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Chapter 47

Records Retention Scheduling: Terminology and Concepts*

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*Disclaimer: The information provided in this chapter does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice. It is provided for general informational purposes only. The reader is encouraged to consult with legal counsel in the relevant jurisdiction(s) to obtain advice with respect to the legal aspects of records retention and disposition. Further, the information in this chapter, links to resources in the endnotes, and the content of the cited resources were correct at the time they were published. It is possible that there may have been subsequent changes which make the information outdated at the time you are accessing it.

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This chapter introduces records retention scheduling terminology and concepts, illustrates how records retention scheduling is records and information management best practice, highlights the benefits of records retention scheduling, and discusses records retention policy.

This chapter is the first in a series of three chapters on the topic of records retention scheduling. The second chapter will address records retention schedule development, including the research of legislated records retention and broader recordkeeping requirements, and the third chapter will address implementing and maintaining a records retention schedule.

§ 47:1 Terminology

‘Archival records’, ‘disposition’, ‘preservation hold’, ‘records’, ‘records appraisal’, ‘records series’, ‘records retention schedule’, and ‘records retention period’ are key terms in the theory and practice of records retention scheduling.

§ 47:2 Terminology—Records

The ISO records management standard defines ‘record(s)’ as “information created, received and maintained as evidence and

as an asset by an organization or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.”¹

Note: ‘Data’, which can be defined as “reinterpretable representation of information in a formalized manner suitable for communication, interpretation, or processing”,² is also a type of information that an organization creates, receives, and maintains as evidence and as an asset in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. The retention of data is not typically addressed in a records retention schedule; however, organizations may wish to link (where possible) data repositories to the record series in a records retention schedule.

§ 47:3 Terminology—Records—Official Records

Some organizations distinguish between ‘official’ records and ‘transitory’ records with official records being defined as above. Doing so helps employees to identify the subset of records they create or receive and which should be retained as per a records retention schedule while being given licence to dispose of records of temporary value. However, it is important to remember that the concept of ‘official’ versus ‘transitory’ records has no basis in Canadian law. For example, Ontario’s *Evidence Act* defines a ‘record’ as “includes any information that is recorded or stored by means of any device”¹ while British Columbia’s *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* defines a ‘record’ as “includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records”.² Duplicate records, in particular, are likely to have the same weight as the official record with the result that they may be

[Section 47:2]

¹International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 3.14.

²International Organization for Standardization. (2015). *Information Technology—Vocabulary* (ISO/IEC Standard No. 2382:2015) <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso-iec:2382:ed-1:v1:en> (accessed August 7, 2020).

[Section 47:3]

¹*Evidence Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.23, s. 35(1) <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e23#BK42> (accessed August 7, 2020).

²*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 165, Schedule 1 https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_07#Schedule1 (accessed August 7, 2020).

subpoenaed and used against an organization or be expected to be disclosed under an access to (freedom of) information request unless subject to an allowable exemption even though the official record was properly disposed of under the authority of a records retention schedule.

§ 47:4 Terminology—Records—Transitory Records

Transitory records are records of “short-term value that can be destroyed immediately or after meeting . . . [their] transitory need.”¹ Although recognizing that “These categories are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive. There will always be exceptions where records could appear to be transitory but, because of the way they are used or because of individual circumstances, they should be retained as official records and maintained in a formal recordkeeping system,”² George Brown College’s Transitory Records Guidelines provide good examples of some common types of transitory records, as listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Some Common Types of Transitory Records³

Transitory Record	Examples
“Duplicates of records that are produced for reference only and which are exact copies (i.e., not annotated or changed in any way) of official records which are maintained in formal recordkeeping systems.”	Photocopies of paper documents; electronic or printed copies of electronic documents; duplicate copies of photographs and audio or video recordings; reference sets of meeting papers, technical reports, plans etc.; departmental ‘reading’ or ‘circulation’ files. Chronological files of correspondence (often referred to as ‘day files’) may or may not be transitory records, depending on institutional policy.
“Draft documents and working materials which do not document significant steps in the development of a final version, and which are not needed to track the development process or provide evidence of decisions or precedents.”	Draft documents with only proof-reading marks; initial outlines of ideas, designs, calculations etc. which were discarded or incorporated into other work which superseded them; unused audio/video material which was discarded during editing; unofficial work planning or scheduling materials or communications.

[Section 47:4]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 52. Note: This is the definition of ‘temporary record’ which ARMA International considers to be a synonym for ‘transitory record.’

²George Brown College, *Transitory Records Guidelines* <https://www.georgbrown.ca/about/archives/employee-resources/transitory-records-guidelines> (accessed August 7, 2020).

³George Brown College, *Transitory Records Guidelines* <https://www.georgbrown.ca/about/archives/employee-resources/transitory-records-guidelines> (accessed August 7, 2020).

Transitory Record	Examples
“Documents containing requests for information that have no further value after the information is provided/received.”	Requests for ‘stock’ publications, maps/directions, and arrangements for events.
“Transmittal documents that accompany records, but which do not themselves contain substantive information and are not required as evidence of receipt.”	Fax cover sheets/header slips, compliments slips, Post-it notes, routing slips etc. (paper or electronic) which contain only transmittal information (names, contact details etc.).
“Items received (solicited or unsolicited) for information only from external organizations.”	Advertising material (e.g., brochures, catalogues, price lists); e-mail messages received from list-servs; publications (e.g., magazines, newsletters).
“Items received for information only from elsewhere in the institution, often as part of a distribution list.”	‘All Staff’ memoranda and notices (e.g., concerning holidays, special events, maintenance programs); publications for staff (e.g., newsletters, directories); publications for general distribution (e.g., prospectuses, plans, marketing materials).

§ 47:5 Terminology—Records Series

A records series is “A group of related records filed/used together as a unit and evaluated as a unit for retention purposes (e.g., a personnel file consisting of an application, reference letters, benefit forms, etc.).”¹ It is records and information management best practice for the records in a series to have the same retention period. For example, an organization may keep bank statements and reconciliations for six years after the end of the organization’s fiscal year. Occasionally, it may be necessary to keep some records in a series for a different length of time. For example, an organization may keep personnel or employee files until two years after termination of employment but dispose of records of employee discipline after twenty-four months in compliance with the terms of a collective agreement. In such cases, the retention period exception would be noted in the records retention schedule for records of employee discipline alongside the retention period which applies to the balance of records in the personnel/employee files records series.

§ 47:6 Terminology—Records Appraisal

Records appraisal is “The evaluation of a records series or an individual record’s value for retention or archival purposes, based upon its current or predicted use(s) for administrative, legal, regulatory, fiscal, research, evidentiary, or historical

[Section 47:5]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 44.

purposes.”¹ The content and context of a record series (or individual record) determines its business value for retention scheduling purposes and one series (or record) may have more than one value. There are four records values: administrative/operational value, fiscal value, legal/regulatory value, and archival (or historical) value.

§ 47:7 Terminology—Records Appraisal—Administrative/Operational Value

Records with administrative/operational value “document the activities of an organization, particularly those activities that are directed toward the substantive purpose for which the organization exists. These records facilitate the performance of an organization’s primary business function.”¹ For example, a municipality’s recreation program registration records have administrative/operational value because the provision of recreational programming is one of the primary business functions of a municipal government. While these records have administrative/operational value for a relatively short period of time (e.g., to allow the program instructor to confirm the attendance of registered individuals), these records may have other, longer term values such as legal value if they include signed indemnity waivers.

§ 47:8 Terminology—Records Appraisal—Fiscal Value

Fiscal value can be defined as “The worth of records for the conduct of current or future financial or tax business and/or evidence.”¹ Records with fiscal value document or relate to an organization’s financial transactions, e.g., records such as bank statements, budgets, invoices, and payroll records and to its taxes, e.g., claims for tax benefits and tax returns. While many records of fiscal value are created/received and kept by an organization’s accounting/finance and tax functions, other busi-

[Section 47:6]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 3. Note: This is the definition of ‘appraisal’ which ARMA International considers to be synonym for ‘records appraisal.’

[Section 47:7]

¹ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 11.

[Section 47:8]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 22.

ness functions may be responsible for records of fiscal value due to the evidentiary nature of this value. For example, the production function (e.g., daily production records) and sales function (e.g., contracts or purchase orders) at a manufacturing company would have records of fiscal value because such records provide evidence to support the company's financial, tax, and audit activities.

