

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULE 20**

**Electronic Records Systems**

This schedule applies to electronic records systems files routinely created, maintained, and disposed of by D.C. government agencies, including records received by an agency from another government agency, and records created, or stored, for D.C. government agencies by private contractors and grantees. It covers records created by computer operators, programmers, analysts, systems administrators, and staff persons using word processors.

The system approach is needed to schedule electronic records because the same subject-matter that exists in a single document in hard copy form, when converted to electronic form, may exist as input data, processing files, transaction files, and master files, in addition to the hard copy inputs, record layouts, codebooks, technical specifications, users' guides, and outputs. Thus, this schedule categorizes electronic records for appraisal and disposition on the basis of the various versions and/or formats of the subject-matter and related documentation, then addresses the subject-matter. In most cases, the subject-matter appraisal of agency records in electronic form will take place in the agency records retention schedule. Any electronic records that agencies think are not fully covered by this schedule should also be included in the agency records retention schedule. Electronic records may not be destroyed without an approved records disposition authorization.

The three basic categories of this schedule are: (1) documentation, (2) processing files, and (3) master files.

1. DOCUMENTATION (Items 1-6), covers those records required for servicing electronic records: the code books, record layouts, technical specifications and users' guides for converting them from machine-readable data into human readable data. In general, the disposition for documentation is the same as for the related electronic records.

2. PROCESSING FILES (Items 7-10), are raw data input files and valid transaction files used to create or update a master file. The usual time for appraising the subject-matter in an electronic records system is at the master file stage, but occasionally a processing file may contain advantages over a master file, such as data in more detail, or is easier to access, or results in costs savings. In such a case, agencies should retain and schedule the processing file and the master file.

3. MASTER FILES (Items 11-21), constitute the definitive state of electronic records systems, that is, all the data that goes into a file for a definite time frame, universe, or computation have been input, edited, and given final approval.

Electronic records on media other than computer magnetic tape (such as floppy disk, cartridges and hard disk packs) may be scheduled by DCGRS 20, but are usually converted to magnetic tape before they are transferred to the D.C. Archives for permanent retention. Please contact the D.C. Archives for assistance in this matter.

DCGRS 20 retention time frames such as "when no longer needed" may be given exact time frames such as "Destroy when XX years old," or "Destroy after XX update cycles" in an agency records retention schedule.

Records created prior to January 1, 1921, must be offered to the D.C. Archives before applying the disposition instruction set forth in this schedule.

This general records schedule was approved by the D.C. Records Disposition Committee on May 17, 1989. It replaces D.C. Schedule 40, Section 28.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION
1.	<b>Data Systems Specifications.</b>	
	Documents containing definitions of the system, including functional requirements, data requirements, system/subsystem specifications, and authorizing directives.	
	a. For a disapproved proposed system.	Destroy one year after final action.
	b. For an approved system for which all related magnetic data files are authorized for disposal.	Destroy one year after discontinuance of the system.
	c. For an approved system for which any related magnetic data file is not scheduled.	Retain with related data file.
2.	<b>System Test Documentation.</b>	
	Descriptive material including test plans and test analysis reports.	
	a. For an approved system.	Destroy one year after completion of testing.
	b. For a disapproved proposed system.	Destroy when no longer needed.
3.	<b>Record Layouts.</b>	
	Definitions of the logical and physical characteristics of each record, element or item of data in the file, including names and tags or labels, locations, form, format and size of data fields.	
	a. For a system for which all related magnetic data files are authorized for disposal.	Destroy with related data file.
	b. For a system for which any related data file is not authorized for disposal.	Retain with related data file.
4.	<b>Code Books.</b>	
	Definitions of all codes used, including standard codes.	
	a. For a system for which all related files are authorized for destruction.	Destroy with related data file.
	b. For a system for which any related magnetic data file is not authorized for destruction.	Retain with related data file.

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5.	<p><b>Users' Guides.</b></p> <p>A guide which describes the criteria used to create an electronic records system, including the authority to set it up, the program or function the system supports; how the data were collected, coded, processed, weighted, and level of coding; as well as the scope and size of the universe, dates of data and data collection, conclusions, operations, or major decisions based on the data.</p>	Destroy with related data files.
	a. For a system for which all related files are authorized for destruction.	Retain with related data files.
	b. For a system for which any related magnetic data file is not authorized for destruction.	
6.	<p><b>Output Specifications.</b></p> <p>Technical descriptions of output tape copies, disk packs, printouts, dumps, or any products of the system that are to be used outside the creating agency's computer center, which list each type of output by title, type of internal label, data set names, record length, blocking factor, recording density, character code, number of tracks, number of volumes, and access restrictions.</p>	
	a. For a system for which all related files are authorized for destruction.	Destroy with related data files.
	b. For a system for which any related magnetic data file is not authorized for destruction.	Retain with related data file.
7.	<p><b>Data Retrieval Routines.</b></p> <p>General purpose or special purpose programs designed to retrieve data from a specific electronic data file.</p>	
	a. For a file not authorized for destruction.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
	b. For a file authorized for destruction.	Destroy when no longer needed.
8.	<p><b>Test Data.</b></p> <p>Electronic data file(s) constructed and used only to test a system.</p>	Destroy when no longer needed.

