



## **Guidelines for Planning to Move Your Records**

**Provincial Archives of New Brunswick  
Corporate Information Management Unit  
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## Preface

The records of government are a valuable resource and an important asset that document its business activities. Their effective management enables government to support future action and decision making, reduce costs, meet business, legal and accountability requirements, and preserve New Brunswick's documentary heritage.

The Provincial Archives' Corporate Information Management Unit is responsible for the government-wide records management program under the *Archives Act*. Provincial government organizations manage their records according to corporate standards, guidelines and policies to support the delivery of their programs and services.

The Provincial Archives of New Brunswick Corporate Information Management Unit provides central records management services and support to departments, crown corporations and agencies within the government of New Brunswick by:

- developing and authorizing retention and disposition schedules that control the period of time government records are retained as well as their final disposition through the transfer to the Provincial Archives or destruction;
- developing and establishing policy, standards and guidelines;
- providing training, technical and consultative services in the development, implementation and maintenance of programs to manage recorded information in all formats;
- maintaining and administering the centralized offsite records storage program for semi active government records;
- identifying archival and records management issues at the beginning of the information life cycle.

Departments manage recorded information by:

- applying the *Classification Plan and Retention Schedules for Common Records* for retention scheduling;
- establishing a file classification plan for operational records;
- developing and maintaining written policies and procedures;
- cooperating with the Provincial Archives to develop and apply retention and disposition schedules for all government records in all formats;
- taking advantage of the centralized records storage and retrieval services of the Provincial Archives Records Centre.

It is important to note that records must not be destroyed or removed from the control of the Government of New Brunswick, unless such action is authorized under the *Archives Act*.

## Introduction

Office moves are an inconvenient and often inevitable part of our work lives; it is never too soon to begin the planning process. As a departmental records manager, you have an important role to play in ensuring records and information, regardless of format, are identified and moved in a secure and efficient manner.

A successful move requires a tremendous amount of preparation and coordination. There are many factors to consider, not the least of which are:

- when you are moving,
- what you are moving,
- where you are moving, and
- how much space will be available in the new location.

The sooner the plan is communicated to those affected, the smoother the transition will be.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to assist records managers in planning and implementing a move involving departmental records – whether in physical or in electronic formats.

## 1 Starting Out

Immediately after a move is announced or confirmed, designate a lead person, preferably someone with knowledge of records management practices, to coordinate meetings and assign responsibilities.

Once selected, this person should:

- identify what information and assistance is required in terms of guidance, procedures, training, etc.;
- identify any special requirements for records (vault, secure locks on doors, oversized records, special format records);
- prepare a *contact list* including vendors, recycling/shredding service providers, moving company, departmental contact person, and any other stakeholders;
- meet with facilities' management to discuss move dates, plans for existing equipment, space allocations, etc.;
- order the necessary equipment such as standard Records Centre boxes – available at *Grand & Toy stock number SKU#:BOX* or *Staples Canada Inc., stock number STP20657*;
- create record lists of physical records to include with each box containing the identifying information such as: contact name, schedule number, box number, record series, description, dates etc.;
- create records lists for electronic records and their locations;
- determine if a budget is needed and how much; and

- develop a timeline for required activities such as the destruction of non-records, the scheduling of public records as well as their transfer to Records Centre or Archives (see [Appendix A](#) for sample timetable).

## 2 Inventory

In order to plan the move efficiently, it is important to take stock of what you have. The easiest way to do this is through an inventory. The objective of conducting an inventory before the move is not only to identify and quantify existing records but also to give you a starting point to reduce the volume of records. This will ensure resources are spent only on the records that need to be moved. Separating these records from those ready for transfer or destruction will save you time and money. Not only will there be less to move, but the new space will be used more effectively and efficiently.

