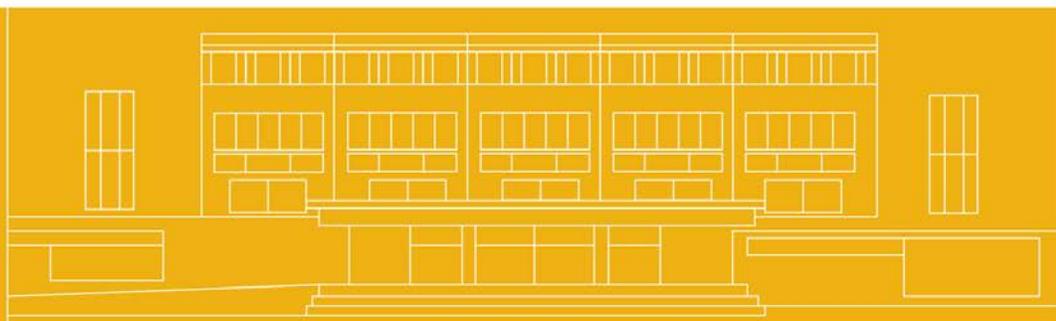


RECORDS MANAGEMENT TIPS



March 2014

[Records Management and Developing a Successful Records Survey \(RM-19 Form\)](#)

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to state-agency records officers on effectively completing a records survey in order to create or update an agency-specific records retention and disposition schedule. This is intended for only **state-government agencies**.

Agencies need to consider the following five factors before starting a records survey.

1. Know your records

Understand as much as possible about the record series being surveyed, e.g., its purpose, how long it's active, what determines the end of its active life, how long it is then needed for reference or research purposes. Review the records, interview the staff members who create and/or use them, and if warranted and possible, interview the customers who use them.

2. Provide training to staff on the RM-19

If the records officer will have help compiling the survey forms, training should be provided, whether face-to-face or, at a minimum, a referral to the [YouTube training video](#).

3. Complete the RM-19 form

Make sure you are using the current version of the form found on the [Records Management Forms](#) webpage. Complete and submit the survey in the electronic MS Word format. This is much more effective than a paper format for soliciting editing assistance from colleagues. Your records management analyst must receive it in this format to create or update the records series.

4. Work with your records management analyst on the draft

Especially if this is your first, or first in a long time, endeavor at developing a records survey, work closely with your [assigned records management analyst](#). Before the surveying starts, have a conversation about the depth and breadth of the project to determine a feasible plan. Before going too far in a wrong direction, complete one or two drafts and then submit those to your analyst for review and comment.

5. Meeting the deadlines

There are bi-monthly deadlines for introducing proposals for new and updated records series into the Records Oversight Committee (ROC) process. Your analyst will require some time, depending on the scope of the project, to convert the RM-19 forms into record series drafts. Work out mutually agreeable deadlines for forms to be submitted, and, if a large project, submit them in small batches as they are completed.

Records Analysis Section

www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/