§ 47:9 Terminology—Records Appraisal—Legal/Regulatory Value

This value is defined as “The usefulness of a record in complying with statutes and regulations, as evidence in legal proceedings, as legal proof of business transactions, or to protect an individual’s or organization’s rights and interests.”¹ While legal documents such as deeds and contracts have legal/regulatory value, many other records may possess this value (e.g., records documenting compliance with a legislated requirement, correspondence that provides evidence for a legal proceeding, and cancelled cheques which provide proof of payment). Severe consequences may arise if an organization fails to meet its legal/regulatory obligations, including “loss of rights, loss of time and money, penalties for obstruction of justice, penalties for being cited for contempt of court, adverse consequences in litigation, presumption of guilt or wrong doing, damage to the organization’s reputation or public image.”² For these reasons, legal counsel should be involved in identifying records of legal/regulatory value and in determining their retention periods.

When developing a records retention schedule, it is RIM best practice to prepare jurisdictional citation tables to capture applicable citations from in force legislation that governs or guides the retention of records. Where applicable, citation tables would also be prepared for non-legislative citations from industry regulations or professional bodies (e.g., a regulatory college).

[Section 47:9]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 31. Note: This is ARMA International’s definition of ‘legal value.’ While the *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms* does not include ‘regulatory value’, regulatory value is used in other ARMA International publications such as *Retention Management for Records and Information*.

²ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 12.

§ 47:10 Terminology—Records Appraisal—Archival (or Historical) Value

Archival value is defined as “A determination during appraisal that the item has continuing usefulness or significance in documenting the history of an entity.”¹ Because records of archival value relate to “the historical development of the organization, including its mission, programs, products, major achievements, failures, significant events and personalities, and societal relationships,”² archival value records are “often useful as a basis for management decisions regarding future projections or as a record of the organization’s origins and activities.”³ Examples of archival value records include, but are not limited to, organization charts, press releases, publications, and strategic plans.

§ 47:11 Terminology—Records Retention Schedule

Sometimes called a ‘records retention and disposition schedule’ or a ‘disposition authority’, a records retention schedule is traditionally defined as “A comprehensive list of records series titles, indicating for each series the length of time it is to be maintained. May include retention in active office areas, inactive storage areas, and when and if such series may be destroyed or formally transferred to another entity, such as an archives for historical preservation.”¹ A more simple definition is “A document that identifies and describes an organization’s records, usually at the series level, [and] provides instructions for the disposition of records throughout their life cycle.”²

A records retention schedule is, and should be communicated

[Section 47:10]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 26. Note: This is the definition of ‘historical value’ which ARMA International considers to be a synonym for ‘archival value.’

²ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 13.

³ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 13.

[Section 47:11]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 44.

²Society of American Archivists. *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/retention-schedule.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

to staff as, an organization's direction on the retention and disposition of records. It is a policy, not a guideline.

It is records and information management best practice for a records retention schedule to provide the following minimum information for each record series:

- a) Record series name.
- b) Scope note describing the purpose or function of the series and sometimes the types of records in the series.
- c) Retention period.
- d) Disposition method.
- e) Office of record identifier (i.e., the department/division, function, or other organizational unit designated to maintain the record).

Some records retention schedules divide the retention period into two phases of retention: 'active'³ (sometimes referred to as 'in office' or 'in department' retention) and 'inactive'⁴ (sometimes referred to as 'in storage' retention). Active physical records are kept in offices and in on-site file rooms while active electronic records are kept on an organization's main (production) servers. Conversely, physical inactive records are boxed and stored in lower cost storage at a record centre while inactive electronic records may be moved to slower servers or transferred to alternative electronic storage media such as tape. In addition to the storage cost-savings typically achieved for inactive records as compared to active records, the distinction between these two phases of retention often results in higher records retention schedule compliance because it identifies when employees should review records and either dispose of them (if no inactive retention period applies) or move them to lower cost storage (if an inactive retention period applies).

In addition to providing retention and disposition direction, a records retention schedule sometimes includes additional descriptive information about a record series, e.g.,

- a) Information security classification. An information secu-

³Page 2 in the ARMA International *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms* (2016). defines 'active record' as "A readily accessible record related to current, ongoing, or in-process activities and referred to on a regular basis to respond to day-to-day operational requirements."

⁴Page 28 in the ARMA International *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms* (2016). defines 'inactive record' as "A record no longer needed to conduct current business but preserved until it meets the end of its retention period. Note: Inactive records are often stored in a records center or an offline media."

rity classification is used to demarcate the security classification of records by identifying records that are public versus restricted, with restricted records being typically categorized into 2-3 levels depending on content and the severity of the damages that would arise should the records be inappropriately accessed or released. For example, the University of Saskatchewan's Data Classification consists of four levels as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Example of a 4-level Information Security Classification⁵

Information Security Classification	Description and Examples
Public	"Data that is (or can be) generally available to all employees, the general public, and the media. Unintended disclosure of such information has no effect on an individual, a group or institutional operations, assets or reputation." Some examples: Convocation lists, job postings, and published research
Internal	"Data that is available to those members of the university community or research project team with a clear need for access as part of their employment, academic, or research duties and responsibilities. Unintended disclosure of such information has minimal or no effect on an individual, a group or institutional operations, assets or reputation. Access to data is provided based on a person's relationship with the University." Some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional data: Basic floor plans and student university e-mail address ● Research data: Aggregated or de-identified personal information
Limited	"Data of a sensitive or confidential nature which is intended for limited internal use. Unintended disclosure of such information has moderate effect on an individual, a group or institutional operations, assets or reputation. Access to data is generally limited to individuals in specific job functions." Some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional data: Course grades and student numbers ● Research data: Data on identifiable human biological material such as tissue samples
Restricted	"Data of a highly sensitive or confidential nature which is intended for restricted internal use. Unintended disclosure of such information is serious and has severe or adverse effect on an individual, a group or institutional operations, assets or reputation. Access to data is restrict to specific legitimate use cases." Some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional data: Credit card numbers and security codes or passwords ● Research data: Data governed by third-party agreements or contracts with stipulations for restricted access

- b) Personal information (bank) indicator. There are various definitions of personal information in access to information/freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation, e.g., the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* defines per-

⁵University of Saskatchewan. *Data Classification* <https://www.usask.ca/avp-ict/documents/Data%20Classification%20Summary.pdf> (accessed August 7, 2020).

sonal information as “information about an identifiable individual”.⁶ Examples of personal information include information about an individual’s race or criminal history, an identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to an individual such as a social insurance number, and the views or opinions of another individual about the individual. Personal information may exist in individual records (e.g., a credit card number in a program registration receipt), in which case the records may be coded as personal information (PI) or personally identifiable information (PII) in a records retention schedule. Some personal information resides in a personal information bank, i.e., “a collection of personal information that is organized and capable of being retrieved using an individual’s name or an identifying number or particular assigned to the individual”⁷ such as an organization’s employee or personnel files which are organized by employee name or number.

- c) Vital records indicator. Vital records are “records that are fundamental to the functioning of an organization. Certain vital records contain information critical to the continued operation or survival of an organization during or immediately following a crisis. Such records are necessary to continue operations without delay under abnormal conditions. They contain information necessary to recreate an organization’s legal and financial status and to preserve the rights and obligations of stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and citizens.”⁸ Records retention schedules which identify vital records also typically indicate the method by which each series of vital records will be protected (e.g., dispersal of physical records, electronic vaulting, etc.).

Including information security classifications, personal information (bank) indicators, and/or vital records indicators in a

⁶*Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, S.C. 2000, c. 5, s. 2(1) <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-8.6/page-1.html#h-416889> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁷*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. F.31, s. 2(1) <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90f31> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁸ARMA International. (2003). *Vital Records Programs: Identifying, Managing, and Recovering Business-Critical Records* (ANSI/ARMA 5-2003), p. 3.

records retention schedule provides a central point for accessing additional information necessary for managing records during their lifecycle. For records and information management staff, this is often more efficient than creating and maintaining separate documents. For users, this is often more efficient than having to retrieve and reference separate documents.

§ 47:12 Terminology—Records Retention Period

A retention period is “The length of time a record must be kept to meet administrative, fiscal, legal, or historical requirements.”¹ It is records and information management (RIM) best practice to determine these requirements during the records appraisal process which results in retention periods being proposed based on the value(s) of record series, not the types or formats of records in individual series.

Let us use voice mails as an example. It is not RIM best practice to schedule a blanket retention period for all voice mails (e.g., 30 days) because each message has a different value to the organization and, therefore, merits a retention period of an appropriate duration. For example, a voice mail advising that the start time of a meeting has been advanced by 30 minutes is likely of no further value after it has been listened to while a voice mail from one’s boss authorizing a course of action or the expenditure of funds would require retention.

There are, however, examples in the RIM literature of the application of blanket retention periods by record type or format, for example:

- In 2013 the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in the United States announced the Capstone approach for retaining e-mail. NARA positioned Capstone as a “simplified approach to managing email”² to assist Federal agencies to meet the requirements of the Managing Government Records Directive³ and, particularly, Goal 1.2 of the Directive which requires

[Section 47:12]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 46.