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9.	<b>Source Documents.</b>	
	Hard copy input source documents, such as standard forms, dockets, applications, account ledgers, personnel folders, case files, questionnaires, survey forms, or test scores.	
	a. For an electronic file for which destruction is not authorized.	Retain one example copy of input source document with related electronic data file.
	b. For an electronic file for which destruction is authorized.	Destroy with related data file.
10.	<b>Update Files.</b>	
	Electronic data files created and then used as input to create or update a master file, in which case the master file contains all the information in the input files. For example, File A is used to create or update File B, File B is used to create or update File C, and File C is used to create or update File D.	File A may be destroyed after File D has been created or updated. (The same rule applies if more than one file is used to create a master file).
	a. Same as above, but no C File, or D File is ever created.	Retain or destroy with the related master file.
	b. On magnetic media received from another agency.	Destroy File A only after File D has been updated.
	c. Key punched cards.	Destroy when no longer needed.
11.	<b>Information Retrieval Files.</b>	
	A computerized index, location register, log, inventory, or list, for correspondence files, court dockets, case files, subject files, financial trans-actions, agency publications, mailing lists, non-agency publications, or an audit trail.	
	a. Files with software attached that merge variable, or field, locations and definitions (i.e. Dictionary File) with records not authorized for destruction by this General Records Schedule or an approved agency records schedule.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
	b. Same as 11a, but the related records are authorized for destruction.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	c. Computerized record layout and/or code book for a file not authorized for destruction by this General Records	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.

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	Schedule or an approved agency records schedule.	
	d. Same as 11c, but the related file is authorized for destruction.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	e. Computerized index, list, or inventory for official agency publications.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
	f. Computerized index, list, or inventory for non-record publications received and maintained by the agency for reference purposes.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	g. Computerized audit trail.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	h. Information retrieval files that apply to the records only while they are active in agency office space.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	i. Same as 11h, but can serve as a retrieval or indexing tool beyond active agency office use.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
12.	<b>Electronic Publication File.</b>	
	Data produced and disseminated as a publication or used to produce a printed publication.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
13.	<b>Electronic Printout File.</b>	
	Data used to produce required printouts of tabulations, ledgers, tables, and unpublished reports.	
	a. Working drafts.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	b. Final draft.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
14.	<b>Reports.</b>	
	Any final report, on printed, electronic, or other media, that was developed using the data in an electronic records system.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
15.	<b>Word Processing Files.</b>	
	Letters, messages, memoranda, reports, handbooks, directives, spread sheets, manuals, and similar records.	
	a. If records are already covered by an	Follow the disposition instructions in the

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	existing general schedule such as DCGRS 23, Records Common to Most Offices; or DCGRS 16, Administrative Management Records.	pertinent general schedule.
	b. If records are not covered by an existing schedule.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
16.	<b>Housekeeping System Master Files.</b>	
	Electronic records systems containing data used to support or operate housekeeping and office administration functions such as supply management, payroll preparation, and routine expenditures.	
	a. If the records are already covered by an existing general records schedule, such as DCGRS 23, Records Common to Most Offices; or DCGRS 2, Payrolling and Pay Administration Records; or D.C. Schedule 40, Section 8, Procurement, Supply, and Grant Records.	Follow the disposition instructions in the pertinent general schedule.
	b. If the records are not covered by an existing schedule.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
17.	<b>Schedules of Daily Activities.</b>	
	Computerized calendars, appointment schedules, logs, and other records documenting such things as meetings, appointments, telephone calls, travel, and visits, by government employees while serving in an official capacity.	See DCGRS 23, item 2.
18.	<b>Program Records Systems Master Files.</b>	
	Records created, received, or produced by a contractor or grantee, to document, implement, direct, monitor, support, study, or operate agency programs.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
19.	<b>Summary Master Files.</b>	
	Summaries or aggregates of a file that exist in greater detail on other magnetic media.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
20.	<b>Samples, Subsamples, and Special Study Extracts Master Files.</b>	
	Files containing data selected from a larger data file, but designed to be representative	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.

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	of the larger file.	
21.	<b>Re-Formatted Master Files.</b>	
	Files containing duplicate record information copied from another master file.	
	a. Digitized records acquired from an outside source by a D.C. government agency for its own purposes.	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.
	b. Files copied and re-formatted solely to be used on a different computer, or with different software.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	c. Files copied and re-formatted for the specific purpose of information interchange.	Destroy when no longer needed.
	d. Files copied and re-formatted for the specific purpose of storing the Files on computer output microfilm (COM) or a CD (compact disk).	Submit request for disposition authority to D.C. Archives.