

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Format for Notices of "Records Schedules; Availability and Request for Comments"

AGENCY: National Archives and Records Administration, Office of Records Services—Washington, DC.

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) publishes notices at least once a month of pending records disposition schedules submitted by Federal agencies. Once approved by NARA, schedules provide mandatory instructions on what happens to records when no longer needed for current Government business. Schedules call for the permanent retention and eventual transfer to the National Archives of the United States of records that have historical or other research value. Most records, however, lack such value and are approved for destruction after a specified period.

NARA began publishing **Federal Register** notices about schedules in 1985. This process alerts members of the public to pending schedules in which they may have an interest. Members of the public may request copies of schedules and provide NARA with comments. Until recently, notices of pending schedules contained only the name of the agency which submitted the schedule, the NARA-assigned control number, and an extremely brief summary of the records proposed for destruction. In 1998, NARA modified the format of notices. Notices now provide the total number of items covered by the schedule and the number of items proposed for disposal as well as more information concerning the types of records covered by the schedule. In addition, the explanatory information concerning the scheduling process included in each notice points out that NARA staff usually prepare appraisal memorandums concerning the records covered by a proposed schedule and that these too may be requested. (Our most recent notice of pending schedules is published elsewhere in this separate part of the **Federal Register**.)

NARA seeks public comments so we can assess and improve the effectiveness of **Federal Register** notices. We are especially interested receiving input concerning the following questions:

(1) Is the current format for notices, including the introductory material explaining the scheduling process, clear and easy to understand?

(2) Is the information provided about individual schedules sufficient to alert readers to pending schedules in which they have an interest? If not, what additional information would you need?

(3) Would it be easier for readers to locate notices of pending schedules if NARA were to publish such notices on only one specified day of the week?

(4) Are there any other ways in which NARA can use the **Federal Register** process to enhance public input concerning pending schedules?

DATES: Comments must be received on or before July 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent electronically to records.mgt@arch2.nara.gov (comments sent electronically must be in the body of the message or be in WordPerfect 6.1 or Word 6.0 if they are sent as attachments); by FAX to 301-713-6852; or by mail to Director, Life Cycle Management Division (NWML), National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Rd., College Park, MD 20740-6001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marie Allen, Director, Life Cycle Management Division (NWML), National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Rd., College Park, MD 20740-6001. Telephone: (301) 713-7110. E-mail: records.mgt@arch2.nara.gov.

Dated: March 26, 1999.

Michael J. Kurtz,
Assistant Archivist for Records Services—
Washington, DC.

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Records Schedules; Availability and Request for Comments

AGENCY: National Archives and Records Administration, Office of Records Services—Washington, DC.

ACTION: Notice of availability of proposed records schedules; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) publishes notice at least once monthly of certain Federal agency requests for records disposition authority (records schedules). Once approved by NARA, records schedules provide mandatory instructions on what happens to records when no longer needed for current Government business. They authorize the preservation of records of continuing value in the National

Archives of the United States and the destruction, after a specified period, of records lacking administrative, legal, research, or other value. Notice is published for records schedules in which agencies propose to destroy records not previously authorized for disposal or reduce the retention period of records already authorized for disposal. NARA invites public comments on such records schedules, as required by 44 U.S.C. 3303a(a).

DATES: Requests for copies must be received in writing on or before May 24, 1999. Once the appraisal of the records is completed, NARA will send a copy of the schedule. NARA staff usually prepare appraisal memorandums that contain additional information concerning the records covered by a proposed schedule. These, too, may be requested and will be provided once the appraisal is completed. Requesters will be given 30 days to submit comments.

ADDRESSES: To request a copy of any records schedule identified in this notice, write to the Life Cycle Management Division (NWML), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001. Requests also may be transmitted by FAX to 301-713-6852 or by e-mail to records.mgt@arch2.nara.gov. Requesters must cite the control number, which appears in parentheses after the name of the agency which submitted the schedule, and must provide a mailing address. Those who desire appraisal reports should so indicate in their request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael L. Miller, Director, Modern Records Programs (NWM), National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001, telephone (301)713-7110.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Each year Federal agencies create billions of records on paper, film, magnetic tape, and other media. To control this accumulation, agency records managers prepare schedules proposing retention periods for records and submit these schedules for NARA's approval, using the Standard Form (SF) 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority. These schedules provide for the timely transfer into the National Archives of historically valuable records and authorize the disposal of all other records after the agency no longer needs to conduct its business. Some schedules are comprehensive and cover all the records of an agency or one of its major subdivisions. Most schedules, however, cover records of only one office or program or a few series of records. Many