²National Archives and Records Administration. *National Archives Issues Guidance for Managing Billions of Federal Emails* <https://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2013/nr13-128.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

³Office of Management and Budget and the National Archives and Records Administration. (August 12, 2012). *Managing Government Records*

agencies to manage e-mail records electronically by December 31, 2016. The Capstone approach represents a significant departure from the traditional approach of scheduling retention periods for individual e-mails based on message content and value(s) to an organization. Instead, the Capstone approach allows the categorization and retention scheduling of e-mails “based on the work and/or position of the email account owner. The Capstone approach allows for the capture of records that should be preserved as permanent from the accounts of officials at or near the top of an agency or an organizational subcomponent. An agency may designate email accounts of additional employees as Capstone when they are in positions that are likely to create or receive permanent email records. Following this approach, an agency can schedule all of the email in Capstone accounts as permanent records. The agency could then schedule the remaining email accounts in the agency or organizational unit, which are not captured as permanent, as temporary and preserve all of them for a set period of time based on the agency’s needs. Alternatively, approved existing or new disposition authorities may be used for assigning disposition to email not captured as permanent.”⁴

- When implementing an enterprise content management (ECM) system it is not uncommon for an organization to implement a policy requiring employees to identify and declare e-mail records to the system on the understanding that any messages remaining in e-mail accounts after a set period (e.g., 30, 60, or 90 days) will be considered non-records and automatically deleted. Retention periods, as per the organization’s records retention schedule, would be applied only to the e-mail records declared to the system.
- Many organizations which digitize non-archival source records dispose of the source records after a set period (e.g., 30 days) following successful completion of quality assurance of the resulting images. In these instances, the resulting images are the organization’s official records and they are retained as per the organization’s records retention schedule.

Directive (M-12-18) accessible from <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/grs/grs06-1-faqs.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁴National Archives and Records Administration. *Bulletin 2013-02: Guidance on a New Approach to Managing Email Records* <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2013/2013-02.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

**§ 47:13 Terminology—Records Retention Period—
Types of Records Retention Periods**

A records retention period may be expressed as a time period (e.g., two years), as an event or action (e.g., until superseded), or as a combination of time period and event or action (e.g., three years after audit).

A time period retention period is typically a period of one or more specified years (counted on a calendar year or fiscal year basis depending on the records and whether the organization's fiscal year is other than January to December) to facilitate the annual review and disposition of records. However, a time period retention period may be a specified number of months or days if an operational requirement or legislated records retention requirement applies. For example, s. 88(1) of Ontario's *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*¹ requires a 120-day retention period for election records: "The clerk shall retain the ballots and all other documents and materials related to an election for 120 days after declaring the results of the election under section 55." When the 120-day period ends, and provided a court has not ordered that the ballots and other documents be retained or provided that a recount has been commenced but not finally disposed of (s. 88(3)), the clerk is instructed to proceed as follows "(a) shall destroy the ballots, in the presence of two witnesses; and (b) may destroy any other documents and materials related to the election" (s. 88(2)). Further, s. 88(4) of the act requires the clerk to retain "documents filed under sections 88.25, 88.29 and 88.32 . . . until the members of the council or local board elected at the next regular election have taken office."

A retention period which is expressed as a time period or as a combination of time period and event or action should be expressed as a set quantified period and not as a minimum or maximum period. Qualifying a retention period as 'minimum' or 'maximum' opens the door to individual interpretation, invariably resulting in inconsistency as employees apply different retention periods to the same records and *ad hoc* dispositions occur.

**§ 47:14 Terminology—Records Retention Period—
Permanent Records Retention Periods**

It is not uncommon for the retention of selected records to be

[Section 47:13]

¹*Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96m32#BK94> (accessed August 7, 2020).

scheduled as ‘permanent’ in a records retention schedule for one of three reasons: the organization is uncertain of the appropriate retention period and defaults to keeping the records permanently, the organization plans to keep the records until it ceases to exist, or the organization believes the records merit permanent preservation as archival records.

Completion of a records appraisal by a records and information management professional in consultation with various subject matter experts (e.g., legal counsel) will eliminate the use of permanent retention as a default because retention periods will be set according to the value(s) of each record.

With respect to records that an organization plans to keep until it ceases to exist, the author recommends a more precise expression and application of the retention period as a combination of time period and event or action instead of scheduling a permanent retention period as in Example # 1.

Example # 1: Section 5800(1) of the Canadian federal *Income Tax Regulations* (C.R.C., c. 945) requires a corporation to retain specified records (as stated below) until two years after the day the corporation is dissolved.

“For the purposes of paragraph 230(4)(a) of the Act, the required retention periods for records and books of account of a person are prescribed as follows:

- (a) in respect of
 - (i) any record of the minutes of meetings of the directors of a corporation,
 - (ii) any record of the minutes of meetings of the shareholders of a corporation,
 - (iii) any record of a corporation containing details with respect to the ownership of the shares of the capital stock of the corporation and any transfers thereof,
 - (iv) the general ledger or other book of final entry containing the summaries of the year-to-year transactions of a corporation, and
 - (v) any special contracts or agreements necessary to an understanding of the entries in the general ledger or other book of final entry referred to in subparagraph (iv),the period ending on the day that is two years after the day that the corporation is dissolved.
- (b) in respect of all records and books of account that are not described in paragraph (a) of a corporation that is dissolved and in respect of the vouchers and accounts

necessary to verify the information in such records and books of account, the period ending on the day that is two years after the day that the corporation is dissolved.”¹

Rather than stating that these records will be retained permanently, the author recommends the following retention period: E+2 wherein ‘E’ stands for the event (in this case, dissolution of the corporation) and ‘2’ stands for 2 years after the occurrence of the event. Because other event-based retention periods would be included in the records retention schedule, the definition of the event (i.e., dissolution of the corporation) would be stated in the schedule for clarity.

With respect to scheduling a permanent retention period for the records an organization believes to merit permanent preservation as archival records, the author recommends against co-mingling the retention period and the disposition method as in Example # 2 below.

Example # 2: An archivist would consider an organization’s audited financial statements to be archival records. While staff (particularly in the accounting/finance and tax functions) would need to reference audited financial statements for various reasons for a few years after their creation (perhaps 7-10 years), they would not need to reference them in perpetuity. Therefore, rather than scheduling them for permanent retention, the author recommends they be scheduled for a finite period to reflect their use and that their disposition method be flagged as ‘archival’ to allow the records to be transferred to an archives.

§ 47:15 Terminology—Preservation Hold

Known also as a ‘destruction hold’, ‘destruction suspension’, ‘legal hold’, or ‘litigation hold’, a preservation order is “A hold placed on the scheduled destruction of records due to foreseeable or pending litigation, governmental investigation, audit, or special organizational requirements.”¹ There are four important points to note regarding the application of a preservation hold:

[Section 47:14]

¹*Income Tax Regulations* (C.R.C., 954) https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._945/page-73.html#h-591121 (accessed August 7, 2020).

[Section 47:15]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 30. Note: This is the definition of ‘destruction hold’.

- a) A preservation hold should be implemented and revoked in writing by, for example, preparing and issuing a preservation hold notice to the employees or departments with custody or control of the records deemed relevant to the matter. Subject matter experts (SMEs) should prepare (or at least be consulted in the preparation of) a preservation hold notice to ensure the appropriate records are identified for hold, for example:
- Legal counsel in the event of litigation and some types of governmental investigations (e.g., human rights complaints).
 - The organization's chief financial officer and/or auditor in the event of audits.
 - The appropriate function or role for the specific organizational requirement necessitating the hold, for example an organization's Access to Information/Freedom of Information Officer in the event of a wide-ranging, complex access to (freedom of) information request.
- b) It is records and information management (and legal) best practice to retain—as an audit trail—the preservation hold notice (or other written documentation regarding the implementation and revocation of the hold).
- c) A preservation hold does not suspend all scheduled records dispositions in an organization. It should only suspend the scheduled disposition of the records deemed relevant to the matter necessitating the hold.
- d) A preservation hold is not a records retention period. Rather, it is a formal documented process which suspends the scheduled retention and disposition of specified records. When a preservation hold is revoked, the 'retention clock' resumes for the records that were on hold. Depending on a hold's duration, some or all of the records that were on hold should be processed for immediate disposition because they will have reached (or exceeded) their approved retention periods by the time the hold is revoked.

§ 47:16 Terminology—Disposition

Disposition is “the final action taken per the retention sched-

tion hold' which ARMA International considers to be a synonym for 'destruction moratorium', 'destruction suspension', 'freeze notice', 'hold', 'hold notice', 'legal hold', 'litigation hold', 'preservation order', and 'suspension order.'

ule, concluding with destruction, transfer or permanent preservation.”¹

Destruction is the most common disposition method with physical records being shredded to maintain confidentiality and security and electronic records being deleted. It should not be possible to recover destroyed records, a particular challenge when destroying electronic records. Advice from the Washington State Archives (reprinted below) discusses four common methods of destroying electronic records: deletion, overwriting, degaussing, and physical destruction of electronic storage media.

