FILE MANAGEMENT BASICS

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AUTHORITIES

FILES MANAGEMENT

Authority for Preparation is the ***ARS Files Management Guidebook***, dated June 1985.

To locate the ***ARS Records Schedules***, go to:

http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/recmgmt/schedules.htm

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The authority for records management is **P&P 251.8**, Records Management.

Access the REE Administrative Issuances (Bulletins, P&P's, etc.) website at: http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/ (with search capability).

From this P&P on the web-site you can link to the *General Records Schedule*. The authority to dispose of files is the *General Records Schedule*. The *General Records Schedule* is a National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) document. Access the *General Records Schedule* from the ARS, AFM, Information Technology Division, Records Management Home Page at: http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/ardor/records-schedules.html

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BASIC FILE RETENTION AND DISPOSITION

BUDGET – Current plus 5 years (in case of 5-year review).

CORRESPONDENCE – Current plus 5 years (unless we think we need it or want to keep for samples).

CRIS PROJECTS – 5 years

PROGRESS REPORTS AND PLANS – Current plus 5 years (in case of 5-year review).

PURCHASE ORDERS – Current plus 2 years.

PATENT INFORMATION – Current plus 5 years (unless we think we need it or want to keep for samples).

STATUS OF FUNDS – Current plus 2 years.

T&As – Hard Copy – Current plus 6 years (this should include backup documentation; e.g., leave slips).

TRAVEL (DOMESTIC) – Current plus 6 years.

TRAVEL (FOREIGN) – Current plus 6 years.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS – Current plus 6 years.

TRAVEL VOUCHERS – Current plus 6 years.

TRAINING FORMS – Current plus 3 years (what MSA Personnel Office does).

The Excel spreadsheet is a guide based on the ARS File Management Guidebook. Use what you need; you will not file everything that is listed. Many of the entries that have blank destroy dates do not have a date shown in the Guidebook or it says "Disposition pending NARS approval". You will have to use you own judgment because there is no other documentation that clearly states how long to keep the information.

When you destroy records, shredding is the best method, especially for any documents containing financial, budget, personnel, research, etc.,

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A good rule of thumb to use in disposing of files is as follows:

Budget documents, such as ARMPS – 5 years
Real Property documents – 10 years
Accountable documents – 10 years

Except as listed above, most files are kept 3 years – the most current year (active files) plus the two previous years.

Throw nothing away on program agreements, projects (active or inactive), etc., without asking Research Leader.

PREPARATION OF FOLDERS

Coding Material

Alphabetic Name File (Pink Copy)

The Pink Copy is filed alphabetically by name of addressee and is used to locate records when we can remember the name of the addressee, but not the subject or where we coded the material. The subject is coded in the upper right corner of the copy and coding matches the yellow file copy coding. Multiple mailings (letter addressed to

more than one correspondent) will be filed in chronological order, latest date to the top, in a special folder labeled, “MULTIPLE MAILINGS.”

Subject File (Yellow Copy)
The Yellow Copy is filed according to subject and is the subject folder file copy. All background and/or incoming correspondence is filed with the yellow copy. The subject is coded in the upper right corner of the copy and the coding matches the pink file copy coding.

Case Files
Case files contain material relating to a subject that is not included in the numeric outline in the guidebook. You need only to case file topics that apply to your unit. For example, under the subject “Research,” we case file as follows:

RESEARCH (RES)
- Aquaculture
- Animals
- Crops – Cotton
- Crops – Bt Cotton
- Crops – Forage
- Insects – Termites
- Insects – Bees

Files Index

A Files Index should be prepared after you have set up your files and updated as the files are changed.

The Files Index should be inserted at the front of the Alphabetic file folders.

As you code material, use the Files Index to guide you.

Example is included.

Subject – Numeric File System

The Subject-Numeric File system is a subject classification system. Selected subjects are arranged in alphabetical order and subdivisions are numeric. The ARS system has 36 primary subject headings. We have added an additional subject heading for Homeland Security.

Only prepare folders for subject headings actually used (See File Designations – A Quick Reference Guide Section).

Preparation of Folders

SECTION 4

Preparation of File Folder Labels, Guide Cards, and Drawer Labels

Proper labeling is a very important part of a well managed and efficient filing system. Labels act as signposts, speeding the filing and retrieving of records (see Figure 4-1, page 17).

1 File Folders. The folder labels will contain the following information:

a Folder subject title.

b Name of the case file (if any).

c Period covered by the folder (fiscal year [FY], calendar year [CY]).

d File disposition authorized in the approved Records Control Schedule, DIRECTIVE 251.8.

The subject title will appear exactly as it appears in the File Outline (see Exhibit 2). Each folder label will be typed and attached to the folder in the format described below.

2 Placement of Folder Labels. There are three areas on the folder tab where a label may be placed: the left-hand corner, center, and the right-hand corner.

a Left-Hand Corner. This label will contain the folder subject title in the following format:

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT(FIN) 14 - 2
Payrolls
Time and Attendance Reports

b Tab Center. This label will contain only the name or number of the case file.

Doe, John

c Right-Hand Corner. This label will contain the time period covered by the folder and the disposition information.

