

## INTRODUCTION

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Our ability to control records has not kept pace with our ability to create them. Rapid copy and duplicating machines, along with data and word processing equipment, have accelerated the accumulation of records. The problem of disposing of records that have outlived their usefulness, as well as which records to keep and how long to keep them, are issues faced by each of us.

The lack of control over the creation, maintenance, retention and disposition of records manifests itself in a number of ways. The following questions can be asked of your individual unit:

1. Do you know how many records you have and where they are?
2. Who uses the records and how often are they used?
3. How much is it costing to house these records?
4. How much time are you spending on the upkeep of inactive records?
5. How much money do you have invested in file equipment?
6. Do you have a retention schedule covering all of your records?
7. Is the retention schedule being applied?
8. If you have a retention schedule, when did you last review it to see if the retention periods could be shorter?

The answers to these and other questions will be answered in the following sections of this handbook.

**FORMS AND/OR FORMS SAMPLES: RETURN TO ISSUANCE HOME PAGE FOR FORMS/FORMS SAMPLES SITE LINK.**

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