

Office of Information Affairs Notice

Date: July 10, 2025

To: All Agency Records Officers

From: Alexis R. Graves, Director

Subject: Shipping Personally Identifiable Information to NARA to Meet Bulletin 2024-01 Requirements

On September 10, 2024, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) released [Bulletin 2024-01: Limited Exception for Sending Official Personnel Folders and Employee Medical Folders to the National Personnel Records Center](#). The Bulletin provides guidance on the extension provided to federal agencies to continue to send hardcopy Official Personnel Folders (OPF) through June 30, 2025 and Employee Medical Folders (EMF) through June 30, 2027 to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). To address NARA Bulletin 2024-01, the Office of Information Affairs (OIA), in coordination with the USDA Privacy Office, compiled the following information to better safeguard the USDA records and information being shipped.

Box Preparation

Files must be packed in boxes for shipment by USDA personnel charged with managing personal information. Boxes must not be overpacked to ensure a tight closure.

Prior to sealing the boxes:

- Ensure all files are in the correct color folder, as required by [OPM guidance](#).

File Abbreviation	File Name	Folder Name	Folder Color
OPF	Official Personnel File (OPF)	SF-66	Brown
Merged OPF/EMF	Merged Official Personnel File (OPF) and Employee Medical File (EMF)	SF-66C	Orange
EMF	Employee Medical File (EMF)	SF-66D	Blue

- Manilla folders will not be accepted, if records are sent in incorrect folders they will likely be returned to the Agency for correction.

- If more than one File type is included in the shipment, EMFs should be placed after personnel folders (OPF, Merged OPF/EMF).
- Ensure all folders are labeled in accordance with [OPM guidance](#).
 - Name: The employee's name, exactly as it is on the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.
 - Date of Birth: The employee's date of birth, formatted month, day, year in six numerals with dashes between each day, month, and year.
 - Example: MM-DD-YY.
 - Social Security Number: The employee's social security number (SSN) is entered directly under the name. SSNs are shown for all United States citizens and all foreign nationals serving in the 50 states and non-foreign areas (see 5 CFR 591.205 for list of non-foreign areas).
 - Example: Doe, Jane R.
 SSN: XXX-XX-XXXX
 - If folders are labeled incorrectly, they will likely be returned to the Agency for correction.
- Insert a **list of the folders contained**, which identifies the name and social security number of each folder. This list must be placed inside the box, in front of the first folder.
- Insert a **Privacy Act Data Cover Sheet** as the first page in each box. Be sure the point of contact information includes be the Privacy Act Coversheet with the following Point of Contact information included:
 - Name of Point of Contact;
 - Email address;
 - Phone number, in case of any questions; and
 - Total amount of boxes in the shipment (e.g., Box 1 of 5).
- Include a return shipping account number.

Sealing Boxes

Once all folder information is added and correct, the boxes must be closed and sealed with shipping tape. All box seams should be taped to create a seal that will only be opened by the NPRC.

There must be no writing on the exterior of the box, no indication of the contents or markings which indicate the information is sensitive.

Once packed and sealed, boxes must not leave the secure location until picked up by the mail carrier. If necessary, boxes must be escorted from the secure location to a mailing room at the specified pick-up time.

Shipping

Boxes may be shipped via first class priority mail. Certified mail which requires tracking and confirmation of receipt is the preferred method. Use of any shipping carrier which offers tracking and confirmation of receipt is acceptable.

The shipping label should be clearly printed and attached utilizing a clear plastic sleeve, or taped to the box, with the tape covering the entirety of the label.

Delivery Validation

Maintain a shipping log that includes:

- Date of shipment;
- Number of boxes shipped;
- Tracking number or Certified mail tracking number; and
- Date of confirmed delivery (ensure all boxes delivered).