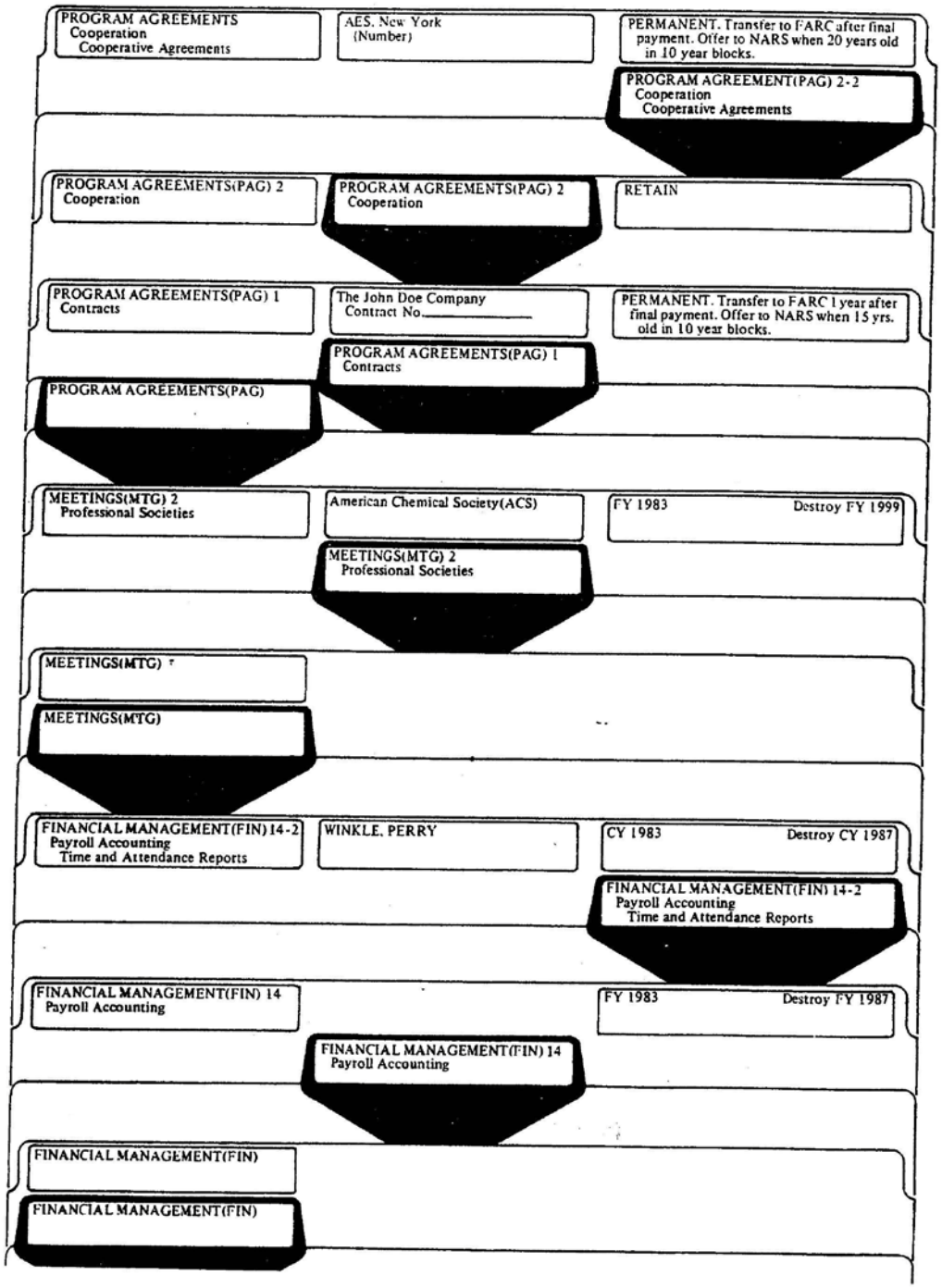
CY 1983 Destroy CY 1987

3 Guide Cards. Guide cards are used as a finding media for various file segments and to separate groups of files contained in the same file drawer. On the average, there should be no more than 6-10 guide cards per full file drawer. The label on the guide card should clearly show the nature of the folders which follow (see Figure 4-1).

4 Drawer Labels. Label the front of each file drawer to show the drawer contents.

FIGURE 4-1

GUIDE CARDS AND FOLDERS



File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
Associations and Societies……	(ASN)
Audits, Investigations, and Reviews……	(AUD)
Authorizations…….....	(ATZ)
Automated Data Processing……..	(ADP)
Budget ……..	(BUD)
Committees……..….	(COM)
Communications …….	(CMN)
Cooperation …….	(COP)
Energy Conservation …….	(ERG)
Environmental Quality …….	(ENV)
Equal Employment Opportunity …….	(EEO)
Financial Management ……..	(FIN)
Homeland Security …….…….	(HLS)
Information-Public Relations……..	(INF)
Information Resource Management …….	(IRM)
International ……..….	(INT)
Legal and Legislation ……..…….	(LEG)
Management …….	(MGT)
Meetings …….	(MTG)
Organization and Reorganization …….	(ORG)
Patents ……..	(PAT)
Permits …….	(PMT)
Personal Property ……..	(PRP)
Personnel …….	(PER)
Procurement and Contracting…….	(PRC)
Program Agreements …….…..	(PAG)
Program Management/Strategic Plan Implementation …	(PMS)
Program Planning and Review …….	(PPR)
Projects …….	(PRJ)
Publications …….	(PUB)
Radiological Safety …….	(RAD)
Real Estate-Real Property …….	(REA)
Records Management …….	(REC)
Reports-Statistics …….	(RPT)
Reproduction and Distribution ……..	(REP)
Research ……..	(RES)
Travel and Transportation …….	(TRV)

