2014

University Employee Guide to:

Moving and University Records

Making a Move? … Renovating? … Building? … Closing Down?

Principle of Transparency and Accountability and Retention

Questions:
University Records Officer
recmgmt@library.wisc.edu
Voice: 608-262-3284

Making a Move? … Renovating? … Building? … Closing? Make sure to incorporate planning for your records. One of the components that is often forgotten when it comes to planning for a major event such as moving, renovating or closing down the department is the management of the department's records. Considerations of what to do with the records and how to move records are often left until the staff is almost ready to turn the lights out and lock the door.

Relocation and Records Issues

When planning a move, a lot of thought and consideration goes into what type of lighting, planning out the office layout, and acquiring a communications system, but records also require planning and are often left for last. In the case of a department closing, planning is also required to efficiently move records to the correct storage area.

The objective of this Guidance is to outline the minimal planning steps that should occur in preparing to move, discard, or temporarily relocate records as part of an office move or closure.

Packing and moving an entire department's records can appear to be nothing less than a monumental task. There are, however, steps that can be taken to eliminate the confusion and provide the needed direction to staff about what their responsibilities are toward records.

Records Planning Objective

The overall objective should be to have a smooth transition of a department's records from one office environment to another with minimal disruption to client service and without loss of control over the records and information assets of department.

The following are 9 steps towards a smooth move or relocation of department records.

1. **Allow sufficient time for planning the move**
2. **Put someone in charge of the move as the Records Coordinator**
3. **Obtain an overview of the records to be moved**
4. **Determine what are records and what are non-records**
5. **Utilize the University's General Records Retention Schedules**
6. **Utilize the Departmental Records Retention Schedule if there is one**
7. **Prepare the boxes for the move**

8. **Records Destruction or Transfer**
9. **Once the move has been completed**

So let's start with the first step.

Step 1.   Allow sufficient time for planning

A minimum of two months should be allotted for a records move or closure. If it is a large move, for example an entire building or college, allow six to ten months for planning and moving. Contact the University Records Manager for a consultation.

Step 2.   Put someone in charge of the move as a Records Coordinator

As with any other activity, in order for the move of records to be completed smoothly and efficiently, someone needs to be in charge. This person should:

- Make certain that each activity is planned and documented.
- Ensure records accountability before, during and after the move.
- Secure proper authorization for disposal of records.
- Set up a central point for acquiring supplies like boxes and forms/checklists.

Step 3. Obtain an overview of records

Once a person has been designated, a quick survey of the records in your office to be moved can be enormously beneficial in providing information for use in planning for the move. The following information should be collected on a checklist or spreadsheet:

- Categories, types of records, and date spans.
- Volume and location of records. *(Tip: use Post-It Notes to label the cabinets)*
- Which department or offices do the records belong?
- Special circumstances or concerns—i.e. whether records are poorly organized, damaged unknown owner, etc.

REMINDER: Not all records are paper based. Remember to account for electronic records as well.

Step 4.   Determine what are records and non-records

Destroy / Delete any non records as storage areas are reviewed. Transfer permanent records per the retention schedule to the UW-Archives.

What are RECORDS- By law, University records are any papers, books, photographs, tapes, films, recordings, or other documentary materials, or any copies thereof, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, produced, executed, or received by any department or office of the University or by any academic or administrative staff member in connection with the transaction of University business, and retained by that agency or its successor as evidence of its activities or functions because of the information contained therein.

What are NON-RECORDS - Certain categories of materials are ***not*** considered records.

- Stocks of printed or reproduced documents kept for supply purposed when file copies have been retained for records purposes; for example, handbooks or manuals prepared for the instruction of a particular course.

- Books, periodicals, newspapers, and other library and museum materials made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes.

- Duplicate microfilm. (if your department still has this)

- Preliminary drafts of letters, memoranda, reports, worksheets, and information notes which **do not** represent significant basic steps in the preparation of the record document.

- Convenience copies of reports, memoranda, etc. for which your office was not the originator or the office of record, and which have not been annotated by your office.

- Materials not filed as evidence for department operations that have no informational value, such as telephone call slips, letters of transmittal, route slips, etc.

When there is any doubt as to whether or not any document (paper or other format), record, or group of records is a University record, it should be considered an official record until determined otherwise.

Any questions regarding the record should be directed to the University Records Officer which will analyze the records in question and make the final determination.

UW-ARCHIVES TREATMENT of PUBLICATIONS
(see General Records Schedule – Administrative)

While the definition of University records generally excludes books, periodicals, and other printed material; certain types of publications are collected by the Archives as **official records** of the University.
*Use a transfer form when transferring boxes UW-Archives to insure proper accession.

