



**SARAWAK CIVIL SERVICE RECORDS
MANAGEMENT: GUIDELINES AND
TOOL KIT**

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1.0 General introduction

1.1 Purpose

A responsible and effective records management program assures the retention and protection of the public records created by or for or on behalf of the Sarawak State Government. The **Sarawak Civil Service Records Management: Guidelines and Tool Kit** is intended as a guide for all employees in the Sarawak Civil Service who share in the creation, maintenance, and disposition of records.

This Guidelines and Tool Kit will be updated from time to time. The forms included, and the other specific procedures will undergo constant scrutiny to assure State Records are preserved in excellent condition for access, retrieval, and references.

1.2 Authority

Sarawak State Library Ordinance, 1999, Section 14(1)(d), stipulates that Pustaka Negeri Sarawak (Sarawak State Library), “to maintain, preserve and keep public records which are more than twenty-five years old, and other documents, papers, instruments, and statues, statutory orders, regulations or decrees, directed by State Secretary to be maintained, preserved and kept in the State Depository on account of their historical value or public importance”.

2.0 Effective Records Management Practices

2.1 Definition of a Record

Sarawak State Library Ordinance, 1999 Part 1(2), “*public records*” means *papers, documents, instruments, registers, maps, drawings, photographs, films, microfilms, magnetic disks or diskettes, video tapes, cassette tapes and recordings of any kind whatsoever, officially received, printed or reproduced by any public office or by any public officer in the course of his official or public duties.*