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
A	
Abandoned Patent ……..	PAT 1
Abstracts …….... ….	INF 9
Accidents, Employee …… ….	PER 21-1
Accidents, Motor Vehicle …….. ….	PRP 4-1
Accomplishments of ARS …….…..….	PUB 2
Accomplishments of Management Unit ……	RES
Acting –in-Charge Personnel ……	PER 1
Addresses …….. ….	CMN 1
Adjunct……	PER 8-2-4 – Outside Activities
Administrator's Council Meetings ……	COM 4-1
Adverse Actions ……	PER 8-3
Affirmative Action Planning ……..	EEO 1
"Agricultural Research" Magazine ……	PUB 4-1
Airline Schedules ……	TRV
Animals …….…..….	RES 10 – Animals
Animal Care Use Committee ……	COM
Animal Manure …….....	RES 10 – Animals
Animal Waste ……	RES 10 – Animals
Annual Reports …….. …	REP
Applications for Jobs …… …	PER 19
Appropriations …….. …	BUD
Aquaculture …… …	RES 10 – Aquaculture
Area Reserve …….….	BUD 2-2
ARIS …….….....	ADP
ARMPS / ARMS …….….	BUD 5-2
ARS Fellowship Program ……..……... …	PER 25-11
Audio / Visual Aids …….….	INF 1
Audits, Organizational ……	AUD
Audits, Personnel ……	PER 4
AWARDS	
Contract ……..... …	PRC 5
Employee …… …	PER 7-1
Incentive …… …	PER 7-2
Length of Service …….. …	PER 7-3
Letters of Commendations/Appreciation. …	PER 7-4
Memorials/Tributes …… …	PER 7-5
Outside …… …	PER 7-6
Suggestions …… …	PER 7-7
B	
Beef / Forage / Livestock …….…… …	RES 10 – Animals
Bees …… …	RES 10 – Insects
Bid Lists…… …	PRC 12-1
Bioinformatics …… …	RES 10
Biological Control ……... …	RES 10

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
Boll Weevils …….. …	RES 10 – Insects
Break-ins, Building …… …	REA 3-2
Briefing Hearings ……	BUD 7-1
Budget Appropriations ……	BUD -1
Building Repairs ……..	REA 2
C	
Care Review ……	AUD 2-1
Case Write-ups (RPES) ……	PER 16-2
Catfish ……..	RES 10
Catalogs/Price List ……	RC 12-2
Ceilings, Personnel ……	BUD 4-1
Ceilings, Travel ……	BUD 4-2
Charge Card ……..	TRV 1
Charges, Discipline ……	PER 8-3
Chemicals ……	INF 3
Civil Rights ……	EEO
Collaborators ……..	PER 9
Committees	
Internal ……	COM 4-9
National ……..	COM 4-10
Regional ……	COM 4-11
Community Activities ……..	PER 6
Competitive Grants ……	PAG 5-2
Complaints – Criticisms, Personnel ……	PER 8
Complaints, EEO/Discrimination ……..	EEO-4
Complaints, General ……	INF-4-2
Computers ……	ADP
Computer Security ……	ADP - 2
Conference Calls ……	CMN 7-2
Conflict of Interests ……	PER 8-2-1
Congratulations – Commendations ……....	PER 7-4
Congressional Calls …….....	CMN 2
Congressional Proceedings ……	BUD 7
Construction Projects …….....	REA 2-1
Continuing Resolution ……	FIN-2-2-1
Contracts ……	PAG 1
Cooperative Agreements ……	PAG 2-2
Copier Management ……	REP-1
Cotton ……	RES 10 – Cotton
Counselors / Counseling, EEO ……..	EEO 2
Court Attendance ……..	PER 5
Criminal Actions ……	LEG 3-2
CRIS ……	PRJ 1
Crops ……	RES 10 – Crops

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
D	
Damage to Building / Land …….	REA 3
Demonstrations ……...	INF 4
Demotions ……...	PER 18-1
Design and Construction …….……	REA 2-1
Details, Work …….……..	PER 18-2
Discipline and Adverse Actions ……	PER 8-3
Discrimination Complaint ……	EEO-4
Dismissal for Hazardous Weather ……..……..	PER 24
Displays ……..……..	INF 4
Directives ……..….	REC 3
E	
1890 Institutions ……	COP 10
EEO Matters ……..	EEO
E-mail ……..……..	CMN 3-1
Emergency Needs Requests ……..……..	BUD 2-2
Employee Details …….……..	PER 18-2
Employee's Associations / Societies / Activities…..	PER 6
Employee Assistance Program ……	PER 21-4
Endangered Species Act ……...	INF 3
Ethics……	PER 8-2 – Conduct & Responsibility
Exhibits for Fairs, Projects, Community ……..	INF 4
Excess Personal Property……	PRP 3
Excess Real Property…….……	REA 10-1
Expenses, Pre-employment ……..	PER 9-3
F	
Facilities ……	REA 7-5
FAX ……	CMN 7-1
Federal Employees Retirement Systems (FERS) ...	PER 23-4 – FERS
Fellowship program, ARS ……..……..	PER 25-11
Field Days ……..	INF 4
Field Space …….…..	REA 12
File Management ……..	REC 4
Flight Schedules ……..	TRV
Forage ……..	RES 10 – Crops
Foreign Cooperative Agreements ……...	PAG 2-2
Foreign Research Associates ……	PER 25-11
Foreign Travel ……	TRV 9-2
Foreign Travel Plans ……	TRV 9-2
Formosan Subterranean Termites ……	RES 10 – Insects
Freedom of Information Act ……	INF 5
Fruits ……..……	RES 10 – Crops

