

GLOSSARY: A-C

PURPOSE: To provide definitions for the most commonly-used records and information management (RIM) terms for use by FHFA employees.

A

Accession. A group of records that has been transferred to a Federal Records Center (FRC) for storage.

Accession Number. A number used to identify shipments of records to the FRC. Accessions have a unique accession number including 543 (FHFA's record group number), followed by the fiscal year (FY), followed by a four-digit sequential number. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) system Archives and Records Centers Information System (ARCIS) assigns this number and uses it to track the location and retention period of the records housed at the FRC.

Active Records. Records necessary to conduct current business and therefore generally maintained in office space and equipment. For electronic records, including databases and websites, active records refers to information that must be easily accessed.

Adequate and Proper Documentation. The concept that a record of agency business is complete and accurate to the extent required to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and that it is designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the agency and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities.

Administrative Records. Records relating to budget, human resources, acquisitions, and similar housekeeping or facilitative functions common to most federal agencies. The General Records Schedule (GRS) provides the descriptions, disposition authorities, and instructions for disposing of these records.

Agency Records Officer. *See* **Records Officer.**

Appraisal. The process of determining the value and final disposition of records.

ARCIS (Archives and Records Centers Information System). A web-based application implemented by NARA to manage box requests and the lifecycle of records accessioned into the FRC.

B

Block. (1) One segment of cutoff, or closed, records that are in the same series and are dealt with as a unit for disposition purposes, especially for the transfer of permanent records to the National Archives and Records Administration. For example, a transfer of records in 10-year blocks. (2) A grouping of electronic data stored as a unit on an external storage medium and dealt with as a unit by the computer for input or output.

Box Inventory. A document attached to the Standard Form (SF) 135 (Records Transmittal and Receipt) that lists the contents of each box in an accession that is stored at the FRC. The box inventory serves as a finding aid if the FHFA needs to retrieve the records from the FRC. The box inventory and the SF-135 are a public record. Also called a **box index**.

Breaking Files. Ending files at regular intervals, usually at the close of a fiscal year (September 30) or calendar year (December 31).

C

Capture. A deliberate action that results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. For certain business activities, this functionality may be built into computer systems so that the capture of records is concurrent with the creation of records.

Case Files. Records, regardless of media, documenting a specific action, event, person, place, project, or other matter. Examples include personnel, project, and transaction files.

Central Files. Files accumulated by several offices or organizational units that are maintained and supervised in one office area or location. Also called **centralized files**.

Charge-out. The act and result of recording the removal and loan of a document, a file, or a box from its home location, and placing it in the care of an authorized individual. Charge-outs require information about the person who will be responsible for that information while it is their custody.

Classification. (1) The systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules represented in a records classification system. (2) Determining document or file naming conventions, user permissions, and security restrictions on records. *See also* **Restriction Codes**.

Classification System. A set of terms and business rules that can be applied to records to facilitate capture, retrieval, maintenance, and disposal.

Closed Files. A series containing documents on which action has been completed and to which more documents are not likely to be added. *See also* **Cutoff**.

Comprehensive Records Schedules. Agency schedules which incorporate both the General Records Schedules dispositions for common administrative records as well as agency-specific program records dispositions.

Container. A customized receptacle that protects FHFA vital records during storage and transport.

Convenience Files. Nonrecord copies of correspondence, completed forms, and other documents kept solely for ease of access and reference. Also called **information copies** or **Reference Files**.

Conversion. The process of changing records from one medium to another or from one format to another. Conversion involves a change of the format of the record but ensures that the record retains the identical primary information, or content. Examples include microfilming and digital imaging of paper records. *See also* **Migration**.

Copy. (1) A reproduction of the contents of an original document. (2) In electronic records, the action or result of reading data from a source, leaving the source data unchanged, and writing the same data elsewhere on a medium that may differ from the source.

Correspondence. Any form of addressed, written communications that is sent and received, such as letters, emails, memoranda, etc.

Current Records. *See also* **Active Records**.

Custody. Control of records, either physical possession and/or legal responsibility.

Cutoff. The point at which files are cut off, ended, or “broken” to permit their disposal or transfer in complete blocks, and for correspondence files, to permit the establishment of new files. Case files are generally cut off at the end of the year in which the case is closed. *See also* **Breaking Files**.