

GENERAL

1.0. POLICY

1.1. This chapter implements *the* Department of Defense (DoD) Records Management Policy, and “TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) Records Retention Schedule (RRS)” (hereafter referred to as “TMA RRS”). Contractors must plan for the full life cycle of Government records (regardless of media), from creation through the required retention period and to the authorized destruction date. In addition to the TMA RRS, contractors shall comply with the following policies, regulations, and laws relating to Government records:

- 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subchapter B - Records Management
- Federal Records Act (Title 44 United States Code (USC), Chapters 21, 29, 31, 33)
- Paperwork Reduction Act (Title 44 USC, Chapter 35)
- DoD Directive (DoDD) 5015.2, “DoD Records Management Program,” March 6, 2000

1.2. It is DoD policy, to limit the creation of records to those essential for the efficient conduct of official business and to preserve those of continuing value while systematically eliminating all others, and to ensure their management is in compliance with the above listed laws and regulations, as well as, all TMA RRS references.

1.3. No record of the United States (U.S.) Government is to be alienated (removed) or destroyed except in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Records Act and applicable regulations. Unauthorized destruction of records is punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

2.0. APPLICABILITY

2.1. The provisions of this chapter apply to all TMA contractors. Where “contractor” is referred to within this chapter, the provisions shall apply, when appropriate, to subcontractors providing services under the prime *contractors with TRICARE* contracts.

2.2. Contractors are responsible for preventing the alienation or unauthorized destruction of records, including all forms of mutilation. Willful and unlawful destruction, damage or alienation of federal records is subject to the fines and penalties imposed by 18 USC 2701. Records may not be removed from the legal custody of TMA contractors or destroyed without regard to the provisions of the agency records schedules.

3.0. RESPONSIBILITIES

Contractors shall comply with the federal policies, regulations, and laws referenced in paragraph 1.1., including those policies associated with the safeguarding of records covered by the Privacy Act of 1974, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and Health Insurance Portability and

Accountability Act (HIPAA) statutes. These policies include the preservation of all TMA records created or received, regardless of format (paper, electronic, etc.) or mode of transmission (e-mail, fax, etc.) or state of completion (draft, final, etc.). Contractors may choose to maintain records in either paper or electronic format. Depending on the chosen format (paper or electronic), contractors shall use the appropriate Addendum, either Chapter 2, Addendum A or B, for guidance on transferring records to the Federal Records Centers (FRCs).

3.1. TMA

TMA is responsible for:

3.1.1. *The development and implementation of standards and policies for the economical management of records for the TMA Program;*

3.1.2. *Providing effective control over the creation, organization, maintenance, use, and disposition of records including records containing adequate and proper documentation of the contractor's administration and procedures;*

3.1.3. *Providing annual records training for contractors;*

3.1.4. *Notifying contractors of records freezes; and*

3.1.5. *Inspecting the contractor's records management practices and procedures during the contractor's normal business hours.*

3.2. Contractor

Contractor shall be responsible for:

3.2.1. *Scheduling, following contract award, its Records Liaison to attend the next available records management training provided by TMA. The contractor's Records Liaison shall continue to attend the records management course annually thereafter. All travel shall be at the contractor's expense.*

3.2.2. *Records related to beneficiary health care and/or claims and all supporting documentation received or developed under a TMA contract, are the property of the U.S. Government, unless specifically excluded. Contractors, at a minimum, are required to:*

3.2.2.1. *Maintain all government records in accordance with the requirements of the TMA RRS (see Chapter 2, Section 2).*

3.2.2.2. *Appoint an individual to act as a Records Management liaison to work with the TMA Records Management Officer.*

3.2.2.3. *Apply current laws, regulations, standards, procedures, and techniques to ensure the most economical, efficient, and reliable means for creation, retrieval, maintenance, preservation, and disposition of their (Government) records, regardless of media.*

