

Records Officer

TOOLKIT

MANAGING GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Records Series Disposition

Disposition refers to a record's final destruction or transfer to the State Archives as determined by its appraisal. Possible dispositions are as follows: "retain in office permanently," "transfer to State Archives," or "destroy" (upon completion of the approved retention schedule).

Approximately 5-10% of records has enduring or historical value or are required by law to be kept permanently; 90-95% of records are destroyed after meeting their retention requirements because they have no enduring value.

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■ Destruction

Obsolete records which have met their approved retention periods should be destroyed. No record or groups of records can be destroyed without first meeting the retention schedule time periods as approved by the State Records Committee. The records committee approves all record retention schedules as found in the various general retention schedules or agency specific schedules. When destroying records, a records destruction log should be completed. The log lists the general schedule or agency specific series number and the signature of the approved agency records officer. The log should be kept as a permanent record to provide documentation of all record destructions.

TIP: All government records must have an approved retention schedule before disposal.

Destruction of Records at the State Records Center

The State Records Center is responsible for destroying obsolete records held on behalf of government agencies. When records have met their approved retention periods, the records center will send a destruction authorization letter to the agency responsible for the records. If the agency feels the records should not be destroyed, they have the option of withholding destruction. Some reasons for this include litigation, audit, or improper retention.

If the records can be destroyed, the agency returns the signed destruction notice to the records center or notifies the records center by email.

Destruction of Records Held at the Agency

For records held at the agency office, obsolete records should be destroyed in the proper manner at the end of the retention period. Very few of Utah's laws **require** that obsolete records be destroyed or how they are to be destroyed. However, appropriate destruction of obsolete records according to their legal requirements lessens the risks of audit and liability for an agency.

There are four appropriate options for records destruction: recycling, shredding, incineration, and landfill. For records with access restricted information, landfill and recycling are not appropriate options.

Destruction Officers

To avoid costly mistakes and ensure the timely destruction of records, each agency should appoint a destruction officer. Destruction officers need to be aware of all their records and formats. They should keep agency destruction logs for their records. A destruction log provides proof that the record was legally destroyed in a timely manner. Being aware of the records your agency is currently responsible for and those they no longer possess is an essential part of good records management.

Postponing Destruction

If the entity finds that it needs the records longer than the approved retention period, they have the option to withhold destruction.

If destruction is postponed, a specific time should be set for future destruction. Withholding destruction is a common practice for records needed in an audit or for pending litigation.

If records need to be kept for continuing administrative or other use, the agency should review the record series retention schedules and determine if the retention period should be adjusted.

■ **Transfer of Custody to the State Archives**

Records that have continuing historical or enduring value are usually transferred to the State Archives. When records are transferred to the State Archives, the custody of the records is also transferred. The State Archives is the official custodian of all noncurrent records of permanent or historic value (§ 63A-12-102).

When records with a permanent disposition complete their approved retention at the State Records Center, they are transferred to the State Archives for permanent custody.

Transfer of Custody of Records at the State Records Center

Records that have a permanent disposition, but have spent their inactive stage at the State Records Center, will be transferred to the State Archives upon meeting their approved retention periods. State Archives Staff will obtain approval from the governmental entity before sending records to the State Archives.

Transfer of Custody of Records Held at the Agency

Governmental entities that have historical records which have completed their approved retention periods and are not stored at the State Records Center may transfer their records directly to the State Archives.

Records officers in this case should prepare their boxes using the same processes as those sending records to the State Records Center. However, after the boxes are prepared, the records officer must use the Archives Transfer Sheet and **not** the Records Transfer Sheet to transfer records to the State Archives.