The UW-Archives divides publications roughly into **5** categories:

1) **Official University publications.** These include budget "red books", catalogs or bulletins, faculty, staff, and student directories, timetables, etc. This type of publication describes official admission procedures and requirements, degree requirements, course lists, and so on. UW-Madison Archives routinely receives these publications and retains them permanently. It is not necessary for department offices to retain copies of these publications except as needed for reference: collections of these publications should not be transferred to the UW-Madison Archives.

    a. **EXCEPTION:** Since many departments produce their own course catalogs and periodically update them, arrangements should be made to transfer a copy of these items to the Archives for permanent preservation.

2) **Publications produced as a result of University operations.** These publications are largely administrative and include such items as annual financial reports, annual budgets, enrollment reports, and various other statistical and planning reports and documents. These publications are also considered archival. Some are sent to the UW Archives routinely, while others come to the Archives from the originating department when it transfers its administrative subject files. University departments that receive copies of these publications may dispose of them after reference use has been completed, provided the department is not in any way responsible for significant annotations in the report or document. Because this category is not as clearly defined as the first one, it is advised that the department contact the UW Archives with questions about whether or not a report should be saved or destroyed.

3) **Publications of research centers and institutes.** This category includes publications such as the report series prepared by the Social Systems Research Institute and the various reports by the Sea Grant program. The UW Archives routinely receives many of these publications, but because of limited space, is not actively recruiting additional collections of publications from centers and institutes. Departments are advised to check with the Archives to ascertain which publications it receives, while centers and institutes should check with appropriate college or department libraries that may with to collect their publications.

4) **Faculty publications.** Many faculty members have extensive reprint or book collections. Because of space considerations the Archives does not actively recruit this type of publications unless it is of an unusual nature. A faculty member seeking storage alternatives for a reprint or book collection should check with the appropriate college or

department library. The library may want the collection or may have suggestions for its disposition.

5) **Publications authored or produced outside the University.** This category contains a variety of publications from supply catalogs to professional journals and magazines. The Archives does not collect these printed materials; they should be removed from records collections prior to their transfer to the Archives.

Step 5.   Use the Campus-wide Records Schedules

These university wide schedules are posted on the UW-Madison Records Management website (http://archives.library.wisc.edu:2784/records/rda.html#general-records) to further purge department records.

Use of the campus-wide schedules can greatly reduce the volume of records you need to maintain and/or store. For records that are eligible for destruction, (*see Step 8 for recommendations on records destruction.)*

Step 6.   Locate and implement Department Records Schedules

Departmental schedules are not posted on the records management website. The department should have a copy, but if in doubt contact the University Records Officer with your UDDS billing code.

By Wis. Statute 16.61, all records are to be governed by records retention schedules. While many of the more common administrative records are covered by campus-wide schedules, departments will have record material that is unique to them and should therefore be covered by a specific records retention schedule.

Planning for a move can be the opportunity to either implement existing schedules or develop them if they do not already exist.

If records schedules need to be developed, consult the UW-Madison Records Management website and/or contact the campus records officer for further assistance.

Step 7. Preparing records for the move

There are many questions that need to be answered before moving. Will you be going to new space? Will your file cabinets be set up in a similar manner? Will you have less space? More? The same? How many rooms are you moving from and into? You will want to number rooms (A, B, D, etc.) and label boxes accordingly to ensure they are delivered to the correct room.

Do not start packing for the move without documenting what records are being moved, where the records are going, who is to be responsible for the records, and how records are to be arranged.

Inventory the hardcopy records to determine what's going over before moving it. You will know if some files are missing before the move, and you will know if any files went missing during the move. Generate spreadsheets to use as checklists for the move. These checklists can be sorted by office, destination, and staff person assigned to the files. Other information to include would be to label filing cabinets A, B, C or by numbers and have an inventory of what is in each cabinet and label moving boxes appropriately to match. Use the checklists as box packing lists and to determine if records are missing. It is recommended that staff generate a packing list detailing box contents before packing anything.

Consider how your boxes are going to be unpacked. Organize records and pack records into boxes in the order that files will maintained on shelves or in file cabinets.

When boxes are moved, be sure to move the boxes you want to unpack last, move first, and those you want to unpack first, move last. Movers will probably stack the first delivery against the wall, the second delivery in front of those, the third delivery in front of those, etc.

Consider how much you have to move and whether or not an elevator will be needed. If there is only one service elevator, don't hire a crew of 16 people and fill a tractor trailer full of boxes and expect to get everything packed, transported, and unpacked in one day. One elevator can only hold so much at a time and will only go up and down floors at a certain speed.