2.2 The Life Cycle of a Record

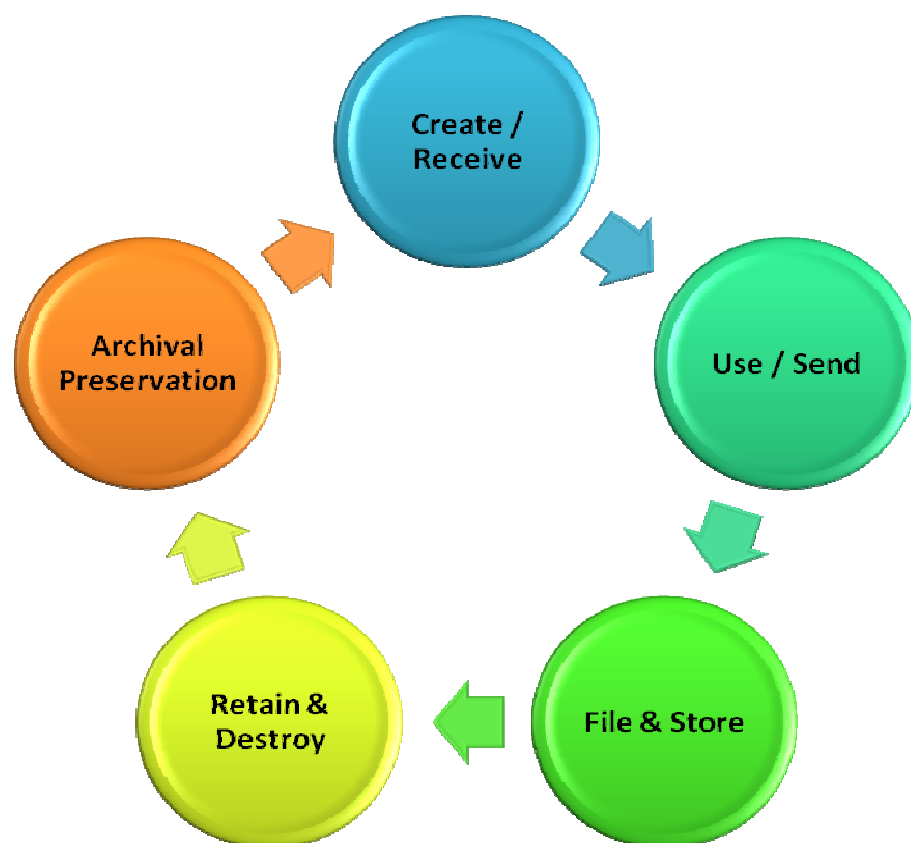


Figure 1: Records Life Cycle

- i) Create and Receive:** The first phase of the Records Life Cycle involves records being created, collected or received through the daily transactions of the department/agency and can include printed reports, documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of the department/agency.
- ii) Use and Send:** The next phase of the life cycle is the maintenance and use of the record. This can include filing, retrieving, use, duplication, printing, dissemination, release or exchange of the information in the record.
- iii) Filing and Storage:** Filing is the process of arranging information in a predetermined sequence and creating a system to manage it for its useful existence within an organization. Storage includes space and equipment such as records room, records centre, compact or mobile shelving, automated filing systems, rotary files, open faced shelving, and storage carousels for recordkeeping and filing.
- iv) Retain and Destroy:** At the disposition phase records are assessed to determine their retention value using Retention Schedule. This leads to either for preservation or destruction of the record. When the retention date of these records is reached, permission will be sought from Pustaka Negeri Sarawak for their destruction.
- v) Archival Preservation:** When a record has been determined to be of permanent value to the department/agency then it is transferred to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak for permanent archiving and preservation.

The responsibility for maintaining a record during its active office life is that of the officer in charge of the office that generates the record. Maintaining the record, especially for long periods of time or permanently, requires trained staff who take into consideration the type and value of the record, the most efficient system for organizing and accessing the record, and procedures for protecting the record. In most cases, the location for

storage is the office where the record was created. Other options include moving the record to an off-site storage location (and taking responsibility for all corresponding costs), or, if the record has some historical, research, or special value, it may be eligible to be transferred to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak.

Unless the record is permanent or transferable to the Pustaka Negeri Sarawak, it must be disposed of after its respective shelf life. The creating agencies/departments write a letter of "intent to destroy" that lists the record and sends the letter to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak for prior approval. Upon approval by Pustaka Negeri Sarawak the record may be destroyed. Disposal options include burning and shredding. When recycling is a viable option, it is recommended as the most responsible means of disposition. After its disposition, the record will be permanently gone, but a copy of the intent to destroy will be retained by the creating agencies/departments.

2.3 Importance of Public Records

- i) Public records belongs to the country's heritage that contains valuable information on the history and the administration of the country
- ii) Public records contains knowledge that helps to nurture national awareness
- iii) Public records is the sole source as future reference to the government and the public
- iv) Public records contains information that protects human rights/property and government's as well as individual's authority
- v) The departments and the agencies are responsible in protecting the records in order to meet the government's goal is to produce/generate efficient and economic

administration through a systematic and modern records management made available at departments and agencies

2.4 Responsibilities of Departments and Agencies towards Public Records

- i) To ensure public records are systematically kept and protected
- ii) To segregate non-active records from active ones
- iii) To prepare records transfer list
- iv) To declassify records prior to transfer and disposal
- v) To ensure records of archival value are transferred to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak
- vi) To ensure records more than 25 years are transferred to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak
- vii) To fumigate records prior to transfer to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak
- viii) To contact Pustaka Negeri Sarawak for records transfer and records disposal purposes

2.5 Roles of Pustaka Negeri Sarawak

- i) To ensure the departments and the agencies under Sarawak State Government properly manage public records before it reaches 25 years old as cited in *Sarawak State Library Ordinance Section 14(1)(d)*
- ii) To conduct records transfer and records disposal processes
- iii) To provide consultation and guidelines pertaining to public records disposition
- iv) To conduct official inspection and advisory visits to registry and records centre in Sarawak State Government departments and agencies
- v) To conduct training programs in records management

2.6 Records Transfer and Records Disposal Application

Public Records Appraisal needs to be carried out by the departments and agencies that wish to transfer and dispose the records. Application letters and records transfer lists are required to be sent to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak. Any department and agency that wishes to seek consultation and guidance pertaining to records management, may contact:

Pustaka Negeri Sarawak
(Repositori Rekod Negeri)
Jalan Cahya Indah
Off Jalan Sultan Tengah
93050 Kuching
Sarawak

Tel : +60 82 440488
Faks : +60 82 440484
Email : librarian@sarawaknet.gov.my
Website : www.pustaka-sarawak.com

3.0 Retention Schedules

A Retention Schedule is the authority that lists records series and provides instructions and special guidelines for their care how long to preserve or retain them, how to maintain them, where and under whose custodianship, and when to dispose of them. By following a retention schedule, systematic control of information from its creation to final disposition is established. Different records series are required by law to be preserved or retained according to the length of time that they have administrative, legal, fiscal, historical or research value. Most records have a short lifespan, but others have longer retention periods for various reasons

4.0 Filing Practices

4.1 Introduction

Establishing an efficient filing system involves planning the design of the system to ensure productive workflow. This includes deciding how files will be arranged, type of access, the classification system to be used, coding and indexing schemes, and selecting the proper equipment and supplies.