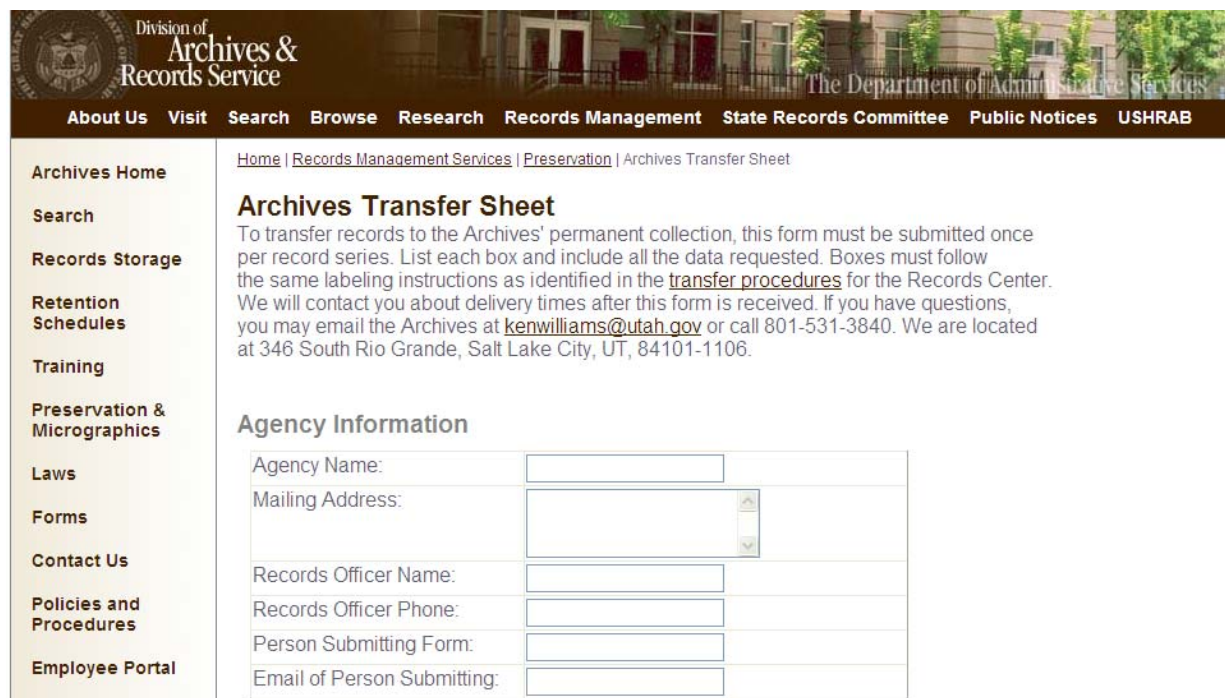
TIP: Be sure to use the Archives Transfer Sheet and not the Records Transfer sheet for the State Records Center. Each transfer sheet is used for separate locations.

Archives Records Transfers

The Archives Transfer Sheet is used when transferring custody of records from an agency directly to the State Archives. The form is a summary of the record box information being transferred. The form must be completed online.

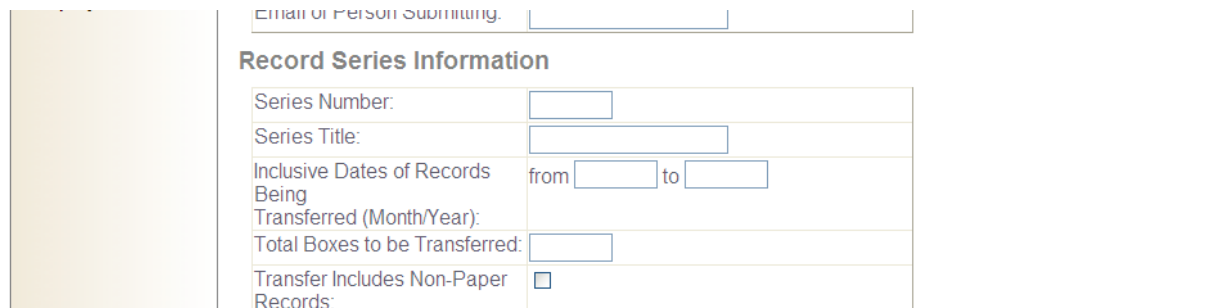
The form includes: agency and records series information as well as a description of the records being transferred.

The required agency information includes the agency name, mailing address, and contact information.