Issues with Delivery

If there is a situation where delivery confirmation cannot be validated or confirmed, you must:

- Report the incident to the Cybersecurity Defense Operations Division using the [Report PII Exposure](#) Portal.
 - If you are unable to report the incident through the portal, contact the CPOC Cyber Incident Hotline at 1-866-905-6890 and send any related questions to the Cyber.Incidents@usda.gov mailbox.
- Notify the Departmental Records Officer, Beatriz Collazo, at Beatriz.Collazo@usda.gov.

For any questions, contact:

- Departmental Records Officer (DRO) Beatriz Collazo, at Beatriz.Collazo@usda.gov;
- The Departmental Records Program at USDADepartmentalRecords@usda.gov; or
- The Privacy Division at SM.OCIO.CIO.UsdaPrivacy@usda.gov.

List of Attachments:

1. Privacy Act Data Coversheet
2. OPF & EMF Folder Samples
3. OPM Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping Chapter 7, Transferring Records

Privacy Act Data Cover Sheet

DOCUMENTS ENCLOSED ARE SUBJECT TO THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

This package contains personal or privileged information and should be treated as **"For Official Use Only."** Unauthorized disclosure of this information may result in **CIVIL** and **CRIMINAL** penalties.

These documents must only be reviewed by personnel within the office in which this package is addressed, and only individuals with a direct need-to-know in performance with their official duties.

If you are not the intended recipient of this package, please contact:

Name: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Phone Number: _____

Total Number of Boxes in Shipment
_____ of _____

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has established procedures for the transfer of personnel records (personnel and medical folders) to the National Personnel Records Center. The procedures can be found in OPM's Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping, Chapter 7 Transferring Records.

Official Personnel Folders (OPF's)

Personnel records that document an individual's federal career are placed in a single personnel folder. The type of folder to be used depends on the kind of service the employee has. There are three authorized personnel folders: Official Personnel Folder (Standard Form 66), Merged Records Personnel Folder (Standard Form 66C), and Foreign Service Administrative Folder.

Standard Form 66 Revisited January 1999 U.S. Office of Personnel Management FPM Chapter 293-31 66-106
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER
NSN 7540-00-222-3442

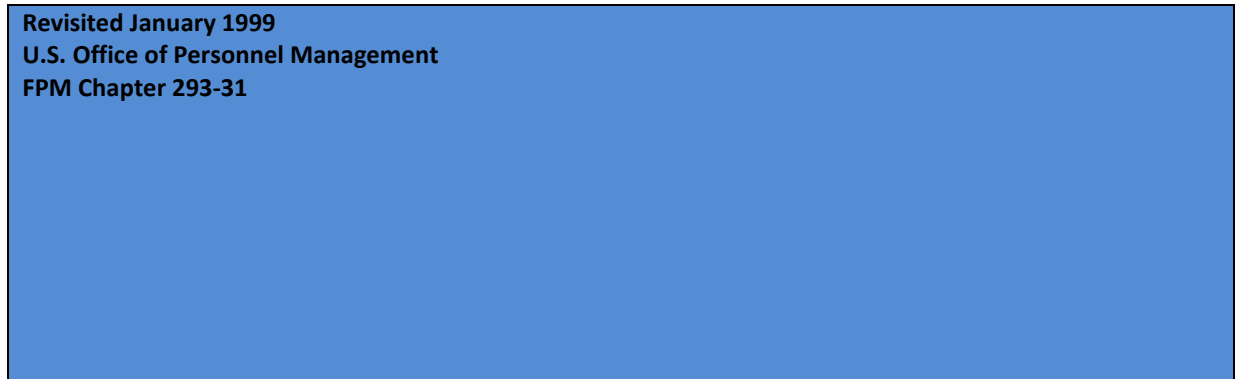
OPF Folder (Standard Form 66)

Standard Form 66C November 1983 U.S. Office of Personnel Management FPM Chapter 293-31 66-401
MERGED RECORDS PERSONNEL FOLDER
RESTRICTED USAGE
NSN-7540-01-165-7295