Train staff: The Records Coordinator should assign staff to be accountable for particular records before, during, and after the move.

Boxes:

- o   Use State Records Center boxes and copy paper size boxes.
- o   Do not exceed 30-50 lbs per box.
- o   Determine standard methods to mark box contents.
- o   Remove any hanging file folders for records boxes being transferred to the State Records Center or to the UW-Madison Archives.

Records Center boxes are available through Material Distribution Service- MDS*. More information can be found on the UW-Madison Records Management website:* http://archives.library.wisc.edu/records/src.html

Step 8. Records Destruction or Transfer?

For records that can be discarded based on records retention policies, follow these guidelines.

- Records containing any type of personally identifiable information, social security numbers, personal identifiers, charge card numbers, etc. should be confidentially destroyed.

- **Shredding:** Records containing personally identifiable information should be shredded confidentially. However, shredding documents can be labor intensive. Particularly, if there is a substantial volume of record material to be shredded.

- The State Records Center has Confidential Shredding services that are available to all University departments. Contact the Records Management office for more information about this service.

- For more information on transferring records to the State Records Center please see our website: http://archives.library.wisc.edu/records/src.html

- For more information on transferring records per the schedule to UW-Madison Archives see Transferring Material: http://archives.library.wisc.edu/faculty.html
  *Use a transfer form when transferring boxes UW-Archives to insure proper accession.

Step 9. When the move has been completed

The Records Coordinator in charge of the move should:

o Account for all boxes – if closing then document disposition of the boxes.

o Take files out in the order that they were packed

o Use checklist for tracking missing files or boxes

o Set up files in a organized fashion to promote access and retrieval

o Continue to use the University Records Retention Schedule in the normal course of business going forward to be in compliance with university policies.

Don't forget the Electronic Records and Your Computer

Your computer contains electronic records and their safe transfer should also be considered. This is especially true for department that will be closing down.

Remember to check UW and department records schedules. What are your obligations to retain the electronic data? How will you access it later is needed? Have records been moved to those that need the information? What about email messages?

1. University Records schedules apply to electronic files as well as hard copy.

2. Delete/erase those items that have exceeded recommended retention times.

3. Back up your data before unplugging the computer.

4. Move e-records to appropriate storage (i.e. department shared network drive).

5. If records are found which are on some sort of storage media, make sure that records are duplicates or that they have met retention before destroying.

6. Before discarding any storage media all record materials should be thoroughly erased. The same is true for discarding computer equipment such as hard drives.

7. The State Records Center does offer confidential destruction for both paper and media. They are to be packed separately and boxes taped and marked appropriately.

DO's and DON'Ts for Moving Records

DO's for moving records:

1. **DO** contact the University Records Officer as soon as possible for a consult. It will be so much easier for you, and we can do a better job of meeting your needs.

2. **DO** use the State Records Storage cartons - Purchase from MDS
   it is the only box the State Records Center and the University Archives will accept!

3. If you are reorganizing as part of the move, **DO** inventory the records of offices, functions, entities, etc. that will be merged or divided. This will permit you to do some organizing on paper or on the screen before you actually begin shuffling files. It will also permit the identification of duplication records and information that can simply be destroyed as opposed to moved! If multiple offices are moving boxes simultaneously, use color labels to aid in identification of boxes belonging to specific organizational units.

4. **DO** work with IT to ensure that all electronic records are accounted for and moved to appropriate storage to meet retention requirements or transferred to new user.

DON'Ts for moving records:

1. **Do Not remove documents from their folders.**
    Folder headings and file tabs provide helpful information about organizational structure, topic or subject covered, dates, and other critical information that you and others will need in order to retrieve or use the documents at a future date.

2. **Do Not remove folders from file cabinets or other storage equipment without recording organizational scheme information.** *See number 1.*

3. **Do Not leave sensitive or confidential information unattended on loading docks or other unsupervised areas.**
    Theft or inadvertent loss of personal or confidential information cannot only be embarrassing to the University but costly as well.

4. **Do Not leave computer equipment or electronic storage media containing sensitive or confidential material unattended in openly accessible areas such as loading docks.**
    Electronic storage devices (e.g. hard drives and disks) that are being discarded must be erased before disposition.

If you have any questions or still don't know quite where to start, begin with scheduling a consultation email the University Records Officer.

UW Archives and Records Management
425 Steenbock Library
550 Babcock Drive
Madison, WI. 53076-1201
Phone: (608) 262-3284
recmgmt@library.wisc.edu
http://archives.library.wisc.edu/records/Index.html