4.2 File Arrangement

The first step in creating a filing system is to develop a file plan. It specifies the logical order of documents or files and the arrangement or scheme by which documents may be identified, stored and retrieved. The plan consists of:

4.2.1 Selecting the file arrangement (e.g. alphabetical, numerical, alphanumeric, etc.)

4.2.2 Developing an index

4.2.3 Planning file system maintenance

The most common methods of arranging documents are alphabetical, numerical, or alpha-numeric. The file arrangement should be based on how the information will be retrieved.

i. Alphabetical Filing

These may be topical or classified arrangements. Topical filing arranges files in straight alphabetical order. For example, subject correspondence would be arranged from A-Z, based on the name of the subject. This method is also called the "dictionary" method because it is the method used in dictionaries.

Classified filing places related documents under a major sub-heading. For example, customer complaint correspondence may be filed under the general heading of customer relations. An alphabetical arrangement also is appropriate for filing records that are arranged by geographical locations, such as states, districts, and towns.

ii. Numerical Filing

A numerical arrangement places records in order from the lowest number to the highest. This method also often tells the searcher which files are the oldest (the lowest numbered files) and which are the newest (the higher numbered files). A numerical scheme is easier to comprehend than alphabetical filing and may have fewer misfiles. Records that have pre-printed numbers on them such as checks, invoices, purchase orders, and vouchers also are suited for this filing arrangement.

iii. Alpha-Numeric Filing

An alpha-numeric arrangement uses a combination of numeric digits and alphabet characters to create a flexible filing system. Subjects may be substituted with alphabetical or numerical codes. An index is needed to use the system effectively.

4.3 Access

Another aspect of creating a file plan is deciding how files will be accessed. The two methods of access are direct access and indirect access.

i. Direct Access

A direct access plan allows the user to access the file without first referring to an index. Direct access may be ideal for

small offices that produce a low volume of records. (Example: If it is easier to find information by a person's name, the system would be alphabetical. One looks for the file directly by the name.)

ii. Indirect Access

An indirect access system requires the use of an index or codes to locate a file, such as assigning a number to a file. An indirect access system generally is used for large or complex filing systems. It may require the use of automated equipment to locate the files, as well as knowledge of the coding system.

4.4 Classification

A classification is a grouping of records with common characteristics or which document similar functions. The point of having a classification system is to keep all like records together, which, in turn, expedites records retrieval and maintains file integrity.

Classification systems sort records by major headings and subdivisions. A classification system is usually considered when:

- i) The current filing system produces excessive misfiles.
- ii) Various subjects are filed by the same name.
- iii) The method for filing documents varies from user to user.
- iv) The volume of records is so large that an index is necessary to locate a file quickly.

5.0 Storing

5.1 Storage of Current or Active Records

Storing records in the office or commonly known as Registry in a department rather than an off-site location ensures that records are kept near their users and enhances record accessibility when they are well organized. These are suitable for current and active records.

A well organized Registry enables:

The existence of a protected storage area in a department

- i) Assure fast and easy retrieval of records for daily operations and putting in place and an retrieval
- ii) Ensure the security of records by monitoring the usage and access by unauthorized personnel
- iii) Facilitate the timely disposition of records, according to approved Retention Schedules

5.2 Storage of Semi-Current Records

Records with short retention periods are usually placed in temporary storage areas prior to disposal, while records with longer retention periods are placed in long-term storage areas. Records that require long term storage, including records that have permanent retention periods of historic value, may be segregated, or even transferred to a secured storage facility such as the State Records Repository of Pustaka Negeri Sarawak.

Records of historical, archival, public importance and research value may then be made available for research by designated officers of the creating agencies. In any situation where records

with long retention periods are at stake, special storage spaces and special precautionary measures to insure their preservation shall be taken. The staff at Pustaka Negeri Sarawak in consultation with the originating agencies shall then implement the best possible ways.

6.0 Procedures for Appraisal, Disposal and Transfer of Public Records

6.1 Retention Schedule

To determine whether records may be destroyed, approved records Retention Schedule are consulted. The Retention Schedule describes the type of records created by a public office and how long each type of record must be retained according to statute/established authorities.

