

## Introduction

This edition of *Records Retention for Public Colleges and Universities in the State of Ohio: A Manual* supersedes the version completed in 1992 and updated in 1994. Users will find several important changes—more examples of record titles in the model records retention schedule, and some changes in records retention requirements (especially for personnel and time-keeping records). Those changes aside, the purpose of this manual has continued to be the determination of minimum guidelines for the retention of records as required by law and sensible practice.

The guidelines are the work of many. The Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC), the association of presidents of the public universities in Ohio, organized a committee of archivists and records managers who had actively used the manual in their work to review it for comprehensiveness and usefulness. Finally, IUC commissioned Donald Skupsky, an attorney and certified records manager who was the consultant for the original manual, to make certain that the manual continued to embody current legal requirements and best practices as they pertain to records retention and disposition.

As a whole, the manual has five distinct parts, all of which follow the model illustrated in Donald Skupsky's *Records Retention Procedures* (Denver, Colorado: Information Requirements Clearinghouse, 1990). The first four parts—the records retention matrix, the legal group file, the legal research index, and the legal group index—represent the formula that creates the fifth part, the records retention schedule, that lists titles of records on campuses and what should be done with them. The manual establishes a method for evaluating records by function and by legal concern that would be true for all public colleges or universities, even though the titles of records or files might be different at each campus.

Each of the parts of the manual is inter-related. The records retention matrix is a list of functions or activities (retention groups) relating to records at all universities or colleges. This matrix is linked to a legal group file that describes and categorizes legal concerns related to the function of the record. As an example, retention group ACC1000, which refers to records documenting accounts payable and receivable activities, belongs to the legal group ACC000. This legal group file, in turn, leads to a legal research index that is arranged by legal group number and refers to the specific statute that determined the retention period for records. A check of the legal research index for ACC000 reveals more than fifty citations in federal and state laws and regulations.

Finally, there is the records retention schedule itself. This is the document that most users will employ in deciding the retention and disposition of specific records at individual campuses. Included here is a prototype of what the "typical"

institution will have. Actually, each college or university will make adaptations to the prototype to reflect the titles found in departments or offices.

It is important, even critical, to note that each title of the prototype cites a retention group number from the matrix. The use of this number serves two purposes. First, it provides a justification or explanation for the retention and disposition of the record. Second, it enables the college or university to alter the retention of existing titles in compliance with changes in law or regulation. All that is necessary is to establish which legal group is affected by the altered or new law (which is listed in the legal research index). From there, determine which retention groups have their retention based upon the changed legal group. When the retention group number is known, it is then possible to know the actual titles of records affected. This is only possible by maintaining the links between the records retention schedule, the records retention matrix, the legal group file, and the legal research index.

Finally, users will also find helpful information in the appendices of the manual. The manual serves to support systematic programs of records retention scheduling, which is required of public colleges and universities by *The Ohio Revised Code* (Section 149.33). In Appendix A, Establishing a Records Retention and Disposition Program: The Basics, readers will find model statements of policy and convenient forms needed to develop records retention scheduling programs on their campuses.

### **Explanation of Abbreviation**

ACT	While Active
AS	Limitation of assessment or the period of time in which records can be audited for tax purposes.
AUD	Until Audited
CFR	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>
CY	Current Year
GAF	General Schedule of the State Records Administrator, Ohio Department of Administrative Services.
IND	Indefinitely

LA	Limitation of action, or the period of time in which legal action must take place.
LRBR	Donald Skupsky, <i>Legal Requirements for Business Records</i> (Denver, Colorado: Information Requirements Clearing House, 1988)
MAINT retention. ORCA	Maintain; the law specifies the creation of the record, not its <i>Ohio Revised Code</i>
PROC	Procedure; laws which identify procedural matters rather than retention periods.
SUP	Until Superseded
USC	<i>United States Code</i>