3.2.2.4. *Maintain a file plan of all active and inactive federal records and provide a copy of the plan for review by the TMA Records Management Officer. In addition, the contractor shall maintain documentation on any federal records that have been retired to the FRC or destroyed.*

3.2.2.5. *Annually review and provide feedback on the file plans for each office within their purview to ensure that records are accurately identified. These file plans shall be made available to the Government, if requested.*

3.2.2.6. *Perform self-evaluations of their records management program every two years to ensure compliance with applicable records management laws, regulations, standards and guidance. Copies of the evaluations criteria and their results shall be made available to the Government, if requested.*

3.2.2.7. *Evaluate current and potential information systems to identify record information being created or received during the conduct of business and ensure the preservation of federal records as specified in the TMA RRS. Record information created in information systems and not identified in the TMA RRS shall be brought to the attention of the TMA Records Management Officer.*

3.2.2.8. *Promote awareness of their legal responsibility to report to the appropriate official any actual, impending, or threatened unlawful removal, alteration, or destruction of federal records. Applicable policies and regulations are referenced in [paragraph 1.1](#).*

3.2.2.9. *Establish a records management program covering all media. The contractor shall use the standard classification and filing system outlined in the TMA RRS. This allows for the maximum uniformity and ease in maintaining and using Government records and facilitating the locating, charge-out, re-filing, and disposing of records.*

3.2.2.10. *Develop and implement a vital records program in case of disaster. Reference 36 CFR, Part 1223, "Managing Vital Records."*

3.2.2.11. *The contractor shall ensure that records in its jurisdiction are retrievable and provided within five working days of being requested by the Government.*

3.2.2.12. *TMA records move from an active to inactive status when they meet the TMA RRS cut off requirements in the disposition instructions. Once the TMA records are inactive, they shall be held in accordance with the TMA RRS disposition instructions then transferred to the FRC. Inactive TMA electronic records shall be transferred from contractor systems to TMA's designated National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Electronic Federal Records Center (eFRC) (see [Chapter 2, Section 4, paragraph 3.0](#)).*

4.0. DEFINITIONS

4.1. Active Records

Active records are those used to conduct current TMA business. They may also be referred to as "open." Active records are generally maintained in office space or on-line in an electronic system. Events in this phase of the records life cycle include creating or receiving records and capturing them in a document or content management system or recordkeeping system.

4.2. Case Files

A case file contains material on a specifically identified matter, action, transaction, event, person, project, or other single standardized subject. As an example, case files may cover one or several topics but all subject material pertains to a single particular case.

4.3. Content Management System

An application that provides capabilities for multiple users with different permission levels to manage content, data, or information.

4.4. Contractor Records

Records include data produced and/or maintained by a contractor for TMA. The contractor is required to provide adequate and proper documentation of TMA's programs and to manage them effectively. The documentation of TMA programs is considered a record.

4.5. Disposition Instructions

Actions taken on records no longer needed to conduct the current business of TMA, and usually include instruction for the cut off, transfer, retirement, and destruction of record documents. Specific guidance and techniques for using or applying disposition instructions are located in the TMA RRS.

4.6. Documentation

Documentation concerns the creation of records and the assembly or consolidation of this information; this applies to records in all media (paper, electronic, microfilm, etc.).

4.7. Electronic Information Systems

Records generated in systems created to perform TMA mission related functions (claims, Explanations of Benefits (EOBs), etc.) and used by office and/or organizational personnel, computer operators, programmers, and systems administrators. These systems are usually identified by a specific name or acronym, and contain structured data. These systems contain TMA records content and shall be required to have retention schedules applied.

4.8. Electronic Mail

A document created or received on an agency electronic mail system, including brief notes, more formal or substantive documents, and any attachments and routing information which may be transmitted with the message. May be a record or a non-record.

4.9. Electronic Recordkeeping

The creation, maintenance, use and disposition of records created and stored by using a computer. Electronic recordkeeping is part of the solution to manage, preserve, and provide access to electronic records.