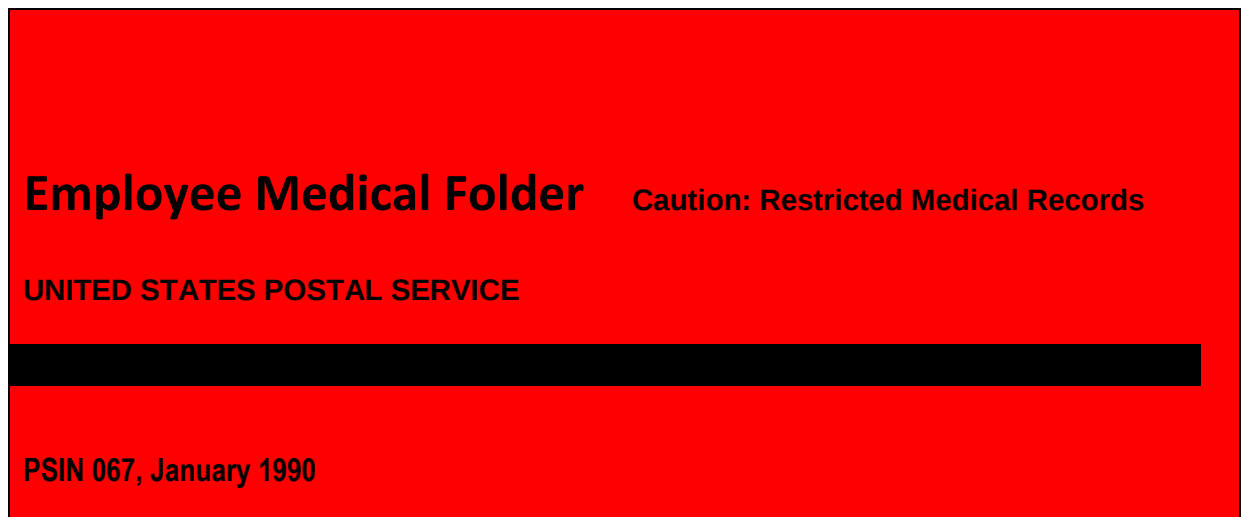
Merged Records Personnel Folder (Standard Form 66C)

Employee Medical Folders (EMF's)

Medical records should be transferred in an Employee Medical Folder (Standard Form 66D). Regardless of how the records are stored during the employee's service, all long-term occupational medical records must be placed in a single Employee Medical Folder when the employee leaves the agency.



Employee Medical Folder (Standard Form 66D)



USPS Employee Medical Folder

Folder label

The Official Personnel Folder, Merged Record Folder, and Employee Medical Folder (Standard Form 66, 66C and 66D) all require the same type label. The position of the label on the right side of the folder is indicated on the folder. The label must have the following three items. NAME: Type the employee's name exactly as it is on the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.

- **DATE OF BIRTH:** Type the date of birth, month, day and year in six numerals with dashes between day, month and year. Example: January 14, 1974 is typed 01-14-74.
- **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:** Type the employee's social security number (SSN) directly under the name. Show full SSN of all United States Citizens and for all foreign nationals serving in all 50 states and non-foreign areas listed in section 591.205 of title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR 591.205).

SMITH, JOHN D	00-00-1777
000-00-0000	

Standard Label Example

Manifest

All shipments received should include a manifest listing all records contents, there should be a manifest included in every individual box submitted by the agency with the following information enclosed:

- **SUBMITTING AGENCY ADDRESS INFORMATION:** Agency information should be located on the manifest, this is for billing and verification purposes. Official agency letterhead is permitted.
- **NAME:** Type the employee's name exactly as it is on the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.
- **DATE OF BIRTH:** Type the date of birth, month, day and year in six numerals with dashes between day, month and year. Example: January 14, 1974 is typed 01-14-74.
- **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:** Type the employee's social security number (SSN) directly under the name. Show full SSN of all United States Citizens and for all foreign nationals serving in all 50 states and non-foreign areas listed in section 591.205 of title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR 591.205).

