transitory](#) in nature (for example, work/life announcements, rough notes, non-significant drafts, etc.) or which are duplicates/ copies of records already filed in the office recordkeeping system.
- **REMOVE** any non-work related or personal items (for example, resumes, professional association correspondence, family photographs, etc.).

The employee’s supervisor/designate should document that this process has been completed.

### Short Notice Departures

As a temporary measure for short-notice departures, email and items that have not been filed may be copied to a shared drive. The records must then be reviewed by the supervisor or designate according to the above criteria and copied, filed or deleted as appropriate.

Using **portable storage media** is **not** recommended for the following reasons:

- easily lost e.g., forgotten in a drawer
- labelling is often not clear
- fragile and may become damaged
- may become unreadable as software/hardware changes

### Paper Files

Departing employees must:	Records staff must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RETURN all signed-out files.</li> <li>• REVIEW and CLASSIFY any loose papers, working files, etc. in their workspace and file or submit them for filing, as appropriate.</li> <li>• SEPARATE transitory records (preliminary drafts and rough notes, duplicates, etc.) and shred or recycle them, as appropriate (<b>Records Officers</b> will provide destruction guidelines).</li> <li>• FILE drafts with substantial changes that reflect significant aspects of a document’s development, approvals, decisions or that are specified in a records schedule.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UPDATE file lists as required.</li> <li>• PREPARE records for AUTHORIZED DESTRUCTION or TRANSFER to off-site storage (Your <b>Records Officer</b> will provide specific procedures).</li> </ul> <p>If the employee cannot complete these tasks, the supervisor may delegate the project to another staff person.</p>



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### RETENTION OF GOVERNMENT RECORDS

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#### *Transferring employees:*

When an employee is transferred due to a functional reorganization, transfer all related records to the newly responsible business unit, in accordance with ministry procedures.

#### *Departing employees:*



**Employees are not permitted to take government records with them when they leave government employment.** However, in some cases, employees may request copies of non-confidential materials. See below for more information on obtaining copies.

### PROVIDING COPIES

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- Departing or transferring employees may, on occasion, be permitted to take a copy of **non-sensitive** government records (e.g., work samples or information relevant to the employees' knowledge base).
- Employees do not have a right to retain **personal copies** of government records. The retention of personal copies of government records – even for employees remaining within government – can present significant risks (e.g., arising from potential inconsistencies or inadequate control regarding records retention, disclosure, copyright, security, etc.).
- Ministries and agencies should establish **policies and procedures** regarding the provision of record copies to departing or transferring employees. These should ensure that:
  - Due consideration is given to the nature of the requested information and the associated risks.
  - Employee requests for copies are reviewed by the supervisor and other appropriate management, including the ministry/agency [Manager of Information Access](#).

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### SAMPLE EXIT CHECKLIST FOR PAPER AND E-RECORDS

Government employees need to manage the records in their custody in accordance with legislation, policy and standards. **Never** abandon or destroy government records during any position change, office move or reorganization without authorization.



#### 1. ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Ensure all your electronic records (including email) that have ongoing value for your office are filed in the **office recordkeeping system** (EDRMS TRIM or ARCS/ORCS files on the LAN/shared drive or in physical files).

- Clean out any personal storage locations**, such as your personal drive, email account.
- If you are responsible for managing records in a **collaborative workspace** (e.g., SharePoint) make sure records that need to be kept have been filed.
- Delete transitory records, including:** emails, Word documents, and other unnecessary drafts, duplicates, and working materials (see discussion of transitory records below).
- Do not save records onto a mobile storage device** (e.g., memory stick, CD, tablet or laptop computer); they must be stored on a government server that is regularly backed up. This ensures the records will be securely maintained and available in case of access/litigation requests or for ongoing operational or administrative purposes.

#### Access Authorizations:

- Records in offsite storage: send an email notification to your [Records Officer](#) if you have access authorizations for records in offsite storage that will need be cancelled or modified.
- Records management system: If you are a TRIM or CRMS user, either you or your supervisor needs to contact [EDRMS HELP](#) so they can remove or change your access.

#### 2. PAPER AND OTHER PHYSICAL RECORDS

- File your official (non-transitory) paper records** in the office recordkeeping system. Label any folders/boxes of records that haven't been filed so the content can be easily determined. Arrange for any records on retrieval from offsite storage to be returned.
- Place transitory records** in locked office bins for shredding.
- Ensure any **special media records** in your custody are labelled with the appropriate ARCS/ORCS codes and any other identifying information (e.g., for photographs and audiovisual materials, provide dates, locations, names, and other contextual information).

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### 3. TRANSITORY RECORDS

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- Identify and dispose of these records in accordance with the [Special Schedule for Transitory Records \(102901\)](#), as well as the [email management guides](#). Common examples are:
  - **Convenience copies**
  - **Unnecessary duplicate**
  - **Working materials and drafts** – rough notes, calculations, and preliminary drafts for which finished records/subsequent versions have been incorporated into the office recordkeeping system and that are not scheduled to be retained under an approved records schedule

**Note:** Keep drafts or working materials that document significant content changes, particularly for draft legislation, legal documents, budget materials and policy.

### 4. LEAVING ON SHORT NOTICE

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- Return records you have in your custody (e.g., paper files that belong in central filing or offsite storage, electronic documents that need to be checked into EDRMS TRIM or other shared filing system).
- Organize and identify files not yet entered into the office recordkeeping system:**
  - Group documents and files in your custody logically, ideally in accordance with ARCS/ORCS classifications, with identifying labels/lists.
  - Provide a list/key to email folders, personal drive folders, SharePoint documentation, and any other electronic records that have been your responsibility.
  - Include any passwords.
- Label physical records:** label boxes/files/groups of records that remain in your workspace so the content can be easily determined.
- Remove personal records:** box and take home with you any documentation that does not relate to your work.

**Notify your supervisor** if you are unable to complete the above tasks.

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#### Additional Information

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

Also see the [BC Public Service Agency Employee Exit Checklist](#)