4.10. Electronic Recordkeeping System

An electronic recordkeeping system collects, organizes, and categorizes electronic records in their native file form instead of requiring the user to print and file them in a manual filing system. Such a system automates the preservation, retrieval, use, and disposition of the electronic record.

4.11. Electronic Records

Records stored in a form that only a computer can process and satisfies the definition of a federal record, also referred to as machine-readable records or automatic data processing records.

4.12. Electronic Standard Form 135 (SF-135)

The electronic SF-135 is modeled after the transmittal document SF-135 designed for metadata about the paper records. When transferring electronic records the metadata is different than the paper records (see [Chapter 2, Addendum B](#)). The metadata collected for electronic transfers will be the key identifiers used to search and retrieve the record.

4.13. Frozen Records (FRs)

Those temporary records that cannot be destroyed on schedule because special circumstances, such as a court order, require a temporary extension of the approved retention period.

4.14. Group 6 or Higher

The minimum accepted Tagged Imaged File Format (TIFF) version sufficient for electronic records to be maintained or transferred because it is the lowest TIFF specification able to convert record data into an archival file format suitable for long-term preservation.

4.15. Inactive Records

Inactive records are documents which are no longer referenced on a regular basis (yearly) and tend to be stored in a less accessible place. Records become inactive when they reach their cut-off as defined on a Records Retention Schedule, has been reached. Inactive records may also be referred to as "closed" records.

4.16. Life Cycle of Records

The concept that records pass through the following stages: receipt, capture, creation, active use, inactive use, distribution, storage, transfer, migration, disposition, and archiving of the official record.

4.17. Master Files

Relatively long-lived computer files containing an organized and consistent set of complete and accurate data. Usually updated periodically.

4.18. Medium/Media

The physical form of recorded information, such as paper, film, disc, magnetic tape, and other materials on which information can be recorded and stored.

4.19. Metadata

Data about a record; the attributes of electronic records (structure, content, and context), including office of origin, file codes, dates sent/received, disposition, security classification, etc. For example, if a record can be viewed as a "letter," then metadata is found on the "envelope" (e.g., date stamp, return address, addressee, etc.). Associated metadata is data that is linked to or associated with a specific electronic record or record object.

4.20. Migration

The techniques and strategies used to move electronic information from one storage medium to another over time to prevent the loss of needed information because of technological obsolescence.

4.21. Non-Record Material

Non-record material is any U.S. Government-owned documentary material that does not meet the conditions of records status or that is specifically excluded from the statutory definition of a record (see 44 USC 3301). There are three specific categories of materials excluded from the statutory definition of records:

- *Library and museum material (but only if such material is made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes), including physical exhibits, artifacts, and other material objects lacking evidential value.*
- *Extra copies of documents (but only if the sole reason such copies are preserved is for convenience of reference).*
- *Stocks of publications and of processed documents. Catalogs, trade journals, and other publications that are received from other Government agencies, commercial firms, or private institutions and that require no action and are not part of a case on which action is taken. (Stocks do not include serial or record sets of agency publications and processed documents, including annual reports, brochures, pamphlets, books, handbooks, posters and maps.)*

4.22. Optical Disc (OD)

A non-contact, random-access disc tracked by optical laser beams and used for mass storage and retrieval of digitized text and graphics. Sometimes called an optical digital disc or optical digital data disc. Types include:

- *Write Once Read Many (WORM);*
- *Compact Disc-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM);*
- *Compact Disc-Interactive (CD-I);*
- *Digital Video Disc (DVD); and*

- Erasable ODs.

4.23. Processing Files

Files, aside from master files, which comprise the life cycle of most computerized records prior to the production of a given master file. Processing files, from work files and input or source files to some valid transaction files, are employed to create and use a master file.