- a) Deletion: “The simplest, easiest and most appropriate method for non-sensitive/non-confidential records is to simply hit the delete key. Remember that deleting is not exactly the same as destroying the record; it just destroys the access to the record. The actual “1’s” and “0’s” may continue to exist on the storage medium until they are overwritten—and can be recovered using digital forensics.”²
- b) Overwriting: “A more effective method of destroying electronic records is to use software that overwrites the records multiple times (up to 10 times) with strings of “1’s” and “0’s.” This makes the possibility that the records can be recovered much more remote than simply hitting the delete key.”³
- c) Degaussing: “Exposing magnetic media (such as tapes and floppy disks) to a powerful magnetic field to scramble the data. It may take multiple passes of the magnet over the storage media to ensure that the records are properly destroyed.”⁴
- d) Physical destruction of electronic storage media: “Actu-

[Section 47:16]

¹ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 16.

²Washington State Archives. (2016). *Destroying Non-Archival Records: Methods for Destroying Electronic Records* accessible from <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx> (accessed on August 7, 2020).

³Washington State Archives. (2016). *Destroying Non-Archival Records: Methods for Destroying Electronic Records* accessible from <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx> (accessed on August 7, 2020).

⁴Washington State Archives. (2016). *Destroying Non-Archival Records: Methods for Destroying Electronic Records* accessible from <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx>

ally physically destroying the storage media may be the most appropriate destruction method for the most sensitive/confidential records. It may also be the most appropriate method of destroying records stored on portable media, such as shredding CDs and DVDs, cutting up old floppy disks, etc.”⁵

According to the ISO 15489-1 records management standard, four principles should govern the destruction of records: “a) destruction should always be authorized; b) records pertaining to pending or actual litigation or legal action or investigation should not be destroyed while that action is underway or anticipated to rise; c) records destruction should be carried out in a way that ensures complete destruction and which complies with any security or access restrictions on the record; d) destruction, like any disposition action, should be documented.”⁶

The goal of the destruction disposition method is to destroy all instances of a record, i.e., to not keep any copies. For many organizations this is easier said than done given the ease with which copies of records can be made and the diversity of locations in which records, both physical and electronic, can be stored.

Instead of being destroyed at the end of their retention periods, some records will be transferred to another entity, e.g., returned to clients (in the case of some legal records) or returned to the originator (in the case of an organization holding a letter of credit issued by a financial institution). Archival records may be transferred to an archives in their entirety or in part by sampling or selection.

Other records will be flagged for permanent preservation (i.e., never to be destroyed) because the records have been “determined to have sufficient historical, administrative, legal, fiscal, or other value to warrant continuing preservation.”⁷ Archival records are a subset of permanent records.

[a.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx](https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx) (accessed on August 7, 2020).

⁵Washington State Archives. (2016). *Destroying Non-Archival Records: Methods for Destroying Electronic Records* accessible from <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/how-to-destroy-non-archival-records.aspx> (accessed on August 7, 2020).

⁶International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

⁷ARMA International. (2016). *Glossary of Records Management and Information Governance Terms*, p. 38. Note: This is ARMA International’s defi-

§ 47:17 Terminology—Archival Records

An ‘archival record’ is “Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs that are preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator.”¹ The Dictionary of Archives Terminology further states that ‘archival records’ “connotes documents rather than artifacts or published materials, although collections of archival records may contain artifacts and books. Archival records may be in any format, including text on paper or in electronic formats, photographs, motion pictures, videos, sound recordings.”²

A professionally trained archivist should appraise the records in a records retention schedule to identify records of archival value. An archivist may take a number of factors into consideration when appraising records, for example, “the records’ provenance and content, their authenticity and reliability, their order and completeness, their condition and costs to preserve them, and their intrinsic value.”³ The ‘archives’ (or similar) disposition method is used in a records retention schedule to identify records of archival value while the ‘archives selection’ (or similar) disposition method is used to identify where sampling will be used to select a portion of a record series for preservation as an archival record.

As stated above under disposition, archival records are transferred to an archives in whole or in part. The archives may be operated by the organization which is disposing of the records or by a third party (e.g., a government, university, or community archives). In either case, custodianship of the records transfers to the archives. The *Library and Archives of Canada Act* requires the archival records of federal government institutions to be transferred to the Librarian and Archivist of Canada while provincial/territorial legislation typi-

inition of ‘permanent record.’

[Section 47:17]

¹Society of American Archivists. *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/archival-record.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

²Society of American Archivists. *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/archival-record.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

³Society of American Archivists. *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/appraisal.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

cally requires archival records of provincial/territorial government institutions to be transferred to a provincial or territorial archivist. Municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and private sector organizations which transfer their archival records to a third party typically do so under a loan or donation agreement.

§ 47:18 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice

According to ARMA International, “The goal of retention management is to ensure that records (from within an organization’s trove of information resources) are identified, appraised, and maintained for an appropriate period of time in such a way that they are accessible and retrievable, and premature disposition and/or unauthorized retention or disposal can be avoided.”¹ Retention management is records and information management best practice and a requirement of both the international records management standard (ISO 15489-1) and the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles® as described below.

§ 47:19 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—ISO 15489-1

Section 8.1 of the standard calls for the development of four records controls: metadata schemas for records, business classification schemes, access and permissions rules, and disposition authorities (a records retention schedule). Section 8.5 requires the development of disposition authorities to “regulate the disposition of records”¹ and provides the following instructions:

- a) Disposition authorities should be developed “based on the results of appraisal (see Clause 7), carried out with

[Section 47:18]

¹ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 2.

[Section 47:19]

¹International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016). s. 8.5.

the purpose of establishing rules for records retention and disposition.”²

- b) Disposition authorities should “identify groups or classes of records that share retention periods and disposition actions. Classes should be linked to their business context and should consist of the following: a) identifier(s) for the class; b) description of the class (for example, a description of a function or activity); c) disposition action (for example, destruction, migration or transfer of control); d) retention period; e) trigger events (from which to calculate the retention period).”³
- c) Disposition authorities “may also contain instructions on when records should be transferred from one storage environment to another or for continued retention of the records by the responsible organisation.”⁴
- d) Disposition authorities should “be authorized, dated, implemented and regularly reviewed to take account of changing requirements. In some jurisdictions, this should involve authorization from an external authority or regulator.”⁵

Section 8.5 further instructs that “Implementation of disposition authorities should be monitored and documented (see 9.9) and should be regularly reviewed for any new requirements affecting the business activity documented in the records, identified as a result of appraisal (see Clause 7).”⁶

Section 9 of the standard addresses processes for creating, capturing and managing records which are to be integrated into procedures and applicable systems (including records sys-

²International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 8.5.

³International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 8.5.

⁴International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 8.5.

⁵International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 8.5.

⁶International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 8.5.

tems⁷) and supported by “policy, designated responsibilities, procedures and training.”⁸ Section 9.9 requires that “Disposition processes . . . be carried out in conformance with rules in authorized and current disposition authorities (see 8.5)”⁹ and that “Records systems. . . be designed to support the execution of disposition actions (see 5.3).”¹⁰ Section 9.9 further requires:

- a) Records and metadata be “retained for the time periods specified in disposition authorities.”¹¹
- b) Implementation of the disposition actions specified in disposition authorities. Disposition actions may include the destroying the records and metadata, their transfer to “an organization that has assumed responsibility for the business activity through restructure, sale, privatization or other business change,”¹² or their transfer to “an institutional or external archive for permanent retention.”¹³
- c) Review of disposition actions prior to implementation to ensure requirements have not changed.
- d) Disposition processes which support the retention of selected metadata for records “beyond the minimum

⁷Section 3.16 of *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016) defines ‘records system’ as “information system which captures, manages and provides access to records over time.”

⁸International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016). s. 9.1.

⁹International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016). s. 9.9.

¹⁰International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

¹¹International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation - Records management - Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

¹²International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

¹³International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

retention period for the record for which it is associated.”¹⁴

- e) Records destruction be governed by the following principles: “a) destruction should always be authorized; b) records pertaining to pending or actual litigation or legal action or investigation should not be destroyed while that action is underway or anticipated to arise; c) records destruction should be carried out in a way that ensures complete destruction and which complies with any security or access restrictions on the record; d) destruction, like any disposition action, should be documented.”¹⁵

§ 47:20 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®

The Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles® (the Principles) are “a generally accepted global standard”¹ applicable to organizations of all sectors, industry types, and standards. The Principles “identify the critical hallmarks of information governance” and “establish a high-level framework of good practices.”² They also “provide organizations with both a standard of conduct for governing information and guidelines by which to judge that conduct. Organizations complying with the Principles may assure stakeholders and the general public that they are embracing their responsibilities for information governance and engaging in continuous quality improvement initiatives.”³

Two of the eight Principles address retention and disposition, i.e., the Principle of Retention and the Principle of Disposition.