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
G	
Garbage and Trash Collection / Disposal …….….	REA
General Schedule (GS) Rates ……..…….	PER 14
Genetics ……..……..	RES
Gifts …….….....	PER 8-2-1
Grants …….	PAG 5
Grants, Domestic ……..…..…….	PAG 5-3
Grants, Foreign ……...	PAG 5-4
H	
Health, Employee Safety and ……..…….	PER 21
Heating, Lighting and Power ……..	REA 13
Heliothis spp. …….	RES 10 – Insects
High Priority Needs Requests …….	BUD 2-2
Hiring …….....	PER 19
Hotel Reservations …….	TRV
House Hearings ……..…….	BUD 7
I	
Information Technology …….	ADP
Injury, Employee ……..	PER 21-1
Inquiries, Personnel …….	PER 9-1
Insects ……... ….	RES 10 – Insects
Insurance …….. ….	PER 2
Inventions …….. ….	PAT
Inventories ……. ….	PRP 1-2
Itineraries, Travel …….. ….	TRV 10
J	
Job Descriptions ……...	PER 4-5
Judges for Science Fairs …….	INF 4
Jury Duty …….	PER 12
K	
L	
Laboratory Director / Research Leader and Location Coordinator Appointments (MSA)……...	ORG 1
Lab Books (Green) / Field Notes …….	PRJ 1-5
Land / Building ……..……..	REA
Lapse Salary Funds ……..…….	BUD 2-2 – Lapse Salary
Leases, Land ……..……..	REA 6
Leave (General)…….....	PER 12
Leave Audits, Records ……..…….	FIN14-2
Lectures …….….....	INF 19

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
Letterhead ……	REC 5-2
Letter of Reprimand ……	PER 8-3
LOTS ……	FIN

M

Magazine Articles …….……..	INF 8
Mail costs …….……	REC 6-5
Mail License …….....	REC 6-8-1
Mail Lists …… ….	REP 2
Maintenance of Buildings / Land ……	REA 7
Management Unit Accomplishments ……	RES
Manuscripts / Abstracts ……	INF 9
Meetings ……	MTG 1
Meetings, International ……	MTG 6
Meetings, Professional Societies ……..	MTG 2
Meetings, Staff ……	MTG 1-3
Memorandum of Understanding ……	PAG 2-3
MODE Code ……	ORG 6
Modeling ……	RES 10 – Modeling
Motor Vehicles ……..	PRP 4
Motor Vehicle Inspections ……..	PRP 4-4

N

National Program Staff Appointments ……..	ORG 1-8
Natural Products ……	RES 10
Newsletters ……..	INF 16-1
Newspaper Clippings ……	INF 8
Notification of Personnel Actions …….. Chronological File	PER 13

O

Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OSMP)	PER 21-5
Offers of Employment ……..	PER 19-7
Office Space ……..	REA 12
OSQR ……	PRJ
Outside Work ……	PER 8-2-4
OECD Fellowships ……..	PER 25-11
Organizational Charts……	ORG 8-1
Organization/Reorganization ……	ORG 8

P

Parking ……..	REA 12
Passports and Visas …….……	TRV 3
Patents ……..	PAT
Pay Charts ……	PER 14-2-1
Payroll …….....	FIN 14

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
PCMS ……	PRC 8
Peer Review – OSQR ……	PRJ
Performance Evaluations ……..	PER 15-6
Performance Standards ……	PER 15-5
Photographs / Pictures ……..	INF 1
Pilot Tests ……	RES 10 – Pilot Tests
Plans, drawings & specifications ……..	REA 2-1
Policy and Procedures ……	REC
Position Descriptions ……	PER 4-5
Position Organizational Listings ……	PER
Poultry ……..	RES 10
Postage Meter ……	REC 6-8
Precision Agriculture ……..	RES 10
Press Releases ……..	INF 10
Procurement ……	PRC 8
Program Agreements ……	PAG
Program Agreement Accounting ……	FIN 15
Program Redirections ……	ORG 11
Program Reviews ……	PAG 5
Project Plans ……	PRJ 1
Promotions ……	PER 18
Prospectuses …….. …	PRJ 1
Public Relations ……..	INF 6
Purchase Orders ……	PRC 8-1
Purchasing …….. …	PRC 8
Q	
Quarantine …….. …	RES 10 – Quarantine
Quarterly Reports to Congress ……...	PUB 2
Quarters, Rental Rates ……	REA 9
R	
R&M Releases ……	BUD 2-2
RPES (Research Personnel Evaluation System)..	PER 16-2
Recommendations ……...	PER 19-7
Recruitment …….....	PER 19
Reductions-in-Force …….....	PER 13
Regional Projects …….....	COM 4-11
Reorganizations, Agency ……...	ORG 1
Repairs, Building ……	REA 2
Reports …….....	REP
Research …… …	RES
Research Apprenticeship Program ……	PER 25-11
Research Associate Program ……..	PER 9-4-3
Research Leader Appointments ……..	ORG 1 - Mid South Area
Research Leader Meetings ……..	MTG 3

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
Research Personnel Evaluation System (RPES)..	PER 16-2
Resignations ……	PER 23-3
Retirements ……	PER 23-4

S

SAMS ……	FIN
Safety and Health, Employee ……	PER 21
Safety Reports / Inspections ……	PER 21-7
Salary Lapse ……	BUD 6 – Lapse Salary
Science Fairs …….....	INF 4
Seminars ……..	INF 19
Senate Hearings …….....	BUD 7
Senior Executive Service ……..	PER 25-11
Signs and Bulletin Boards ……	REA 11
Slides ……... …	INF 1
Soil, Water and Air ……	RES 10 – Soil, Water & Air
Soybeans ……	RES - Soybeans
Space ……	REA 12
Speeches ……	INF 19
Staff Meetings ……	MTG 3
State Agricultural Experiment Stations ……...	COP 8
Strategic Plan ……	RES
Sugarcane …….....	RES 10 – Sugarcane
Subpoenas ……	PER 5