4.24. Project Files

A project file contains an assembly of materials that pertain to a set of actions, transactions, events, persons, or other subject matter designated to a project. By definition, projects are temporary so files have a clear beginning and end date that correspond to a project's life cycle.

4.25. Record Object

A record object is a container (typically, a computer file) for a group of related information. The information can be formatted as either text or images, and the computer file-type indicates the format of the information. For example, scanned images are typically stored in TIFF or as Portable Document Format (PDF) files.

NOTE: *For the purpose of electronic records management, a record object is not necessarily a row of data in a database.*

4.26. Records

According to 44 USC 3301, the term "records" includes "all books, papers, maps, photographs, electronic records, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the U.S. Government under federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government, or because of the informational nature of data in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference, and stocks or publications and of processed documents are not included."

4.27. Records Management

That area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, use/maintenance, and disposition of records.

4.28. Smart Scan

Smart Scan is a feature of the Archives and Records Centers Information System (ARCIS) that provides a service of scanning the paper records requested and having them e-mailed to the requestor. For more specific details about the service, check the NARA ARCIS web page.

4.29. Transfer

The term "transfer" has replaced the older term "accession" for temporary records. Like an accession, a transfer is a unique identifier used by NARA to track the records transferred using the SF-135 transmittal document for either paper or for electronic records.

4.30. Transmission and Receipt Data

4.30.1. *Transmission data. Information in electronic mail systems regarding the identities of sender and addressee(s), and the date and time messages were sent.*

4.30.2. *Receipt data. Information in electronic mail systems regarding date and time of receipt of a message, and/or acknowledgment of receipt or access by the addressee(s).*

4.31. Vital Records (Sometimes Called Essential Records)

Records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency and also those records essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities (includes both emergency-operating and rights-and-interests records). Vital records considerations are part of an agency's records disaster prevention and recovery program.

5.0. E-MAIL RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The same records management principles apply to e-mail records. Contractors shall, at a minimum:

5.1. Write and implement *e-mail* instructions *based on the requirements of the TMA RRS*. Instructions at a minimum shall address: what is a record vs. a non-record, how the contractor will preserve the data, the names on distribution lists or directories, when to request receipts and how to preserve the receipts, external e-mail systems, and circulated drafts. The contractor must minimize the risk of unauthorized additions, deletions, or alterations to e-mail records (integrity).

5.2. Assign an individual to be responsible for the maintenance of the e-mail recordkeeping system. This individual is also required to annually monitor the use of the e-mail system to assure recordkeeping instructions are being followed.

5.3. Train all e-mail users and provide on-going training for any new users on e-mail record keeping requirements in compliance with *TMA RRS (also see paragraph 1.1.)*. This training shall include: defining what is a record vs. a non-record; how to put records into record keeping systems; preserving data; preserving names on distribution lists or directories; when to request receipts and how to preserve the receipts; how to deal with circulated drafts; and external e-mail systems.

6.0. RECORDS MAINTAINED BY CONTRACTORS

6.1. The records *identified* in Chapter 2, Section 2 shall be maintained by all contractors. *Inactive records shall be routinely transferred to the NARA FRC designated by TMA in accordance with Chapter 2, Section 4.*

6.2. In the event of a contract transition, the outgoing contractor shall transfer records to an incoming contractor *for an agreed upon period of time (for example, typically the last 18-24 months)*. *Records beyond this agreed upon period of time shall be transferred to the NARA FRC designated by the TMA Records Management Officer. Records transferred to the NARA FRC shall follow transfer procedures outlined in Chapter 2, Addendum A and B. Examples of records to be maintained and transferred may include, but are not limited to:*

- *TMA Claims;*
- Claims Supporting Documentation, *including any documentation that either supports or denies payment of a claim;*
- Adjustment Records;
- Adjustment Supporting Documentation, *including any documentation that either supports or denies payment of the adjustment;*
- Checks; *and*
- *EOB* Forms and Summary Payment Vouchers.