6.2 Appraisal

The process of evaluating records to determine their value and ultimate disposition based upon their administrative, legal, historical and fiscal use; their evidential and informational content; their arrangement and condition; their intrinsic content; and their relationship to other records

6.3 Disposal Procedure

1. The general Retention Schedule is consulted to ensure that the legal limit for the retention of the records in question has been reached.
2. Relevant and pending audits, investigations and litigation involving the records or their management must be resolved

before records having any bearing, or having the potential to any bearing on these types of proceedings may be legally destroyed. It must be ascertained that the records do not have any remaining interest to law enforcement agents or judiciary or administrative entities.

- The “*Senarai Pemindahan Rekod*” (SPR) is completed and returned to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak for review and recommendation.

Borang Pemindahan 01

PUSTAKA NEGERI SARAWAK SENARAI PEMINDAHAN REKOD							
1. Jabatan yang memindah :		6. Jabatan yang mewujudkan: (jika rekod-rekod dari pejabat lain)		UNTUK KEGUNAAN PUSTAKA NEGERI SARAWAK SAHAJA (18)			
2. Ibu Pejabat :		7. Kaki panjang :		BIL. FAIL : (i)			
3. Siri Rekod :		8. Perlengkapan dilegakan :		BIL. PENERIMAAN : (ii)			
4. Pemindahan :		9. Tarikh-tarikh termasuk :		TARIKH DITERIMA : (iii)			
5. Penjelasan Ringkas Rekod				TARIKH KAJLAN : (iv)			
Bil. (10)	No. Rujukan (11)	Perkara/Tajuk Fail (12)	Tarikh-tarikh Rekod (13) Drpd Kpd	Taraf Rekod (Terbuka Sulit/dll) (14)	Bil. Lampiran (15)	Musnah / Simpan hingga (16)	Catatan (17)

Figure 2: Senarai Pemindahan Rekod

- Presented to State Records and Archives Retention Committee (SRARC) for approval.
- Records are only destroyed after approval from SRARC.

6.4 Disposal Procedure for Financial Records

As in the case of the disposal of financial records, procedures stated in *Treasury Instruction 150* are to be followed.

6.5 Methods of Disposal

6.5.1 Shredding

Shredding is the most popular method of destroying private or confidential information. Shredders come in a variety of sizes and capacities. If the volume is too large for an office shredder to handle, shredding by the third party may be considered. This has to be done under strict supervision by creating agency and Pustaka Negeri Sarawak.

6.5.2 Burning

Another option for destroying records is by way of burning. Though currently it is a less viable disposal option due to its impact on the environment it is still the best methods where confidential information is concern. Burning shall also be carried out under supervision.