¹⁴International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

¹⁵International Organization for Standardization. (2016). *Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles* (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016), s. 9.9.

[Section 47:20]

¹ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 6.

²ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 6.

³ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 6.

§ 47:21 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®—Principle of Retention

Table 3 provides the actual text and annotations for this principle.

Table 3: Principle of Retention¹

“An organization shall maintain its information assets for an appropriate time, taking into account its legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational, and historical requirements.”

<p>“Information assets document an organization’s business operations and are essential to effective business management. Proper, consistent retention of information assets is especially important today, as organizations are creating and storing enormous quantities of information—most of it in electronic form. To control information volume, an organization needs a retention program that will define what information to retain, how long to maintain it, and when and how to dispose of it when retention is no longer required. This is based on the concept that information has a <i>life cycle</i>, which begins at its creation and ends at its final disposition.”</p>	
7.1	<p>“As part of its retention program, an organization must develop a <i>record retention schedule</i> specifying what information assets must be retained and for what length of time. Retention decisions are based on the information content and the organization’s legal, fiscal, operational, and historical requirements for that content.”</p>
7.1.1	<p>“Legal and regulatory—Local, national, and international laws mandate the retention of some information assets for a specific (generally, the minimum) period. To comply with these laws and regulations, an organization must conduct research in consultation with legal counsel to determine all retention requirements. Failure to do so may result in costly penalties and loss of legal rights.”</p>
7.1.2	<p>“Fiscal—Information assets that have financial or tax value must be retained to ensure the timely payment of obligations and the proper logging of receivables, as well as to support the organization’s financial audits and tax returns. Legal research and consultation with legal counsel must be undertaken to satisfy fiscal retention requirements.”</p>
7.1.3	<p>“Operational—An organization must determine how long information assets are needed to satisfy business needs. In some cases, the organization’s actuarial or analytical needs for the information may be longer than the legal retention period. Such needs are determined by interviewing those most knowledgeable about the operational value and risks associated with each information type.”</p>
7.1.4	<p>“Historical—Information assets that depict the history or an organization may be preserved for the life of that organization, typically in archives specifically designed for this purpose. Examples of historical record include articles of incorporation, by-laws, charters, and board minutes. Historical information normally constitutes a very small percentage of an organization’s total information volume.”</p>

[Section 47:21]

¹ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), Appendix A: The ARMA International Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®, p. 24-25.

7.2	<p>“Once the retention requirements listed above are determined, an organization must conduct a risk assessment to determine the appropriate retention period for each type of information asset. Retention periods are stated in a records retention schedule, which is formalized as organizational policy and approved by senior management. Retention decision makers must be aware that the presence or absence of information can be helpful or harmful to the organization. Therefore, to minimize the risks and costs associated with retention, it is essential to implement and follow the retention schedule consistently. (See 8. Principle of Disposition)”</p>
7.3	<p>“Retention schedules must be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they remain current with changing legal and regulatory requirements.”</p>

§ 47:22 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®—Principle of Disposition

Table 4 provides the actual text and annotations for this principle.

Table 4: Principle of Disposition¹

“An organization shall provide secure and appropriate disposition for information assets no longer required to be maintained, in compliance with applicable laws and the organization’s policies.”

8.1	<p>“At the end of their retention period, information assets must be designated for disposition, which includes destruction, transfer to another entity, or permanent preservation. In many cases, the appropriate disposition is secure deletion of the information or destruction of the information media. If media must be transported for destruction, it must be securely conveyed and irreversibly destroyed.</p> <p>In other cases, information assets may be returned to clients, transferred to another organization in connection with divestiture, or transferred for ongoing preservation to an historical archives, library, or museum. Information assets to be transferred must be appraised by a qualified professional. Organizations must identify the hardware and software that produced the information assets. All transfers must be securely completed and documented in keeping with the organization’s retention policy.</p> <p>If information assets are converted or migrated to new media, disposition of the previous media may be warranted. In all instances, the organization must ensure that all versions and copies of the information are accounted for and documented in the disposition process.”</p>
8.2	<p>“A duty to suspend disposition (i.e., a hold) may arise if there is an audit, litigation, or regulatory action. The organization must designate the information assets to be held pending resolution of the litigation or audit and notify all affected personnel when a hold is issued or released.”</p>

[Section 47:22]

¹ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), Appendix A: The ARMA International Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®, p. 25.

8.3	“Records, regardless of format, may be required to be permanently retained. Information systems that contain permanent records must support long-term retention periods. Suitable preservation formats must be selected, and/or appropriate conversion and migration protocols followed. In some cases, the relevant hardware and software that produced the records must be maintained, as well.” ²
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The Information Governance Maturity Model (Maturity Model) which is “based on the Principles, as well as the extant standards, best practices, and legal/regulatory requirements that surround information governance”³ defines “the characteristics of effective information governance programs at five distinct levels of development and completeness.”⁴ The “unique Maturity Model descriptions applicable to each level . . . allow organizations to identify *current* status and plan for attaining a *desired* status.”⁵

Level 3 (Essential) is the minimum level in the Maturity Model. Level 3 is described as follows: “This level describes the essential or minimum requirements that must be addressed to meet the organization’s legal, regulatory, and business requirements. Level 3 is characterized by defined policies and procedures and the implementation of processes specifically intended to improve information governance. Level 3 organizations may be missing significant opportunities for streamlining the business and controlling costs, but they demonstrate the key components of a sound program and may be minimally compliant with legal, operational, and other responsibilities.”⁶

§ 47:23 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®—Maturity Levels for the Principle of Retention

Table 5 lists the requirements at each of the five levels of the Maturity Model for the Principle of Retention.

²ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), Appendix A: The ARMA International Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®, p. 25.

³ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 6.

⁴ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 6.

⁵ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 8.

⁶ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 7.

Table 5: Maturity Model Levels for the Principle of Retention

“This Principle addresses the maintenance of information assets such that they are retained for the proper length of time per the retention schedule and appropriate mandates, e.g., legal, fiscal, and historical requirements.”¹

Maturity Level	Description ²
Level 1 (Substandard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is no current, documented records retention schedule or policy.” • “Rules and regulations defining retention are not identified or centralized; retention guidelines are haphazard, at best.” • “Employees are not made aware of the requirements for keeping or disposing of the information assets they create and receive.” • In the absence of records retention schedules and policies, employees either keep everything or dispose of information assets based on their own business needs, rather than on organizational needs.”
Level 2 (In Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A records retention schedule and policies are available, but they do not encompass all information assets, have not undergone an official review, and are not well-known throughout the organization.” • “Only those employees with direct information management program responsibilities receive training about the requirements for keeping or disposing of the information assets they create and receive, but only as the requirements relate to their program responsibilities.” • “The records retention schedule and policies are not updated or maintained regularly.” • “The litigation hold process is in place, but it may not be monitored to ensure its effectiveness so relevant information may be missed.” • “Educational materials and training activities related to retention policies are not available.”
Level 3 (Essential)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The organization has instituted a policy for the retention of information assets; a formal records retention that is tied to rules and regulations is consistently applied throughout the organization.” • “All employees receive training about the requirements for keeping or disposing of the information assets they create and receive but only during orientation.” • “The litigation hold process is in place and compliance is monitored.” • “The organization has created specific goals related to information asset retention.”
Level 4 (Proactive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Employees understand how to classify records and other information assets appropriately.” • “All employees receive documented, ongoing training about the requirements for keeping or disposing of the information assets they create and receive.” • “Records retention schedules are reviewed on a regular basis and there is a process to adjust retention schedules, as needed.” • “The appropriate retention of information assets is a major organizational objective.”

[Section 47:23]

¹ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles*® (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 15.

²ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles*® (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 15-16.

Maturity Level	Description ²
Level 5 (Transformational)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The appropriate retention of information assets is an important consideration at the senior management and board levels.” • “All employees receive documented, ongoing training about the requirements for keeping or disposing of the information assets they create and receive, and compliance with this training is audited and documented regularly.” • “Retention is applied to all information assets in an organization and is not limited to official records only.” • “Information assets are consistently retained for the appropriate periods, per retention schedules.” • “The litigation process is in place, routinely monitored, and actively reminds employees of requirements throughout the litigation action.” • “The organization’s information asset retention goals have been met, and there is an established, routinized process to ensure goals are reviewed and revised, as needed.”

