

## GLOSSARY: Q-S (6/22/2011)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this glossary is to provide definitions for the most commonly-used records management terms for use by FHFA employees.

### Q

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### R

**Reading Files.** Outgoing correspondence records arranged chronologically, in contrast to those arranged by subject. Also called **Chronological (chron) Files**.

**Record Group (RG) Number.** NARA-assigned number for records to be transferred to the FRC. FHFA is assigned RG number 543. The predecessor agency Federal Housing Finance Board was assigned RG number 485 and the predecessor agency Office of Housing Enterprise Oversight was assigned RG number 543.

**Recordkeeping Copy.** The copy of a record that is captured and managed in a manual or electronic recordkeeping system.

**Recordkeeping Requirements.** Statements in statutes, regulations, or agency directives that provide general and specific guidance on particular records to be created and maintained by FHFA. Since each agency is legally obligated to create and maintain adequate and proper documentation of its organization, functions, and activities, it needs to issue recordkeeping requirements for all activities for all media and to distinguish records from non-record materials and personal papers.

**Records.** Information created or received, regardless of media that document FHFA's organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities and meet the statutory definition of a record (44 U.S.C. 3301). Agency records:

- Form the basis of actions and decisions by officials;
- Are worthy of management and preservation,
- Allow scrutiny by Congress or oversight agencies; or
- Protect the financial, legal, and other rights of the Government and individuals directly affected by agency activities.

**Records Center Boxes.** Boxes that are approved by NARA to meet guidelines for the storage of records in a federal records facility. Official records center boxes should not be used for packing personal or nonrecord materials.

**Records Creation.** The first of three stages of the records life cycle in which records are created or received by an office.

**Records Liaison.** Designated FHFA employees with front-line responsibility, in coordination with the Agency Records Officer, for implementing and maintaining an efficient and cost-effective agency records management program, including providing advice and direction to employees, ensuring correct and efficient maintenance of files, coordinating the retirement of files to the FRC, and may assume other relevant duties to assure that records management functions are carried out in their business unit.

**Records Maintenance and Use.** The second stage of the records' three stage life cycle, involving the storage, retrieval, distribution, and handling of records kept in offices by, or for, FHFA.

**Records Management.** The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities related to the creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of records to achieve adequate and proper documentation of federal policies and transactions and effective and economical management of agency operations. (44 U.S.C. 2901),

**Records Management Program.** A coordinated set of policies, procedures, and activities used to manage FHFA's recorded information over the life of the records (*see also* **Life Cycle of Records**), regardless of media. Essential elements of a Records Management Program include issuing up-to-date program directives, properly training those responsible for implementation, publicizing the program, and evaluating the results to ensure adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency.

**Records Retention.** The time period for which records are required to be kept according to NARA-approved records schedules.

**Records Retirement.** The process of gaining approval and physically moving inactive (temporary or permanent) records to a federal records center or to an agency-owned or contracted storage facility for temporary storage.

**Records Schedule.** A policy document that describes records, establishes a period for their retention by the agency, and provides mandatory instructions for when they are no longer needed for business by FHFA. Records schedules are approved by NARA with provision of authority for the final disposition of recurring or nonrecurring records. Often referred to as the FHFA Records Retention and Disposition Schedule or the Agency Records Schedule.

**Records Scheduling.** The process of developing a policy document that provides mandatory instructions for how to handle records (and nonrecord materials) no longer needed for current agency business. This includes establishing instructions for destroying temporary records, as well as instructions for retaining and transferring permanent records. The process involves records and information technology staff, representatives from the business unit, and Office of General Counsel.

**Record Series.** The basic unit for organizing and controlling files, it is a group of files or documents kept together (either physically or intellectually) because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, document a specific type of transaction, take a particular physical form, or have some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, maintenance, or use (36 CFR 1220.14).

**Reference Files.** Nonrecord copies of articles, periodicals, reports, studies, vendor catalogs, and similar materials that are needed for reference and information but are not part of the office's records. Also called **information copies** or **Convenience Files**.

**Restriction Codes.** Codes applied to permanent records when accessioning to NARA: C = National Security Confidential, S = Secret, T = Top Secret, P = Privacy Act information, NA = No restriction, or RD = National Security Restricted Data.

**Retention Period.** The length of time that records are to be kept, as authorized by NARA, during which the specified records must be retained as a matter of policy before they are destroyed or deleted.

## S

**Schedule.** See **Records Schedule**.

**Scheduled Records.** Records whose final disposition has been approved by NARA. All records series listed in the FHFA Records Retention Schedule and the General Records Schedules are scheduled records.

**Sensitive Documents.** Documents that if released could cause significant harm to an agency constituency, employees, or the public and could hamper the ability of the agency to carry out its primary functions.

**Screening.** (1) Also referred to as purging or weeding, screening is the process of removing nonrecord or nonessential material from official files. (2) Reviewing files to apply access restrictions.

**Series.** See **Record Series**.

**Standard Forms.** See **Forms**.

**Structured Data.** Data that resides in fixed fields within a record or file, has an enforced composition, and is managed by technology that allows for querying and reporting against predetermined data types and understood relationships. Relational databases are examples of structured data.

**Subject Files.** A file that contains correspondences, reports, forms, and other materials relating to an office's general activities and functions that occur annually. In contrast to project files that are cut off at the close of a project, subject files are cut off at the end of the calendar or fiscal year.

**Suspended Records.** See **Frozen Records**.

**System Administrator.** The person who administers and operates a computer system or application.

**System Owner.** The person(s) or program office responsible for the successful operation of the system and accountable for the security of the data.