Submitting Agency Information

Name

Address

State

Zip

Phone #

Point of Contact

Name	Social Security # (Full)	Date of Birth
DOE, JOHN	000-00-0000	11/11/1177
SMITH, JOHN	000-00-0000	11/11/1177

(Standard Manifest Example)

Preparing Folders

Follow these steps to prepare the personnel and medical folders for transfer.

Step 1 Action

Check the personnel folder to make sure that it contains all the long-term documents that should be in the folder and only the long-term documents authorized in Chapter 3. Make sure that all documents are filed in chronological order.

Step 2 Action

Put the following documents and only those documents on the left side of the personnel folder:

- Record of Leave Data (standard Form 1150) or equivalent record of leave balances;
- Documentation of indebtedness to the health benefits fund for pay periods that began for September 30, 1996;
 - Performance records. For Senior Executive Service employees, these are: annual summary ratings that are 5 years old or less; any appraisals prepared since the most recent annual summary rating; and performance plans for each rating. For all other employees, these are ratings of record that are 4 years old or less, including the performance plan on which the most recent rating was based. Ratings of record include the evaluation of the employee's performance against the elements and standards plus the summary level, pattern, and ending date of the appraisal. (Note: For some agencies on eOPF, performance plans for transfer are indexed as "PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR TRANSFER")

Step 3 Action

Put long-term occupational medical records in an Employee Medical Folder, standard Form 66-D. Oversized x-rays that will not fit in the folder may be microfiched and put in an envelope in the folder or retained by the agency. If retained, the agency should put a note in the folder explaining how to obtain the x-ray.

Step 4 Action

Send the folders to the National Personnel Records Center

Follow agency instructions for documents that are not transferred to the National Personnel Records Center.

THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING

Chapter 7: Transferring Records

Retirement and Death Cases

When an employee retires or dies, there are special requirements for processing the separation. The Office of Personnel Management's Operating Manual, THE CSRS AND FERS HANDBOOK FOR PERSONNEL AND PAYROLL OFFICES contains the processing instructions for these actions. Follow these instructions and send the Official Personnel Folder copy of all required documents with the application for benefits as specified in the Manual.

Records Erroneously Left Out

When long-term paper documents that should have been in the folder are discovered after the folders have been mailed, send them immediately to the National Personnel Records Center. Attach the documents to a cover letter that identifies the employee by name and date of birth. Reference the date the folder was originally sent. Clearly identify the name, address, telephone number and email address of the office submitting the records.

Notice to Employees

It is good practice to tell separated employees how they can request copies of documents in their personnel and medical folders. A sample notice is on the next page of this Guide. Chapter 7 – Transferring Records 7-8

Notice to Separated Employees - Retention of Personnel and Medical Folders

Long-term records documenting individuals' Federal careers are stored in the Official Personnel Folder. The employee received copies of these records when they were created. When an employee separates from the Federal service, the last employing agency sends the Official Personnel Folder to the National Personnel Records Center for storage. Normally, the agency sends the Folder within 120 days after the employee separates. The National Personnel Records Center retains the folders for 65 years after separation. Former employees' request for copies of their personnel records must be in writing and should include:

- the full name(or names) used while employed;
- social security number; (Full, complete SSN)
- written signature;
- date of birth; and
- if known, the year of separation and last employing agency.
- Provide an address to send the response/copy of records as well as a day time telephone number.

THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING

Chapter 7: Transferring Records

For Copies of Specific Documents or a Copy of the Entire Folder Write to:

**National Personnel Records Center
Civilian Personnel Records
1411 Boulder Blvd
Valmeyer, IL 62295**

Since 1984 the Employee Medical Folder has been used to store long-term occupational medical records that were created during an employee's Federal career. These records do not include records on claims filed under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act. There may not be an Employee Medical folder for each employee. When an employee for whom there are long-term occupational medical records separates from Federal service, the last employing agency sends the Employee Medical Folder to the National Personnel Records Center. The National Personnel Records Center retains these Folders for 30 years after separation.