### *Conducting the Records Inventory*

Conducting an inventory can be a formidable task. A sample form is provided for your use on our website [Provincial Archives of NB - Corporate Information Management Unit](#) or you may develop one of your own. The information gathered during your inventory should include:

- What records series are currently in your care and control,
- What retention and disposition schedules are associated with the records series you have identified?
- What is the volume of the records?
- Where are the records located?
- What records are kept in:
  - work spaces?
  - Servers?
  - Databases? central files?
  - binders or any other odd-sized folders?
- Which records are vital records, if any?
- Which records need special handling, if any?
- Would some records benefit from reformatting options (scanning, microfilming, etc.)?

**Note:** It is important to note that not every inventory needs to be completed at the file or record level. Depending on how well your records are organized, you may complete an inventory at the series level instead. It is up to you to decide how much information you need to gather in order to make the move a success.

### 3 Reduce the Volume of Records

Where possible, try to reduce the number of records to be moved. This can be achieved through normal records management practices such as applying the appropriate retention and disposition schedules, and by identifying and destroying non-records.

#### 3.1 Promote a Clean-Up Campaign

In an effort to motivate staff and provide them with an opportunity to purge their workspaces of non-record material and to classify public records, you should consider launching an Office Clean-Up campaign. To keep things organized, appoint a lead person and allocate a specific day or deadline for the purge. If possible, depending on the timeline of your move, it is recommended that you schedule your campaign during the least hectic period of your work year.

To encourage understanding and support of this initiative, it is recommended that you send announcements and periodic reminders to all staff well in advance.

##### **Prior to Clean-Up day:**

- distribute educational materials to help staff discern what is a record and how to identify and handle non-records. (See [Identifying and Handling Non-Records](#), available on our website);
- post flyers and event notices; and
- make arrangements for large recycling containers to be placed in convenient locations and to be removed promptly once they are full.

**Note:** When disposing of material containing personal, confidential or sensitive information (records or non-records), be sure to do so in a **secure** manner.

At the start of the designated day:

- meet with staff to provide detailed instructions,
- have operational retention schedules and *CPRS* ([Classification Plan and Retention Schedules for Common Records](#)) available for reference, and
- have educational support material available.

A records person should be on hand to answer questions and offer assistance pertaining to all records matters.

**Note:** Nothing within this guideline is to be interpreted as authorization to destroy a public record that belongs to the Province of New Brunswick. Public records can only be disposed of in accordance with an authorized Records Retention and Disposition Schedule, approved by the Provincial Archivist, and as described in the Archives Act.

## 3.2 Applying Retention and Disposition

Once an inventory is complete and non-records are purged, you will be able to apply retention and disposition schedules and identify:

- which records are due for destruction,
- which records are due for transfer to Records Centre or Archives, and
- which records are left to be moved.

Before applying retention and disposition schedules identify any constraints, (i.e., other legal holds) and seek advice on how to handle those records, where necessary.

Again, the task of overseeing this activity should be delegated to a lead person with records management knowledge. He or she will need to obtain:

- a copy of the [Classification Plan and Retention Schedules for Common Records \(CPRS\)](#),
- a copy of departmental records retention and disposition schedules, and
- standard Records Centre boxes. (*Grand & Toy stock number SKU#:BOX or Staples Canada Inc., stock number STP20657*)

### Destroying records in-house

Records that have been identified as ready for destruction in accordance with approved retention and disposition schedules may be deleted, shredded or recycled as required. Ensure that you follow in-house records destruction procedures for your department. (See [Records Destruction Form](#) available on our website - Forms)

### Transferring records to Records Centre or Archives

If you have physical records that are ready to be transferred to the Records Centre or Archives, ensure that you have the proper supplies (i.e. standard Records Centre boxes, transfer lists, transfer request forms, black markers, etc). The Records Centre will accept only records that are packed in standard Record Centre boxes.

Once records are boxed and ready, contact the Records Centre to request a transfer. It is advisable to notify Records Centre staff of your request for transfer well in advance of your move date in order that they are able to process it in a timely manner.

For records identified as ready for transfer to the Provincial Archives or the Records Centre, follow standard transfer procedures:

- Identify the records to be transferred and complete the necessary [records transfer list\(s\)](#) for each box
- Submit a Records Transfer Request via the online [Transfer Request System](#). A User Guide is available on the main page.
- Once the request for transfer has been received and processed, Records Centre staff will contact the records custodian/sender the day before the scheduled pickup day.