§ 47:24 Retention Management is Records and Information Management Best Practice—Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®—Maturity Levels for the Principle of Disposition

Table 6 lists the requirements at each of the five levels of the Maturity Model for the Principle of Disposition.

Table 6: Maturity Model Levels for the Principle of Disposition

“This Principle provides for the secure and appropriate disposition of information assets per applicable external regulations and internal policies and procedures.”¹

Maturity Level	Description ²
Level 1 (Substandard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There are no processes or there is no documentation of processes for transferring or disposing of information assets.” • “Employees are not made aware of their information disposition responsibilities.” • “A process for suspending the disposition of information assets in the event of investigation or litigation is non-existent or applied inconsistently throughout the organization.”
Level 2 (In Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Preliminary guidelines for the disposition of information assets are established.” • “There is a realization of the importance of consistently suspending the disposition of information assets, when required.” • “Only those employees with information management program responsibilities [are] receiving training about their information disposition responsibilities, but that training is limited to their program responsibilities.” • “The disposition of information assets is not audited or enforced.”

[Section 47:24]

¹ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 16.

²ARMA International. (2017). *Implementing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®* (ARMA International TR 30-2017), p. 16-17.

Maturity Level	Description ²
Level 3 (Essential)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Official policy and procedures for the disposition of information assets have been developed.” ● “Official policy and procedure for suspending the disposition of information assets have been developed.” ● “Although policies and procedures for the disposition of information assets exist, they may not be standardized throughout the organization.” ● “All employees receive training about their information disposition responsibilities, but only during orientation.” ● “The organization has created specific goals related to the disposition of information assets.”
Level 4 (Proactive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “All employees receive documented, ongoing training about their information disposition responsibilities.” ● “Information asset disposition procedures are applied consistently throughout the organization.” ● “The process for suspending the disposition of information assets is defined, understood, and used consistently throughout the organization.” ● “Information assets are disposed of in a manner appropriate to the assets’ content, media, and format and in accordance with retention policies.”
Level 5 (Transformational)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “The information asset disposition process covers all information, regardless of media or format.” ● “Information asset disposition is assisted by technology and integrated into all applicable data applications, repositories, and systems.” ● “All employees receive documented, ongoing training about their information disposition responsibilities, and compliance with this training is audited and documented regularly.” ● “Information asset disposition processes are applied consistently and effectively.” ● “Processes for information asset disposition are regularly evaluated and updated to account for operational changes.” ● “The organization’s information asset disposition goals have been met and it has an established, routinized process to ensure goals are reviewed and revised, as needed.”

§ 47:25 Records Retention Management Benefits

Managing the retention of records provides many benefits for an organization as discussed below.

However, while the benefits of records retention management are compelling, there is no shortcut to preparing a comprehensive, customized records retention schedule to provide precise retention and disposition policy for an organization’s records. Reviewing the retention schedules of other organizations—whether in the same or different industry—can be helpful to gain insight into options for retention schedule formatting and content; however, you should not copy another organization’s records retention schedule because doing so fails to reflect your organization’s particular operational, fiscal, legal, and archival requirements for retaining and disposing of records. Further, your organization may be called upon in the event of litigation, audit, or government investigation to demonstrate that its records retention schedule was systematically developed by responsible individuals in the normal course of business and in accordance with records and information management principles or best practices. Thus, it is crucial

that an organization's retention management policy and practices will be defensible in a court of law.

**§ 47:26 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Consistency, Certainty, and Boundaries**

An essential component of a Records and Information Management Program, a records retention schedule articulates an organization's policy on records retention and disposition. The objective of a retention schedule is not just to destroy valueless records in order to reduce storage costs and improve access to current, more useful information—it is also about implementing requirements to ensure the existence of valuable and required records. Therefore, a records retention schedule reduces an organization's exposure to *ad hoc*, inconsistent, or inappropriate records retention and disposition practices.

A records retention schedule also “provides certainty and boundaries to the volume and timeframe of records that are being retained. You know with some certainty what you have and what you don't have, and why. It provides boundaries and certainty to the records that are available, not only for litigation, but also for audits, historical research, and all other purposes. Inside the boundaries, the records are there; outside the boundaries, they are gone. Not to deprive litigants of records, not to hide anything, not to deprive posterity of anything; but because some boundary had to be drawn—and none was drawn—and some records fell outside that boundary. If the boundary is prudently chosen, it will withstand any challenge to its legitimacy.”¹

**§ 47:27 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Improved Operational Efficiency**

A records retention schedule can help reduce the volume of duplicate records in an organization while also reducing records volume overall. These reductions result in reduced records search time (and, therefore, reduced records search costs), may improve customer service through faster retrieval of information, and support more expedient decision-making. In the absence of a retention schedule, “anecdotal evidence indicates that most organizations retain from 30 to 60 percent more re-

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¹Montana, John. (2010). *How to Develop a Retention Schedule*, p. 7-8.

records than are needed to operate the business”¹ because employees “often feel ill-equipped to and uncomfortable about making record retention or destruction decisions.”²

**§ 47:28 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Reduced Records Storage Requirements and
Costs**

The application of retention periods and expedient disposition typically result in reduced records volumes or at least stabilization in records growth by creating a controlled balance between the amount of records created/received and the amount of records that are disposed of. For physical records, a records retention schedule enables an organization to reduce (or defer) the purchase of additional storage equipment and reduce (or maintain) the foot-print of its on-site records storage space while also using less expensive storage for inactive records. For electronic records, a records retention schedule enables an organization to manage electronic storage costs more effectively by, for example, deferring the purchase of additional servers or implementing online, near line, and off-line storage. It is important to bear in mind, however, that reduced costs should not be the overriding principle when proposing retention periods—an organization must strike an appropriate balance between keeping the records needed to run the business and the cost of their retention.

**§ 47:29 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Identification of Legislated Recordkeeping
Requirements**

Employees in functions such as corporate secretary, finance, and human resources usually have a good understanding of the legislated retention requirements that apply to the records for which they are responsible and are also often aware of legislated requirements otherwise affecting their management of records (e.g., the records to be submitted to a regulator or made available to external parties such as shareholders,

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¹Robek, Mary F., Brown, Gerald F., and Stephens, David O. (1995, 4th edition). *Information and Records Management: Document-based Information Systems*, p. 43.

²Robek, Mary F., Brown, Gerald F., and Stephens, David O. (1995, 4th edition). *Information and Records Management: Document-based Information Systems*, p. 43.

requirements to keep records in a specified format or at a specified location, etc.). However, researching legislated records retention requirements during retention schedule development is often the first time that an organization documents the legislated retention requirements which apply to all records in the organization. Further, if the legislated requirements research also includes documenting broader recordkeeping requirements as highlighted in the examples above, this is also often the first time that an organization has a comprehensive understanding of all of its recordkeeping obligations. Since some legislated records retention requirements may be vague or ambiguous, having a records retention schedule demonstrates that an organization is acting in good faith to comply with the intent of legislation. For example, many statutes contain requirements to keep records but do not specify a time period. By including those records in a retention schedule and keeping them to satisfy operational or other requirements, an organization can demonstrate its attempt at compliance.

**§ 47:30 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Preparation for Litigation, Audit, or
Government Investigation**

Consideration of legal value when developing a records retention schedule and having legal counsel review a retention schedule prior to its implementation can provide some protection from legal risk by ensuring retention of the records that may be needed for the organization's defence. Having a high rate of retention schedule compliance can help ensure that records are disposed of on schedule, resulting in fewer records to be searched during discovery¹ when the organization is required to identify, locate, and provide all relevant records not subject to solicitor-client privilege. It can also demonstrate that records retention and disposition occur in the 'normal course of business' as per organizational policy and not as a knee-jerk

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¹Page 3 of ARMA International's *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015) defines 'discovery' as: "1. The process of identifying, locating, securing, and producing information and materials for the purpose of obtaining evidence for utilization in the legal process. 2. The process of reviewing all materials that may be potentially relevant to a litigation and/or that may need to be disclosed to other parties, and of evaluating evidence to prove or disprove facts, theories, or allegations. Note: There are several ways to conduct discovery, the most common of which are interrogatories, requests for production of documents, and depositions."

mechanism for destroying unfavourable evidence prior to litigation, audit, or government investigation in an attempt to stave off a potentially adverse outcome. Suspending the scheduled disposition of those records relevant to reasonably anticipated or pending litigation, audit, or government investigation and ensuring those records are protected from disposition until the litigation, audit, or government investigation has concluded minimizes the risks and liabilities of records retention. As we saw with Enron and Arthur Anderson, significant fines can result from unlawful, risky, or unwise records retention and disposition practices.²

**§ 47:31 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Support the Future Availability and Usability
of Electronic Records**

Electronic records are fragile, susceptible to deterioration over time, and are often subject to hardware and/or software dependencies. By inventorying records and appraising their value, a retention schedule can identify how long electronic records will be needed so appropriate measures can be implemented to ensure the records will remain accessible and useable for the approved retention period. For example, an organization can plan to migrate electronic records to new storage media over time to keep pace with new technology.

