

Office of Information Affairs

Unscheduled Records Quick Guide

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requires Federal Agencies to utilize NARA approved Records Schedules to ensure proper management and disposal of records, determine which government records should be kept and which may be destroyed, as required by the Federal Records Act (FRA), [Public Law 113-187](#), and related legislation and regulations.

A Records Schedule is a legal document that tells you how long to keep specific types of records and what should happen to those records when you no longer need them. Agencies must have schedules for their records, and those schedules must be approved by NARA.

Scheduled Records are records that are covered by a NARA approved Records Schedule.

Unscheduled Federal records are records that:

1. Are NOT covered by a NARA approved Records Schedule.
2. Do NOT have NARA approved disposition.
3. Must be treated as PERMANENT until NARA approves a retention schedule.

USDA Personnel* are prohibited from deleting or destroying any unscheduled records. When working with Unscheduled Federal records you should:

- ✓ Report the records to your Agency Records Officer (ARO) and preserve them as permanent until there is an approved, legal records schedule.
- ✓ Use only NARA approved disposition authorities to delete or dispose of records, not agency-created file codes.

*USDA Personnel are defined as Employees, Contractors, Students, Volunteers, Interns, Fellows, and Political Appointees.

For any questions, contact the Departmental Records Program:

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