Former employees' requests for copies of their Employee Medical Folder should be in writing and include all identifying information (name, social security number, date of birth, written signature) as well as an address to send the response/copy of records and a day time telephone number.. These requests should be sent to:

**National Personnel Records Center
Civilian Personnel Records
1411 Boulder Blvd,
Valmeyer, IL 62295**

Sending Records Packaging

Personnel records should be securely packaged to be sure that they arrive in good condition. Transcripts or individual folders may be sent in an envelope. Folders require envelopes or those made from material similar to "Ty-Vek" are recommended.

Carriers

Employees may not be authorized to carry their own records to the next employer. Under the Privacy Act, employees are entitled to copies of their records but the agency is responsible for transferring the employee's official records to the next employer.

Records may be sent by first class priority mail. Certified mail or commercial package shipping service is the preferred method since these methods allow agencies to verify that the records were delivered to the addressee.

THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING

Chapter 7: Transferring Records

National Personnel Records Center

When records are transferred to the National Personnel Records Center, they should be sent to the National Personnel Records Center, Civilian Personnel Records Center in Valmeyer, IL:

OPFs:

National Personnel Records Center

Civilian Personnel Records

1411 Boulder Blvd, Valmeyer, IL 62295

EMFs:

National Personnel Records Center ,

Civilian Personnel Records,

1411 Boulder Blvd, Valmeyer, IL 62295

A small number of folders may be sent in an envelope. Larger numbers of folders should be sent in a carton. Each carton should include a list/manifest of the enclosed folders, identifying each employee by name and social security number. The list/manifest must be included to assist in the tracking and billing processes. In each envelope or carton, a contact name, email address and telephone number of the sender should be provided. A return shipping account number should be provided in the event folders must be returned due to incorrect submission.

Employee Medical Folders may be in the same envelope or carton as personnel folders. Medical folders should be placed after the personnel folders (Official personnel Folders, Merged Records Personnel Folders, or Foreign Service Folders).

Personnel records that document an individual's Federal career are placed in a single personnel folder. The type of folder to be used depends on the kinds of service the employee has. There are three authorized personnel folders:

- Official Personnel Folder, Standard Form 66
- Merged Records Personnel Folder, Standard Form 66 C
- Foreign Service Administrative Folder

Employee Medical Folder should be placed in the Standard Form 66D.

Folder label

The Official Personnel Folder, Merged Records Personnel Folder, and Employee Medical Folder (Standard Forms 66, 66 C, and 66 D) all require the same type label. The position of the label on the right side of the folder is indicated on the folder. The label must have the following three items.

THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING

Chapter 7: Transferring Records

- **NAME:** Type the employee's name exactly as it is on the Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action.
- **DATE OF BIRTH:** Type the date of birth, month, day and year in six numerals with dashes between day, month, and year.

Example: January 14, 1974 is typed 01-14-74. • **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:** Type the employee's social security number (SSN) directly under the name. Show an SSN for all United States citizens and for all foreign nationals serving in the 50 states and non-foreign areas listed in section 591.205 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR 591.205).

Example: DOE, JANE R.
SSN: 999-99-9999

Use "FNO" instead of the social security number for foreign nationals serving in locations other than the 50 states or non-foreign areas listed in 5 CFR 591.205.

NOTE: IF RECORDS ARE IN INCORRECT FOLDERS OR NOT LABELED ACCORDING TO OPM GUIDANCE, THEY MAY BE RETURNED TO THE SENDER.

Agencies are not required to notify the National Personnel Records Center before sending folders. The National Personnel Records Center will not issue a receipt for records sent by regular mail. Agencies on eOPF will receive an electronic acknowledgement.

Used in Lieu of Transferring Folders

Transcript of Services Name:

Doe, John X.
SSN: 000-000-0000
DOB: 00-00-00
SCD: 08-12-67

The following transcript of Federal service was prepared from the Official Personnel Folder.