**§ 47:32 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Identification of Records of Archival Value**

In the absence of a records retention schedule, the often commonly held belief that all old records are archival records results in the indiscriminate stockpiling of records which no longer have value to the organization, let alone have archival value. In most organizations, archival records “represent an extremely small percentage of the total records volume of the organization, usually not over 1 to 2 percent. In government agencies, this Table is usually higher because such organizations may maintain more historical records for use by the gen-

²Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). (2002). *Arthur Andersen Fined, Given Probation over Enron Scandal* <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/arthur-andersen-fined-given-probation-over-enron-scandal-1.340066> (accessed August 7, 2020).

eral public.”¹ Developing a comprehensive and well-researched retention schedule will assist a professional archivist in identifying records of archival value so provisions can be made for their preservation.

**§ 47:33 Records Retention Management Benefits—
Support for Disaster Recovery and Business
Continuity**

A records retention schedule which identifies vital records provides an inventory of the records which are essential to an organization’s operations during a disaster and to the full restoration of the organization’s operations following a disaster.

§ 47:34 Records Retention Policy

This section discusses the establishment, via policy, of decision-making authority for records retention and the additional policy statements an organization requires to support the retention and disposition of records.

**§ 47:35 Records Retention Policy—Records Retention
Decision-making Authority**

It is records and information management best practice for an organization’s executive-level or senior management to have the “ultimate authority for all decisions relating to retention of records.”¹ Sometimes this authority is delegated via policy to a named position in the organization, e.g., when the Clerk of a municipality is named the authority for records retention (and usually all other aspects of a Records and Information Management Program) in a delegated authority by-law passed by the municipality’s council. In other cases, retention management authority may be delegated via policy to a group of individuals such as a committee. Table 7 provides an example of the delegation of retention management decision-making authority to a cross-departmental committee (the Information Governance/Records Retention Committee) while the RIM

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¹Robek, Mary F., Brown, Gerald F., and Stephens, David O. (1995, 4th edition). *Information and Records Management: Document-based Information Systems*, p. 60.

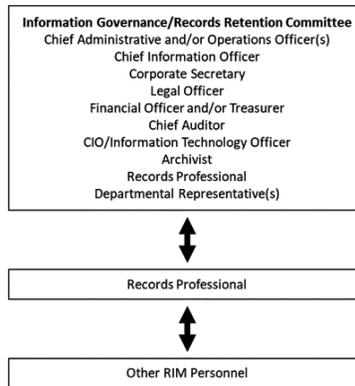
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¹ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 7.

professional and other RIM staff are responsible for the day-to-day leadership and oversight of the RIM Program.

In the public sector it is not uncommon for the ultimate authority for records retention decisions to reside with a third party. One example of this occurs when a provincial archivist is required by law to approve the retention of the province’s government records. For example, the government records² responsibilities of the Archivist of Manitoba under *The Archives and Recordkeeping Act*, C.C.S.M. c. A132 include, but are not limited to, “develop the records schedule process and establish any forms for use in this process” (s. 8(d)) and “approve records schedules” (s. 8(e)). Similarly, s. 12(1) of the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, S.C. 2004, c. 11 states “No government or ministerial record, whether or not it is surplus property of a government institution, shall be disposed of, including by being destroyed, without the written consent of the Librarian and Archivist or of a person to whom the Librarian and Archivist has, in writing, delegated the power to give such consents.”

Table 7—Example: Records Retention Decision-making Authority³



²*The Archives and Recordkeeping Act*, C.C.S.M. c. A132 defines a government record as “a record created or received by, or for, a government body in carrying out its activities” (s. 1) but excluding the personal or constituency records of a minister, library materials, artifacts, or records the archivist may receive from other entities as allowed by the act (e.g., a municipality or a child and family services agency). The Act defines a government body as “(a) a department, (b) a government agency, (c) the Executive Council office, and (d) the office of a minister” (s. 1).

³ARMA International. (2015). *Retention Management for Records and Information* (ARMA International TR 27-2015), p. 8.

§ 47:36 Records Retention Policy—Records Retention Policy Statements

In addition to establishing via policy the responsibility for an organization's records retention decision-making authority, an organization requires additional policy statements to support the retention and disposition of records. These statements may be included in an organization's records and information management policy, a standalone records retention and disposition policy, or the organization's records retention schedule which is itself a policy on the retention and disposition of the organization's records. Regardless of the promulgation method, the policy statements should address the topics below.

§ 47:37 Records Retention Policy—Records Retention Policy Statements—Ownership of Records

Employees are the custodians of the records they create or receive and maintain in their jobs and they are required to manage the retention and disposition of those records according to the organization's policies. Therefore, a policy statement declaring the organization's ownership of records helps to provide context for that requirement. Records ownership statements can be worded in various ways as shown in the examples in Table 8.

Table 8—Policy Statement Examples: Records Ownership

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
Capital Power Corporation ¹ (Alberta)	"Records, regardless of format or location, are the property of Capital Power and do not belong to individuals, business units, shared services units, regions, departments or other parties that created and received them."

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¹Capital Power Corporation. (undated). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on 'records management policy' at <https://www.capital-power.com/> (accessed August 7, 2020).

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
City of London ² (Ontario)	<p>“All City records deemed corporate records that have been received or created by any City employee fall into the custody and control of the Corporation and are the property of The Corporation of the City of London.” “Records created or accumulated by City Councillors acting in their political or constituency capacity are not corporate records where these records are stored and managed separately from City records.”</p> <p>“Records in the custody of consultants, contractors, and private service providers performing work for the City may be under the control of the City and subject to the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990</i>.”</p> <p>“Records created by volunteers or part time workers performing work under the direction of a City employee are corporate records subject to this policy and to the provisions of the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990</i>.”</p>
Professional Geoscientists Ontario ³ (Ontario)	<p>“The PGO owns all records, including business records, created, received or maintained by or on behalf of the Association, unless it is clear that the sender has retained ownership. All PGO records are to be treated as an Association resource, not as the property of any Councilor, officer, employee or other person working for or on behalf of the Association.”</p>
University of Western Ontario ⁴ (Ontario)	<p>“4.00 All records created, received, used or maintained by officers and employees in the course of their duties on behalf of the University are the property of the University. Officers or employees leaving their positions with the University shall leave all records for their successors. This applies to both temporary and permanent departures, including transfers within the University.”</p> <p>“Notwithstanding section 4.00, the provisions of this policy do not apply to the records that are created or acquired by faculty members or other officers or employees pursuant to their individual responsibilities for teaching or research, unless the records are donated to the University Archives.”</p>

§ 47:38 Records Retention Policy—Records Retention Policy Statements—Scope of Retention Management

Two types of scoping policy statements are required: identification of the records which are subject to the retention management policy and identification of the individuals who are required to comply with the policy.

Regarding the records subject to the retention management policy, it is records and information management best practice to include records in all formats and storage locations. While that is relatively easy to accomplish for physical (paper) records and microform records (if any), it becomes harder to apply retention management to all of an organization’s electronic

²University of Victoria. (2018). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible from <https://www.uvic.ca/recordsmanagement/policy/index.php> (accessed August 7, 2020).

³Professional Geoscientists Ontario. (2013). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <https://www.pgo.ca/about/about-pgo> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁴University of Western Ontario. (2001). *University Archives and Records Policy*. Accessible from <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/archives/records.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

records given the multiplicity of ever-expanding formats (e.g., audio, chats, data, e-mails, video, voice mails, etc.) and storage locations (e.g., data applications/business systems, hard drives, network drives, intranets, social media channels, etc.) and the technical challenges (and sometimes inability) to apply retention periods. Therefore, a policy statement is required to clearly demarcate the records (particularly electronic records) subject to the retention policy. These statements should be as specific as possible and not leave room for interpretation as in the City of London example in Table 9 in which ‘etc.’ is stated at the end of the list of electronic record types.

Further, where it is not technically possible to apply retention periods to electronic records, an organization needs to decide whether to remove those record series from the records retention schedule and explain their removal in retention policy or leave those series in the retention schedule but note the inability to apply retention periods to those records.