T

T&A Information ……..	FIN 14-2
Talks ……	INF 19
Teachers Research Fellowship Program ……	PER 25-11
Telecommunications ……..	CMN 7
Telephones ……	CMN 7-2
Termites ……..	RES 10
Thrift Saving Plan ……..	PER 2
Tour of Duty ……	PER 24
Training ……	PER 25
Transfers, Employee ……	PER 23-6
Transportation, Travel ……	TRV
Transportation, Personal/ Household……	TRV 6
Travel and Transportation Accounting ……..	FIN 18
Travel Authorization ……	TRV 9-1
Travel Cards ……	TRV 1
Travel Itineraries ……	TRV 10
Travel Vouchers ……..	FIN 18-1
Trip Reports …….....	TRV 12

U

File Designations - A Quick Reference Guide To Code Filing

Subject	Designation
USDA Newsletter ……	PUB 9-9
Utilities ……	REA 13
V	
Vacancies ……	PER 19-12
Variety Releases ……	RES 10 – Variety Releases
Vehicles ……	PRP 4
Vehicle Accident ……..	PRP 4-1
Vehicle Reports……	PRP 6-1
Visas and Passports ……	TRV 3
Visiting Scientists ……..….	PER 25-11
Visitors ……..	INF 20
Vouchers, Travel ……	FIN 18-1
W	
Wage Grade Rates ……..	PER 14
Water and Sewerage ……..	REA 13
Websites …….….	ADP
Weeds …….….	RES 10 – Weeds
Withholding, Salary ……	PER 14
Word Processing ……	ADP 6-1
Work Details ……	PER 18-2
Working Hours ……	PER 24
XYZ	
Year-End Funding …….....	BUD 2-2

FILE MANGEMENT

Note: 3 years = current + 2
7 years = current + 6

Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
AUDITS, INVESTIGATIONS AND REVIEWS (AUD)		3 yrs after case is closed
2	Internal (Audits, Investigation, & Review)	3 yrs after case is closed
2-1	Care Review	Until replaced
AUTHORIZATIONS (ATZ)		
		Retention periods vary according to subject.
	Delegations of Authority	See Record Control Sheets
AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING (ADP) (COMPUTERS/SOFTWARE/EQUIP)		
	Information Technology	
	PDA (Palm Pilots, Blackberries, etc.	
	Websites	
1	ADP Facilities	
2	ADP Security	
3	Technology	
7	Automated Systems	
8	Equipment-Hardware (Computers)	
12	ARIS	
12-15	Research Unit Files	
14	Software	
BUDGET (BUD)		
	Correspondence	5 years
1	Appropriation - FY 20XX	2 years after close of FY
1-1	Continuing Resolutions	3 years
2	Budget Execution	6 years
2-1	Allocations	6 years
2-1	Allocations – Advice of Allocation of Funds, AD-705	6 years
2-2	Allotments and Authorizations	6 years
2-2	AD Reserve	6 years
2-2	Emergency Needs Request	6 years
2-2	High Priority Needs Requests	6 years
2-2	R&M Releases	6 years
2-2	Salary Lapse Retention	6 years
2-2	Year-End Funding	6 years
2-4	Fund Transfers	5 years
2-4-1	CRIS Projects Processed	5 years
2-4-2	Program shifts	5 years
3	Budget Preparation and Submission	5 years
5	Financial and Operating Plans	5 years
5-2	Annual Resource Management Plans (ARMPS)	5 years
6	Fund Availability	
6-1	Salary Lapse	3 years
6-1-1	Status of Funds	3 years
7	Hearings (Ag Committee Appropriations Bills and Hearings)	3 years
7-1	Briefing Papers	2 years
9	Special Requests	
9-3	Construction proposals	5 years
9-4	Extramural Proposals	5 years
COMMITTEES (COM)		3 years after committee ends
3	Financial records	3 years
4	Records Created by Committees	Primary transfer to NARA
4-1	Administrators Council	3 years
4-2	Advisory Committees	1 yr after termination
4-6	Hse Appropriation Committee	3 years
4-10	National Committees	
	NACOP-National Advisory Council for Office Professionals	3 years
4-11	Regional committees	
	MSACOP-Mid South Area Council for Office Professionals	Primary Files - Transfer to NARA
		6 years* Other Office 3 years
6	Safety Committee	5 years

Revised 2/1/2012

FILE MANGEMENT

Note: 3 years = current + 2
7 years = current + 6

Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
COMMUNICATIONS (CMN)	(General - correspondence, reports)	2 years
1	Addresses	When superceded
2	Congressional Calls (ARS Form 213; Lists of Congressional Representatives)	
3	Communications Systems	
3-1	Electronic Mail	Treat as hard copies and filed under subject headings
5	Radio Frequency	1 year after disposal of material
5-1	Equipment Inspection Record	3 years
7	Telecommunications	3 years
7-1-2	Equiment Requests	1 year
7-1-4	Statements	3 years
7-2	Telephones	1 year
7-2	AD Weekly Teleconference	1 year
7-2	Wireless – cell phones	1 year
7-2-4	Equipment Requests	1 year
7-2-5	Statements	1 year
8	Postal Records	I year
9	Mail & Delivery Service Control Files	1 year
10	Meter Mail (Reports and Related Papers)	6 years
COOPERATION (COP)		**NA**
1-4	Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS)	
1-11	Extension Service ES)	
2	Delta Branch Experiment Station (DBES)	
6	International Activities	
8	State Agricultural Experiment Station (SAES)	
10	1890 Institutions – Alcorn, Southern University, Tuskegee	
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (ENV)		
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)		
1	Affirmative Action Planning	4 years
1-1	Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program Plan	3 years
3	Discrimination in EEO Maters	4 years
	Compliance Records	7 years
3-1	Age	4 years
3-3	Handicap	4 years
3-4	Race	4 years
3-7	Sex	4 years
4	Discrimination Complaints	4 years
4-1	Case files	4 years
5	EEO Advisory Committee	3 years
5-1	Workforce Diversity Committee	
6	Federal Women's Program	4 years
9	Special Observances	4 years
	Black History Month	3 years
	Hispanic Program	3 years
	Womens History Month	3 years
FACILITIES SECURITY AND PROTECTIVES SERVICES RECORDS		
1	Homeland Security	
	Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)	Until superceded
3	Survey and Inspection Files - Gov Facilities	3 years
5	Investigative Files	2 years
7	Guard Assignment Files (Ledger Records)	3 years after final entry
8	Police Function Files	3 years
10	Key Accountability	6 months after turn-in of key
11	Visitor Control Logs	2 years after final entry
21	Emergency Planning Case Files	3 years after issuance of a new plan or directive
22	Emergency Operations Tests Files	3 years
24	Electronic Mail	180 days after record keeping copy is produced
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (FIN)		
	CATS	4 years
	SAMS	3 years