The screenshot shows the website header for the Division of Archives & Records Service, part of The Department of Administrative Services. The navigation menu includes: About Us, Visit, Search, Browse, Research, Records Management, State Records Committee, Public Notices, and USHRAB. The left sidebar contains links for: Archives Home, Search, Records Storage, Retention Schedules, Training, Preservation & Micrographics, Laws, Forms, Contact Us, Policies and Procedures, and Employee Portal. The main content area shows the breadcrumb trail: Home | Records Management Services | Preservation | Archives Transfer Sheet. The title is "Archives Transfer Sheet". The introductory text states: "To transfer records to the Archives' permanent collection, this form must be submitted once per record series. List each box and include all the data requested. Boxes must follow the same labeling instructions as identified in the [transfer procedures](#) for the Records Center. We will contact you about delivery times after this form is received. If you have questions, you may email the Archives at kenwilliams@utah.gov or call 801-531-3840. We are located at 346 South Rio Grande, Salt Lake City, UT, 84101-1106." Below this is the "Agency Information" section with a form containing the following fields: Agency Name, Mailing Address, Records Officer Name, Records Officer Phone, Person Submitting Form, and Email of Person Submitting.

Record series information identifies the records series number and title as well as the volume and type of records being transferred.



The screenshot shows the "Record Series Information" section of the form. It includes the following fields: Email of Person Submitting, Series Number, Series Title, Inclusive Dates of Records Being Transferred (Month/Year) with a range from [] to [], Total Boxes to be Transferred, and Transfer Includes Non-Paper Records with a checkbox.

The description of records being transferred calls for a summary of the contents of each box. Information in this section should include the unique agency number, the date range, and the subject range for each box. There is also a field for records that might need special care.

Description of Records Being Transferred
For each box you are going to transfer, indicate your agency box number, the dates of what is in the box (from and to, in month/year format), and a summary of the box contents. There is no need to list each file in each box. Line numbers have been added for your convenience. Add as many lines to the form as you have boxes.

Example

```
Line, Your Box #, Dates of Contents (from and to, by month/year), Box Contents Summary (no need to list files)

1. 2004-1, from 8/1998 to 8/2000, correspondence A-B
2. 2004-2, from 9/2000 to 9/2002, correspondence C-D
3. 2004-3, from 10/2002 to 10/2004, correspondence E-F
```

To ease data entry, you may compile your list in word processing software, copy it (select the text with your mouse and hit Ctrl-c) and then paste it in the textbox below (Ctrl-v). **Do not** include a list of files with the boxes.

```
Line, Your Box #, Dates of Contents (from and to, by month/year), Box Contents Summary (no need to list files):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
```

Indicate boxes that need special care and handling, or preservation attention:

```
Line, Your Box #, Preservation Needs:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
add more lines as necessary
```

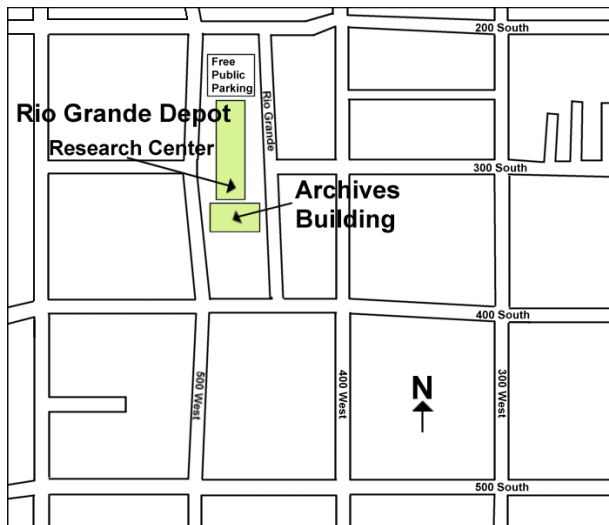
For ease of data entry, you may compile your list in word processing software, copy it (select the text with your mouse and hit Ctrl-c) and then paste it in the textbox below (Ctrl-v). **Do not** include a list of files with the boxes. **Do** include a **range** of contents per box.

<u>S</u> ubmit Query	<u>R</u> eset
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When the online form is complete, submit the query.

■ Access to Records at the State Archives

The State Archives is responsible for the care, maintenance, and access of records in their custody. The State Archives collects state and local government records of enduring value. Governmental entities and the public have access to public records in the State Archives' Research Center.



The Research Center is located at 300 South Rio Grande Street, adjacent to the State Archives Building. The Research Center is a combined research facility, housing the collections of both the Divisions of State Archives and State History. The State Archives' collection consists of government records which include documents, photographs, maps, legislative materials, vital records, and other related materials. State History's collection includes histories, photographs, newspapers, biographies, yearbooks and other compiled research sources.