



DoDEA's Records Management Blueprint for Success

This document outlines the primary steps to follow to establish and maintain a records management program for your division.

As an employee of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), you will be creating and using Official Federal Records. There are rules governing the creation, maintenance, and disposition of all Federal Records. It is your responsibility to protect Official Federal Records in your custody, and there are legal implications for destroying records without the proper authority.

Following good records management practices will not only help you meet legal requirements, they will benefit you and DoDEA in many ways, such as:

- Improving access to information;
- Controlling the growth of materials/data taking up valuable space;
- Reducing operating costs;
- Minimizing litigation risks;
- Safeguarding essential information;
- Supporting better management decision making; and,
- Preserving DoDEA history

1. Determine who will be responsible and what resources will be needed.

Establish a RIM Project Team with representatives from all your division's subsections to oversee the project. The project team should:

- Set up a network with a lead person and representatives for each office.
- Decide the logistics, and if everything will be done "in house" or if outside help (e.g., contractors) will be needed.
- Select one office, within your DoDEA division, in which to initiate the project.

2. Identify records needed that document the activities and functions of your division/office.

Conduct an inventory of the materials in your office. Don't forget to include empty offices, closets, and other areas where things may have been stashed.

Document, at a minimum, using the DoDEA Records Inventory Worksheet and the OSD Records Inventory Form (SD Form 832), where materials are located, how much there is, and the format (e.g., paper or electronic). (When you have a "snapshot" of the scope of materials in your office, you may need to go back to the first step and review the resources available to complete the project.)

An inventory will help you identify which materials are:

- Records,
- Reference materials (non-records),
- Personal papers (non-records),
- Extra copies of documents, publications, and forms (non-records).

The inventory will also help you identify which records would need to be immediately available in the event of an emergency (Essential Records –

Ask your RL for the DoDEA Essential Records Plan).

3. Establish your procedures (recordkeeping requirements).

Now that you know what you have in your office, the project team needs to determine:

- If records will be kept in a “centralized” or “decentralized” location;
- The type of documents that are included in the record files;
- How draft documents, working papers, and concurrence copies will be handled.
- Who will be responsible for maintaining the record copy (records Liaison/custodian).

Remember – Non-record materials such as convenience copies and personal papers need to be maintained separate from records.

4. Match your records to the OSD/DoDEA Records Disposition Schedules (RDS).

The next step in the project is to match the records identified in your inventory with the *OSD/DoDEA Records Disposition Schedules*. Records schedules provide information on how long records are to be kept in the office and what happens when they are no longer needed in the office. Retention periods as stated in the schedules are **MANDATORY**.

Resources:

Records schedules can be found on the DoDEA Records and Information Management Website, under the **Schedules** tab:
(<https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/ExecutiveServices/RecordsManagement.cfm>)

If a records schedule is still in draft (not approved/signed by OSD or the NARA

Archivist), you cannot destroy records covered by that schedule until it has been moved to the approved portion.

Contact the [DoDEA Records Management Officer](#) if:

- You cannot find an appropriate records schedule;
- Your existing schedule is out of date or you need to submit a revision (use OSD/DoDEA SD 831, Records Inventory to Establish New Records Series).

5. Prepare an Office File Plan (per AI-15, Volume I).

Now that you know what records you have and what the appropriate records schedules are, you can begin to organize them. DoDEA records are organized using the OSD Records Schedules by the functional category of the records (AI-15, Volume II).

Once you have identified the file series and file numbers, place them in numerical order. Then, determine if there will be sub-categories or sub-folders and what they will be.

6. Document your recordkeeping requirements and procedures.

Prepare a document which gives details on:

- How your records are organized and maintained,
- Who is responsible for doing what,
- When it should be done (e.g., annual retirement to WNRC),
- What happens to the records when they are no longer needed in the office.

Include all the decisions you made in steps 1 through 5 (e.g., what happens to draft documents).

7. Clean out records which are beyond the approved retention periods as per the appropriate OSD Schedule.

Once you have documented your file plan you can begin to organize your records. First, however, it is a good idea to get rid of those materials in your office which are not needed. If authorized by the records schedule and the DoDEA RMO, you can:

- Dispose of records which are no longer needed for operational use.
- Transfer permanent records to the National Archives, if appropriate. Contact the [DoDEA Records Management Officer](#) for assistance.
- Recycle materials which have passed their approved retention period. Remember to cross-shred/burn bag materials containing confidential or personal information.

Resources:

- [Using the Federal Records Center Tool Kit](#)

8. Organize your records.

Now you can begin to implement your file plan.

First, prepare folders and organize documents within the folders. Follow the procedures established in your RIM governing documents and file plan.

Place file guides and reference sheets in folders, when necessary, to refer users to the location of related non-paper materials such as maps, drawings, etc.

Organize electronic documents residing on shared-drives, SharePoint, and other assigned recordkeeping systems and local enterprise network directories.

Remember to spend the majority of your time on the “mission-related” records and less on administrative or “housekeeping” records such as routine

correspondence.

9. Maintain your records on an on-going basis.

Once everything is organized, it is important to keep it current and up to date. Be sure to:

- File new materials on a regular basis (e.g., weekly).
- Protect records containing confidential information such as confidential or personal information.
- Establish a check-out system (e.g., “out” cards) to track the location of your records so you always know where they are.
- Clean out and migrate inactive materials on a regular basis, usually at the end of the year (as per your written procedures).
- Retire eligible records to the WNRC.
- Clean out superseded or obsolete reference materials.

10. Train.

Now you have a file plan and you've cleaned out all the unnecessary materials and organized the necessary materials. You need to be sure all your division members (and contractors) know about their recordkeeping responsibilities as outlined in the DoDEA HQ RIM Responsibilities Memorandum (**Regulations & Guidance** tab, DoDEA RIM Website -

<https://www.dodea.edu/Offices/ExecutiveServices/RecordsManagement.cfm>).

The Records Liaisons must brief the DoDEA Division Chiefs on the importance of the records management program, and train division members on RIM procedures.

To help you, the DoDEA Records and Information Management Program offers:

- Training sessions, in-person and online, including basic records management and records lifecycle operations;
- Presentations, plans and handouts you can tailor for your particular office; and
- Tailored records and information management support.

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