United States determines which Federal records have temporary value and may be destroyed and which Federal records have permanent value and must be preserved and transferred to the National Archives of the United States. The Archivist’s determination constitutes mandatory authority for the final disposition of all Federal records.

(d) The Archivist of the United States issues General Records Schedules (GRS) authorizing disposition, after specified periods of time, of records common to several or all Federal agencies.

§ 1220.14 Who must follow the regulations in Subchapter B?

The regulations in Subchapter B apply to Federal agencies as defined in §1220.18.

§ 1220.16 What recorded information must be managed in accordance with the regulations in Subchapter B?

The requirements in Subchapter B apply to documentary materials that meet the definition of Federal records. See also Part 1222 of this subchapter.

§ 1220.18 What definitions apply to the regulations in Subchapter B?

As used in subchapter B—

Adequate and proper documentation means a record of the conduct of Government business that is complete and accurate to the extent required to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and that is designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency’s activities.

Agency (see Executive agency and Federal agency).

Appraisal is the process by which the NARA determines the value and the final disposition of Federal records, designating them either temporary or permanent.

Commercial records storage facility is a private sector commercial facility that offers records storage, retrieval, and disposition services.

Comprehensive schedule is an agency manual or directive containing descriptions of and disposition instructions for documentary materials in all physical forms, record and nonrecord, created by a Federal agency or major component of an Executive department. Unless taken from General Records Schedules (GRS) issued by NARA, the disposition instructions for records must be approved by NARA on one or more Standard Form(s) 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority, prior to issuance by the agency. The disposition instructions for non-record materials are established by the agency and do not require NARA approval. See also records schedule.

Contingent records are records whose final disposition is dependent on an action or event, such as sale of property or destruction of a facility, which will take place at some unspecified time in the future.

Disposition means those actions taken regarding records no longer needed for the conduct of the regular current business of the agency.

Disposition authority means the legal authorization for the retention and disposal of records. For Federal records it is found on SF 115s, Request for Records Disposition Authority, which have been approved by the Archivist of the United States. For nonrecord materials, the disposition is established by the creating or custodial agency. See also records schedule.

Documentary materials is a collective term that refers to recorded information, regardless of the medium or the method or circumstances of recording.

Electronic record means any information that is recorded in a form that only a computer can process and that satisfies the definition of a Federal record under the Federal Records Act. The term includes both record content and associated metadata that the agency determines is required to meet agency business needs.

Evaluation means the selective or comprehensive inspection, audit, or review of one or more Federal agency records management programs for effectiveness and for compliance with applicable laws and regulations. It includes recommendations for correcting
National Archives and Records Administration § 1220.18

or improving records management policies and procedures, and follow-up activities, including reporting on and implementing the recommendations.

Executive agency means any executive department or independent establishment in the Executive branch of the U.S. Government, including any wholly owned Government corporation.

Federal agency means any executive agency or any establishment in the Legislative or Judicial branches of the Government (except the Supreme Court, Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Architect of the Capitol and any activities under his direction). (44 U.S.C. 2901(14)).

Federal records (see records).

File means an arrangement of records. The term denotes papers, photographs, maps, electronic information, or other recorded information regardless of physical form or characteristics, accumulated or maintained in filing equipment, boxes, on electronic media, or on shelves, and occupying office or storage space.

Information system means the organized collection, processing, transmission, and dissemination of information in accordance with defined procedures, whether automated or manual.

Metadata consists of preserved contextual information describing the history, tracking, and/or management of an electronic document.

National Archives of the United States is the collection of all records selected by the Archivist of the United States because they have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the Federal Government and that have been transferred to the legal custody of the Archivist of the United States, currently through execution of a Standard Form (SF) 258 (Agreement to Transfer Records to the National Archives of the United States). See also permanent record.

Nonrecord materials are those Federally owned informational materials that do not meet the statutory definition of records (44 U.S.C. 3301) or that have been excluded from coverage by the definition. Excluded materials are extra copies of documents kept only for reference, stocks of publications and processed documents, and library or museum materials intended solely for reference or exhibit.

Permanent record means any Federal record that has been determined by NARA to have sufficient value to warrant its preservation in the National Archives of the United States, even while it remains in agency custody. Permanent records are those for which the disposition is permanent on SF 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority, approved by NARA on or after May 14, 1973. The term also includes all records accessioned by NARA into the National Archives of the United States.

Personal files (also called personal papers) are documentary materials belonging to an individual that are not used to conduct agency business. Personal files are excluded from the definition of Federal records and are not owned by the Government.

Recordkeeping requirements means all statements in statutes, regulations, and agency directives or other authoritative issuances, that provide general or specific requirements for Federal agency personnel on particular records to be created and maintained by the agency.

Recordkeeping system is a manual or electronic system that captures, organizes, and categorizes records to facilitate their preservation, retrieval, use, and disposition.

Records or Federal records is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3301 as including “all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the United States Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of the data in them (44 U.S.C. 3301).” (See also §1222.10 of this part for an explanation of this definition).

Records center is defined in 44 U.S.C. 2901(6) as an establishment maintained and operated by the Archivist (NARA Federal Records Center) or by another
§ 1220.20 What NARA acronyms are used throughout Subchapter B?

As used in Subchapter B—
NARA means the National Archives and Records Administration.
NAS means the Space and Security Management Division.
NR means the Office of Regional Record Services.
NWCS means the Special Media Archives Services Division.
NWME means the Electronic and Special Media Records Services Division.
NWML means the Lifecycle Management Division.
NWMW means the Washington National Records Center.
NWT means Preservation Programs.

Subpart B—Agency Records Management Responsibilities

§ 1220.30 What are an agency’s records management responsibilities?

(a) Under 44 U.S.C. 3101, the head of each Federal agency must make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency. These records must be designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency’s activities.

(b) Under 44 U.S.C. 3102, the head of each Federal agency must establish...