Table 9—Policy Statement Examples: Records Scope

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
British Broadcasting Corporation (United Kingdom) ¹	“This policy and its supporting guidelines and tools are for the use of all BBC staff. The obligation of all staff is to recognise that the information they create or use on a daily basis have a value to the BBC as information assets. This carries with it a responsibility to manage those assets on behalf of the BBC in line with charter, legal, business and heritage obligations and to ensure that records are accessible, accurate, kept in good condition and either held permanently or disposed of in a timely fashion as appropriate.”
City of London ² (Ontario)	“The retention of records is usually dependent on the subject matter of the records, and not the format in which the records are stored. The Records Management By-law, including the Records Retention Schedule and the Records Retention Policy will be applied to all records in the custody and control of the City—including electronic records (i.e., e-mails, files saved on staff computers and networks, files saved external drives, text messages, voice mails, etc.).”
Professional Geoscientists Ontario ³ (Ontario)	“This policy applies to the PGO and all of its statutory and standing committees and any other committees and sub-committees. It also applies to all business/association records belonging to or used by the PGO, regardless of their location or the formats or media in which they are held.”

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¹British Broadcasting Corporation. (2010). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/dq/contents/archives.shtml> (accessed August 7, 2020).

²City of London. (2019). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <http://www.london.ca/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

³Professional Geoscientists Ontario. (2013). *Records Management Policy*.

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
Upper Grand District School Board ⁴ (Ontario)	“all records and information within the custody or control of the board and addresses all aspects of board operations regardless of the medium in which those records are stored and maintained. It ensures that records are available as evidence of board functions and activities, and supports the delivery of board programs and services.” “all business applications and information technology systems used to create, store and manage records and information, including email, database applications and websites.” “all records and information obtained, created, and maintained within all departments and locations of the board.” “all third party contractors or agents who collect, process, or store records and information on behalf of the board.”

In addition to specifying the formats and storage locations of the records subject to the retention management policy, a policy statement is required regarding the management of ‘official’ versus ‘transitory’ records if the organization deploys those concepts. Table 10 provides examples of how transitory records may be addressed from the retention management perspective.

Table 10—Policy Statement Examples: Transitory Records

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
City of Brampton ⁵ (Ontario)	“Not all records created or received by the City have to be maintained as official records. Transitory records can be destroyed or deleted in a timely and effective manner when they no longer have any business value. The Records Decision Tree provides the guidance on how to differentiate between records that are official and records that are transitory. Personal documents may be retained or destroyed by the individual whenever they choose.”
City of London ⁶ (Ontario)	“After a final record has been produced and incorporated into the regular filing system, the working materials involved may become superseded or obsolete transitory records and may be destroyed unless otherwise legislated or specified in the records retention schedule.” “Working materials which are required for ongoing legal, fiscal, audit, administrative or operational purposes are not transitory records.” “Transitory records that are the subject of ongoing legal proceedings or a request under the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> must not be destroyed until after the legal proceeding or request has been completed and all possible appeals have been resolved.”

Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <https://www.pgo.ca/about/about-pgo> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁴Upper Grand District School Board. (2020). *Records and Information Management Policy*. Accessible from <https://www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy/policy-316-records-and-information-management/> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁵City of Brampton. (2016). *Information Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘information management policy’ at <https://www.brampton.ca/en/Pages/welcome.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁶City of London. (2019). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <http://www.london.ca/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
Town of Whitby ⁷	“Transitory Record means a Record that is useful for only a short time and has minor importance by not being required to meet statutory obligations, set policy, establish guidelines or procedures, certify a transaction, commit the Town to an action, become a receipt or provide evidence of legal, financial, operations or other office requirements for the Town of Whitby. Transitory Records may include, but are not limited to, personal emails, drafts, unsolicited advertising, convenience copies of Business Value Records, or matters not related to the business of the Town.” “Transitory Records can be destroyed at any time and outside the scope of a formal Disposition process.”

In addition to specifying the formats and storage locations of the records subject to the retention management policy and addressing ‘transitory’ records (if applicable), a policy statement is required regarding the employees to whom the retention management policy applies. Table 11 provides examples of employee applicability policy statements.

Table 11—Policy Statement Examples: Employee Applicability

Organization and Province/ Country	Policy Statement
Alberta Health Services ⁸ (Alberta)	“Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).”
City of Toronto ⁹ (Ontario)	“This Policy applies to all City of Toronto Divisions, City employees, volunteers and contract employees hired by the City of Toronto.” “This policy does not apply to Elected Officials, Accountability Officers or City Agencies and corporations. The City of Toronto encourages City Agencies and Corporations to review, adopt or update this policy appropriate to their business circumstances.”
County of Grande Prairie No. 1 ¹⁰ (Alberta)	“All the County employees, contractors, temporary help, and agents or representatives acting on behalf of the County who create or collect records and information.”

⁷Town of Whitby. (2017). *Records and Information Management Policy*. Accessible under the ‘Corporate Administration’ category at <https://whitby.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/1728> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁸Alberta Health Services. (2019). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <https://www.alberta-healthservices.ca/default.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁹City of Toronto. (2018). *IM Accountability Policy* (Policy No. CIMS 003). Accessible from <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/access-city-information-or-records/city-information-management-policies-and-legislation/> (accessed August 7, 2020).

¹⁰County of Grande Prairie No. 1. (undated). *Records and Information Management Policy* <https://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/government/policies/records-management.html> (accessed August 7, 2020).

Organization and Province/Country	Policy Statement
University of Waterloo ¹¹ (Ontario)	“This policy applies to all individuals who are responsible for or use this information. University and Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo employees, contractors, students, visitors, volunteers, and all other individuals permitted to access and use the University’s information, must manage, use, share and safeguard this information in accordance with the principles described below, and the procedures and guidelines which supplement this policy.”

§ 47:39 Records Retention Policy—Records Retention Policy Statements—Operational Requirements for Retention Management Activities

Direction is required regarding matters such as preservation holds, records storage locations, security and timing of records disposition, and use of an enterprise content management (ECM) system (if applicable). Table 12 provides examples of how these topics are addressed in the current policies of various organizations.

Table 12—Policy Statement Examples: Retention Management Operational Requirements

Topic	Organization and Province/Country	Policy Statement
Preservation Hold	University of Victoria ¹ (British Columbia)	“Records scheduled for Disposition must not be Disposed of when such Records are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● identified in current or pending litigation; ● responsive to a current request made under FIPPA [<i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>]; ● the subject of an audit; or ● identified in quasi-judicial and legal proceedings.”
Records Storage Location	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation ² (United States)	“Physical records may be stored locally (e.g., in file drawers) on a temporary basis but should be moved to a central or off-site location for longer-term storage. Electronic Business Records must be stored on Record Keeping Systems. Electronic Non-Business Records may be stored on network drives or SharePoint.”

¹¹University of Waterloo. (2016). *Information Management Policy* (Policy 46) <https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policies/policy-46-information-management> (accessed August 7, 2020).

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¹University of Victoria. (2018). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible from <https://www.uvic.ca/recordsmanagement/policy/index.php> (accessed August 7, 2020).

²Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2011). *Records Management*

Topic	Organization and Province/Country	Policy Statement
Security of Records Disposition	Professional Geoscientists Ontario ³ (Ontario)	“Confidential documents containing personal and other secure information should be destroyed by a process using the NAID (National Association for Information Destruction) protocols.”
Security of Records Disposition—Electronic Records	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation ⁴ (United States)	“The Records Administrator for IT Systems will identify the Business Records retained in SharePoint, Unison and ICS for which the Retention Period has expired and execute deletion of those Business Records. Each Records Administrator must work with their Program or Operational area staff to identify Non-Business Records stored on network drives and/or SharePoint which are no longer useful and manually execute deletion of those Non-Business Records. Electronic records must be permanently deleted so that information cannot be recovered and data cannot be reproduced by the foundation; IT will confirm such permanent deletion.”
Timing of Records Disposition	City of Brampton ⁵ (Ontario)	“Records must be securely disposed of immediately following the expiry of their retention periods to mitigate the risk of unauthorized or unnecessary access. The City’s Records Retention By-law provides direction on how to dispose of records/information that no longer have any business value.”
Use of an ECM	City of London ⁶ (Ontario)	“Employees will use the Corporate approved CityHub/SharePoint electronic documents and records management system to store and manage electronic records not already stored in other approved database applications.”

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Policy. Accessible by searching the Internet for ‘records management policy’ ‘gates foundation’ (accessed August 7, 2020).

³Professional Geoscientists Ontario. (2013). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <https://www.pgo.ca/about/about-pgo> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁴Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2011). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching the Internet for ‘records management policy’ ‘gates foundation’ (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁵City of Brampton. (2016). *Information Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘information management policy’ at <https://www.brampton.ca/en/Pages/welcome.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

⁶City of London. (2019). *Records Management Policy*. Accessible by searching on ‘records management policy’ at <http://www.london.ca/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed August 7, 2020).

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Sheila has developed (or updated) records retention schedules for numerous public, private, and not-for-profit organizations. For more than fifteen years, she taught the Records Inventory, Records Retention Scheduling, and Law for Records Managers courses in the RIM certificate programs offered by the Professional Learning Centre at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information (iSchool).

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