Checklists and detailed instructions on completing forms and preparing boxes for transfer to the Records Centre can be downloaded from the <a href="#">Corporate Information Management Unit section of the PANB website</a>
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Note: For the transfer of electronic records to the Provincial Archives, please contact [provincial.archives@gnb.ca](mailto:provincial.archives@gnb.ca).

## 4 Space Planning

Once the inventory is complete, non-records have been purged, and all other records have been scheduled you can identify the volume of records left to move to your new location. In order to make the most of the new space, it is recommended that you meet with facilities management staff to confirm space allocations and discuss any special records management requirements.

The following is a list of questions to consider regarding the new space:

<b>QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN PLANNING FOR NEW SPACE</b>
What is the total volume of the records to be accommodated?
How much area in personal workspace is allocated for records?
What volume of records will be held in the workspaces?
Will there be a central filing space?
What volume of records will be held in central filing areas?
Will the central filing area be secure?
Will there be sufficient space to allow for potential growth?
Do you need a vault? Fireproof area? Climate controls?
What type of filing equipment will be used?
Is the existing filing/storage equipment going to be used?
Do you have sufficient filing/storage equipment?
Does any of the equipment (weight of the records) require reinforcement of the floor?

## 5. Moving to the New Location

In preparation for the move, all of the physical records to be transferred to the new location should be identified using a logical numbering system. Make sure that all boxes are labelled clearly and consistently according to this system. The use of labels and colour codes is helpful in organizing boxes by new location (i.e. all of the blue labelled boxes go to Accounting/second floor/ Tom's office/ etc.)

The lead person should assign someone to coordinate the activity in the new location. This person would be responsible for directing movers, identifying and resolving any unforeseen problems, organizing/delegating inventory checks, etc.

It is advisable to develop and prepare a list identifying the name of the office/person, number of boxes to be moved, originating location, and the location they are being moved to. This will be filled out at the old location as boxes are moved out and as a checklist at the other end to identify any missing boxes.



It is recommended that you collaborate with IT staff to ensure electronic records have been safely transferred to new media, servers, etc. It is also important to ensure that back ups of all electronic records were made just prior to the move.

## **6. Follow-up**

Once records have been moved to the new location, it is important to verify whether the goals set out during the planning and implementation stages were met.

As soon as possible, the lead person should verify with staff that all of the records sent from the old location have, in fact, arrived at the new location. Any missing or damaged records should be identified as soon as possible to prevent further loss or damage, and to increase possibility of recovery.

Once the move is complete and everyone has settled into the new space, take some time to evaluate the experience. Discuss with your colleagues and staff what phase of the move went well and what could have been done better. Meet with the appointed leads for their assessment. Try to finalize your report within 30 to 60 days of the move. Documenting the process and the lessons learned will be an invaluable reference for future moves.

## APPENDIX A

### Suggested Timetable for Planning a Move

3-6 months before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define areas of responsibility</li> <li>• Designate lead person</li> <li>• Identify special requirements</li> <li>• Determine budget requirements</li> <li>• Prepare Contact List</li> </ul>
3 months before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch Clean-Up Day campaign</li> <li>• Conduct records inventory</li> <li>• Order Records Centre boxes</li> <li>• Prepare boxes for transfer to Records Centre/Archives</li> <li>• Contact Records Centre to coordinate transfer. Advise of any deadlines.</li> </ul>
1 month before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm move date</li> <li>• Confirm space allocations</li> <li>• Meet with staff to communicate labelling system/box numbering scheme</li> <li>• Develop Records Moving Inventory sheet</li> </ul>
The move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate leads to coordinate activities at both the old and new locations.</li> <li>• Track records being moved using Inventory Sheet(s)</li> </ul>
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with affected staff to gather evaluations of the move.</li> <li>• Outline what worked and what could have been done better.</li> <li>• Prepare report for future reference</li> </ul>