FILE MANGEMENT

Note: 3 years = current + 2
7 years = current + 6

Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
6	6-5 Vouchers/Invoices	3 years
7	7-8 Letters of Credit	3 years
12	Monthly Operating Reports (Status of Funds)	3 years
13	Obligated Funds	3 years
	13-1 Estimated Obligations	3 years
14	Payroll Accounting	3 years
	14-1 Salary Changes	3 years
	14-2 Time and Attendance Reports	7 years
	14-2 Leave Audits, Records	7 years
18	Travel and Transportation Accounting (General)	3 years
	18-1 Vouchers – Travel	7 years
INFORMATION-PUBLIC RELATIONS (INF)		3 years
	Current Awareness Literature Search (CALS)	
	ARS Libraries (NAL)	
	DigiTop	
	Earth Day	
	Economic Impact	
	Points of Light Initiative	
	REE Weekly Report to the Secretary	
	Sensitive Issues	
	Location Brochures	Until replaced
1	Audiovisual	
	1-1 Photos, Slides, Negatives, etc. relative to research/publications	Offer to NARA when no longer needed or 5 years old
	1-2 Photos for awards, meetins, special occassions	When no longer needed
	1-3 Graphic Arts - Handbills, Flyers, Posters, Letterhead, Other	When no longer needed
	1-4 Films/Videos from Outside Source for Personnel & Mgt. Training	1 year after completion of training
	1-5 Surveillance Footage	6 months old
	1-6 Video Tapes from Outside Source for Personnel & Mgt. Training	
4	Exhibits, Ceremonies, Community, Projects, Science Fairs, Field Days	
5	Freedom of Information	2 years after date of reply
7	Invitations-Engagements	
8	Magazine Articles and Newspaper Clippings	When no longer needed for reference
9	Manuscripts and Abstracts - **General Correspondence**	5 years
	9-1 Active	Until published - send copy to NAL
	9-2 Reprint Master File	Copy on file - until no longer needed
	9-3 Requests for Editing and Approval	5 years after reprint
	9-4 Review of outside manuscripts	1 year
10	Press Releases, News Clippings	3 years
13	Public Inquiries	3 years
	13-3 Requests for Technical Research Information	15 years
16	Publications Issued by ARS	
	16-1 Newsletters	Most 1 year
19	Speeches-Seminars, Lectures	5 years
20	Visitors, Representatives, Guests	3 years
LEGAL AND LEGISLATION (LEG)		
	Policies and Procedures Covered Under This Heading	When no longer needed for Admin purposes
	Liability for Federal Employees	NA
MEETINGS (MTG)		
2	Professional Societies	3 years or when no longer needed for reference
3	Staff Meetings	3 years or when no longer needed for reference
	3-4 Research Leader's Mtg.	3 years or when no longer needed for reference
4	Technical	1 year or when no longer needed for reference
	4-1 Beltwide Cotton Conference	1 year or when no longer needed for reference
7	Delta Council	1 year or when no longer needed for reference
ORGANIZATION AND REORGANIZATION (ORG)		Most - 3 years or when superseded or obsolete
	REE Advisory Board	
	Reinventing Government Initiative	
	Office of Risk Assessment	
1	Agricultural Research Service	
	ARS Customer Service Plan	
	Location Closures	

