



Recorded Information Management & You

The Truth about Backups

The purpose of performing regularly scheduled backups of system applications and user files is to ensure continuity of service in the event of a disaster or loss of the original files on the network servers. Backups are only required for limited periods of time.

Backups are NOT considered archives!

Although backups contain information that falls under records retention and disposition schedules, backups are intended to **restore** files, not to maintain them for long-term use.

Every department should have procedures and practices in place for rendering the information on back-ups inaccessible as part of their risk management strategy.

GNB staff should not rely on backups such as the “auto-archive” function in Microsoft Outlook to manage the records created in the course of GNB activities.

Issue 13



Each department or agency has the authority, responsibility, and accountability for establishing policy and standards regarding system backup and recovery procedures.

Is there a Retention and Disposition Schedule for Backups?

Yes. The records retention and disposition schedule for computer systems backups is outlined in Appendix B of the [Classification Plan and Retention Schedules for Common Records \(CPRS\)](#).



Departmental policies and procedures regarding re-use of backups **must** ensure that GNB information is **destroyed/made inaccessible** following the end of the pre-determined backup cycle.

There are three options to rendering the information on backups inaccessible:

1. overwrite the previous information;
2. physically destroy the backup media;
3. erase the backup media in such a way that previous information cannot be retrieved or restored through normal means.

Questions or comments? Email us at records.centre@gnb.ca or call 506-457-7249

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