6.6 Transferring Records to Pustaka Negeri Sarawak

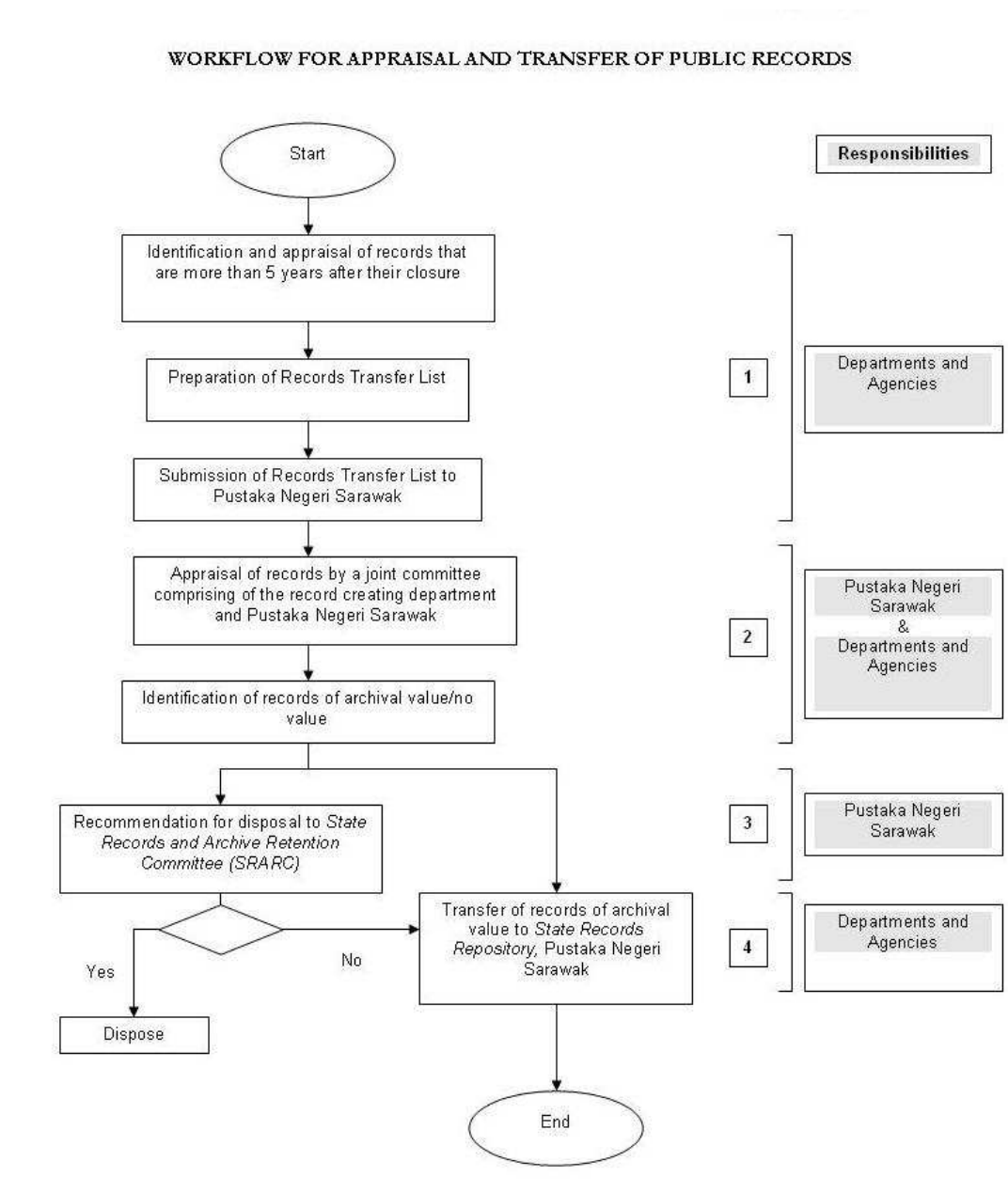


Figure 3: Workflow for Appraisal and Transfer of Public Records

6.6.1 Procedure

1. Pustaka Negeri Sarawak may be contacted to ascertain if an office's records are appropriate for a transfer. The phone number is 082-440488, and the business hours are from 8 am-5 pm, Monday through Friday.

2. Records must be stored in records storage boxes. Box lids must be flat when closed. Overloaded boxes will not fit on the shelves at the Pustaka Negeri Sarawak. Strapping tape should be applied to the bottoms of boxes that appear to be weak. Ledger size books must be packaged and labelled to identify individual volumes, and combined weight should not exceed fifty pounds.
3. Organize the records in a logical sequence before boxing them, and then number the boxes using a common ordering system (e.g., 1 of 12; 2 of 12; 3 of 12, etc., or A of A-E; B of A-E, etc.) by writing the sequence on a piece of paper taped to the handle end of each box and placing a copy of that sequence on the inside of the box. Remove records from hanging folders before boxing them. Hanging file folders make it difficult to close a box's lid.
4. A label should be firmly affixed to a small end (an end with a handle hole) that details:
 - a. The name of the office that created the records
 - b. The name of the records in the box (e.g. minutes from xyz, building plans from Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara), as it would be stated in a retention schedule, if applicable
 - c. The dates of the records (e.g. 1972-1975)
 - d. The record series number, as it is stated in a retention schedule, if applicable

It is critical that the label information be correct in order to prevent permanent records from being destroyed, or time-limited records from being destroyed too early, and to facilitate location and retrieval of records when needed.

5. A request to transfer records should be sent to:

Chief Executive Officer

Pustaka Negeri Sarawak
(Repositori Rekod Negeri)

Jalan Cahya Indah,

Off Jalan Sultan Tengah

93050 Kuching Sarawak.

Tel: +60 82 440488

Fax: +60 82 440484

6.6.2 Storage Boxes

Standard Archive Boxes

Appendix

Appendix – Senarai Pemindahan Rekod