FILE MANGEMENT

Note: 3 years = current + 2
7 years = current + 6

Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
1-1	Agricultural Research Service - Mid South Area	
1-8	National Program Staff	
3	Designations and Functions	
3	Designations and Functions - National Technical Advisors	
6	MODE Code Listings	
8	Organization and Reorganization	3 years or when superseded or obsolete
11	Reorganization	When superseded or obsolete
11	Program Redirections	
PATENTS (PAT)		
1	Abandoned Patents	17 years after abandonment of patent
3	Granted Patents	17 years after issuance of patent
5	Licenses	Destroy upon cancellation of license or expiration of patent
PERSONAL PROPERTY (PRP)		
1	Accountability	2 years
1-2	Inventories	After new list is received & reconciled
1-3	Loan Agreements (borrowing/loaning property)	3 years after termination of agreement
3	Excess Property	3 years
4	Motor Vehicles (correspondence)	2 years
4-1	Accidents	2 years after case is closed
4-3	Authorization to store	Destroy when canceled
4-4	Inspections	1 year after vehicle leaves ARS custody
4-6	Maintenance and Repair	1 year after vehicle leaves ARS custody
6 6-1	Reports on Motor Vehicles	3 years
8	Surplus Property	2 years
PERSONNEL (PER)		
	Personnel Correspondence	3 years
1	Authorizations (Acting)	When superceded
2	Benefits (Day Care, Thrift Savings, Insurance, etc.)	3 years
3	Biographical Sketches	3 years
4	Classification and Duties	When superceded or obsolete
4-3	Classification Standards	5 years after position is abolished or superseded
4-5	Position Descriptions	2 years after position is abolished or superseded
5	Court Attendance	3 years
6	Employee Activities (CFC, Blood Donations,Savings Bonds, etc.)	3 years
7	Employee Awards and Commendations	2 years
7-3	Length of Service and Sick Leave	1 year
7-4	Letters of Commendation and Appreciation	2 years
8	Employee Relations	3 years
8	Employee Relations – Cooperative Resolution Program (CRP)	
8	Employee Relations – Ethics Reform Act of 1989	
8-1	Appeals and Grievances	3 years
8-2	Conduct and Responsibilities	When superseded or obsolete
8-2-4	Outside Work	2 years after separation of employee
8-3	Disciplinary and Adverse Actions	4 years after case is settled (Office of Primary Responsibility)
9	Employment (Correspondence and Proposals)	3 years
	Collaborators	
9-4-3	Research Associate Program	5 years
10	I.D. Cards	3 months after I.D. returned
12	Leave	1 year
14	Pay Administration	3 years
14-2	General Schedule	3 years
14-3	Deductions	3 years
14-4	Name and Record Changes	2 years
15	Performance Evaluations	3 years
15-5	Performance Standards	3 years
15-6	Ratings and Appraisals	3 years
16	Personnel Management	3 years
16-2	Research Personnel Evaluation System (RPES)	After revised RPES
	(Case file in alphabetical order - pending and complete)	
16-2	SY Assessment	Retain
17	Position Resource Management	5 years
18	Promotions and Internal Placement	3 years

Note: 3 years = current + 2
7 years = current + 6

Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
18-1	Demotions	3 years
18-2	Details and Assignments	3 years
19	Recruitment	3 years
	ARS Hiring Freeze/Ceilings	
	Career Enhancement Program	
	Personnel Demonstration Project	
	SY Vacancy and Tracking	
19-1	Personnel Inquiries	3 years
19-2	Applications	
19-3	Certificate of Eligibles	2 years
19-7	Offers of Employment	Destroy after appointment is made
21	Safety and Health	5 years
21-1	Accidents and Injury	5 years
21-4	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	3 years
21-5	Occuplational Medical Surveillance Program (OSMP)	5 years
21-7	Safety / Health Inspections	5 years
22	Security Clearances	2 years
23	Separation and Displacement	3 years
23-1	Death	3 years
23-3	Resignation	3 years
23-4	Retirement	3 years
23-6	Transfers	3 years
	Tours of Duty (Flexitime, Maxiflex, Job Sharing,	
24	Home Work, Dismissals/Closings for Hazardous Weather)	3 years
25	Training and Development	3 years
25-2	Career Development and Planning	2 years
25-3	Fellowships	2 years
25-9	Training Courses and Seminars	When superseded or obsolete
25-11	Training Programs	4 years
25-11	ARS Fellowship Program	4 years
25-11	Ethics	4 years
25-11	Foreign Research Associates	4 years
25-11	Human Resource Management Program	4 years
25-11	OECD Fellowships	4 years
25-11	Path to Leadership Program	4 years
25-11	PEAK Program	4 years
25-11	Research Apprenticeship Program	4 years
25-11	Senior Executive Service (SES)	4 years
25-11	Student Employment Program	4 years
25-11	Teachers Research Fellowship Program	4 years
25-11	Visiting Scientists	4 years
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING (PRC)		
	Competitive Sourcing – FAIR Act Inventory	
8	Procurement (General Correspondence)	2 years
8	Intra Mall Initiative	
8	PCMS	4 years
8-1	Requisition/Purchase Orders	3 years
9	Procurement Guidelines	2 years
9-4	Furniture	2 years
9-5	Office Machine Maintenance	2 years
12	Suppliers/Contractors	2 years
PROGRAM AGREEMENTS (PAG)		
	BARD	
	CRADA	
1	Contracts (Correspondence)	2 years after final settlement
2	Cooperation	
2-2	Cooperative Agreements	5 years after final settlement
2--3	Memorandum of Understanding	5 years after final settlement
5	Grants	5 years after final settlement
5-2	Competitive Grants	5 years after final settlement
5-3	Domestic Grants	5 years after final settlement
5-4	Foreign Grants	5 years after final settlement

FILE MANGEMENT

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Code	Description		Destroy (All Other offices)
5-4	Foreign Grants - Scientific and Technical Exchange Program		5 years after final settlement
6	Program Compliance		
PROGRAM PLANNING AND REVIEW (PPR) (Policy & Procedures)			2 years
5	Program Reviews		3 years unless needed for current activity
PROJECTS (PRJ)			
	Peer Review Process – Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR)		
1	Current Research Information System (CRIS)		5 years after termination of project
1-1	Dropped or Rejected Proposals		5 years after termination of project
1-3	Project Case Files		2 years after termination of project
1-4	Project Control Files		Destroy upon completion or cancellation of project
1-5	Laboratory Notebooks by Research Workers		25 years or no longer needed
	Annual Report		Filed with Project
2	Pending CRIS Projects		Destroy pending copy when signed copy is received
5	Review of Outside Projects		1 year
PROPERTY (PRP)			
4	Motor Vehicles		
+	Vehicle Accident		
4-4	Motor Vehicle Inspections		
PUBLICATIONS (PUB)			**Keep current + 1 year**
2	Accomplishments of ARS		
2	Accomplishments of ARS - Quarterly Reports to Congress		
3	ARS News Notes		
4	Agency Publications		
4-1	Agricultural Research		
9	Department Publications		
9-9	USDA Newsletter		
9-10	Mid South Area Weekly Report		
17	Outside Publications		
20	Strategic Plan		
REAL ESTATE-REAL PROPERTY (REA)			
1	Acquisition		
2	Construction, Alterations, and Major Repairs		
	Proposed projects:		5 years
	Completed projects:		When no longer needed for administrative purposes
2-1	Design and Construction - Permanent		Offer to NARS when no longer needed for current activity
	Routine repair & modification		When no longer needed for further repair or maintenance activities
3	Damage and Protection		
3-2	Security of real estate - real property		3 years - Guard Records; correspondence - 1 year
4	Flag Display		2 years
6	Leases	>10,000	6 years after termination (regional offices) Other offices - 1 year
		<10,000	3 years after termination (regional offices) Other offices - 1 year
6-1	Space utilization		2 years after termination of assignment
7	Maintenance, Inspection, and Preservation Buildings		2 years
7-6	Fire equipment / fire drill inspections		3 years
7-8	Repair and maintenance requests		3 months after work is performed
11	Signs and Bulletin Boards		2 years
12	Space, Field Space, Parking		2 years
13	Utilities and Service (Security, Parking)		2 years
RECORDS MANAGEMENT (REC)			
2	Correspondence		3 years
3	Directive Management		3 years
	Policy & Procedures		Until replaced
4	Files Management		3 years
5	Forms Management		3 years
6-5	Mail Costs		3 years
6-8	Postal Meters		3 years
8	Records Disposition (Correspondence)		3 years
8-3	Records Control Schedule		Until superseded

FILE MANGEMENT

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Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
REPORTS-STATISTICS (RPT)		
	Hot Issues	
	1-1 Activitty Reports	3 years
4	Congressional Reports	
REPRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION (REP)		
1	Copier Management	1 year
	1-1 Inventories	2 years after next inventory
RESEARCH (RES)		**Most Research Files should be kept 3 years or longer as needed**
	ARS Strategic Plan	
	Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering & Technology (FCCSET)	
	Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA)	
	Lower Mississippi Delta Nutrition Intervention Research Initiative (NIRI)	
	Mississippi Delta Management Systems Evaluation Area (MDMSEA)	
	National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economic Advisory Board (NAREEE)	
	National Plant Genetics Resources Board	
	REE Advisory Board	
6402	STONEVILLE, MS	
	Application and Production Technology Research Unit	
	Catfish Genetics Research Unit	
	Cotton Ginning Research	
	Crop Genetics and Production Research Unit	
	Jackson, TN - Nematology Research	
	Biological Control of Pests Research Unit	
	Southern Insect Management Research Unit	
	Southern Weed Science Research Unit	
6404	POPLARVILLE, MS	
	Small Fruits Research Unit	
6406	MISSISSIPPI STATE, MS	
	Crop Science Research Laboratory	
	Corn Host Plant Resistance Research Unit	
	Genetics and Precision Agriculture Research Unit	
	Waste Management and Forage Research Unit	
	Poultry Research Unit	
6408	OXFORD, MS	
	National Sedimentation Laboratory	
	Upland Erosion Processes Research Unit	
	Channel and Watershed Processes Research Unit	
	Water Quality and Ecology Research Unit	
	Natural Products Utilization Research Unit	
6413	BATON ROUGE, LA	
	Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Research	
	Soil and Water Research	
	Pennington Biomedical Research Center	
6420	AUBURN, AL	
	Aquatic Animal Health Research Unit	
	Soil Dynamics Research	
	Chestertown, MD - Aquatic animal Health Research Unit	
6435	NEW ORLEANS, LA	
	Southern Regional Research Center	
	Commodity Utilization Reseach Unit	
	Cotton Structure and Quality Research Unit	
	Cotton Chemistry and Utilization Research Unit	
	Food and Feed Safety Research Unit	
	Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research unit	
	Formosan Subterranean Termite Research Unit	
	Houma, LA - Sugarcane Research Unit	
	Tucson, AR - Food & Feed Safety Research Unit	
6440	LEXINGTON, KY	
	Forage-Animal Production Research Unit	
6445	BOWLING GREEN, KY	

Note: 3 years = current + 2
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Code	Description	Destroy (All Other offices)
	Animal Waste Management Research Project Unit	
10	Subjects (case filed)	
	Aquaculture	
	Animals	
	Animal Care & Use Committee	
	Catfish	
	Livestock	
	Poultry	
	Crops **(Folders for other crops as needed)**	
	Blueberries	
	Cotton	
	Soybeans	
	Sugarcane	
	Forage	
	Corn	
	Insects **(Folders for other insects as needed)**	
	Bees	
	Boll Weevils	
	Boll Weevil Eradication Program	
	Formosan Subterranean Termite (FST)	
	Genetic Resources Database	
	Germplasm	
	Global Change	
	Integrated Farm Management Systems (IFMS)	
	LMRV Watershed Program	
	Modeling	
	Nanotechnolgy	
	Ornamental/Nursery Research	
	Pesticide Application Technology	
	Pilot Tests	
	Plant Patenting	
	Precision Agriculture	
	Quarantine	
	Remote Sensing	
	Rural Development	
	Soil, Water, and Air	
	Sustainable Agriculture	
	Technology Transfer	
	TMDL's	
	Transgenic Plant Varieties	
	Variety Releases	
	Weeds	
11	Drought Conditions	
TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION (TRV)		
1	Travel Card	4 years
3	Passports and Visas	5 years
9	Travel Authorizations	6 years + 3 months
9-1	Domestic	6 years + 3 months
9-2	Foreign - Foreign Travel Plan	6 years + 3 months
10	Travel Plans/Itineraries	1 year
12	Trip Reports	2 years