

Recordkeeping Systems

A recordkeeping system is a shared filing system where records are captured, organized, accessed, protected, retained, and destroyed in accordance with approved records schedules. A recordkeeping system is about more than technology. An appropriate system for managing paper or digital records also needs to be used in conjunction with policies and procedures, defined roles and responsibilities, and ongoing training.

There are various types of recordkeeping systems (also known as records systems) and ways to manage records. These systems range from manual to automated processes.

The goals of an appropriate recordkeeping system are to:

- ensure users can file, locate, and retrieve records
- group related records together so that a ‘complete’ record of the business activity or case is available
- help prevent duplication and unmanaged accumulation
- make it possible to apply records and information management rules accountably and comprehensively

There are three common types of records systems currently in use in the Government of Manitoba with varied capabilities and limitations:

- Electronic Document and Records Management Systems (EDRMS)
- Non-EDRMS Environments
- Print to File

Electronic Document and Records Management Systems (EDRMS)

EDRMS are the most effective way to maintain and manage digital records. These systems facilitate the implementation of adequate controls which ensure the proper management of records and information throughout their life cycle and meet accepted industry standards (see [Recordkeeping Standards](#) for more information).

An EDRMS ensures that:

- records are created in context
- records are managed to maintain their authenticity, reliability, integrity, and usability
- records can be migrated or exported across platforms
- records can be retained and disposed of in a systematic, auditable, and authorized way

Note: some systems may not identify themselves as EDRMS but may have the same capabilities. These systems might include comprehensive case-management systems or robust enterprise content management systems (ECMs). EDRMS capabilities are sometimes integrated into other business applications to provide the full functionality to manage records ‘in place’ instead of exporting them to a specialized system.

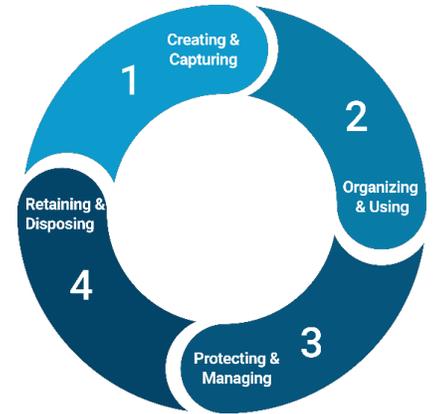


Illustration 1: Lifecycle of records

Non-EDRMS Environments

Non-EDRMS environments can include shared/network drives, cloud document libraries, collaboration work sites, and document management systems *without* robust capabilities. While these environments are currently the most common way to maintain digital documents, they are not the best way to manage them from a business and records management perspective. To effectively manage records in these environments, additional controls and processes are required to ensure that good records are created and that they will have authenticity, integrity, and usability for as long as required. Non-EDRMS environments are not suitable for [high-risk/high value records and information](#).

Print to File

The print to file method is effective for already well-established paper records management practices, and necessary for archival records that are not managed within an EDRMS or other records system with robust capabilities. However, print to file is problematic for complex types of digital records and dispersed work groups.

Unacceptable Records Storage

Records kept outside of a recordkeeping system can result in serious operational risks and consequences such as loss of data, privacy/security breaches, unreliability as evidence, inaccessibility, and business disruption. Unacceptable records storage areas include:

- business applications or storage solutions that are not approved for official government use
- disks, USB drives, or other removable storage media except for temporary purposes
- siloed storage locations such as personal drives, phones, email folders, or desktops where they are inaccessible to others and/or not supported
- private devices or accounts (e.g. non-government email accounts, personal devices, [messaging apps](#))
- basements, attics, or other storage areas prone to environmental damage or infestation

Related guidance:

[Creating and Capturing Records](#)

[File Structures](#)

[Recordkeeping Framework for Departments and Agencies: Policies and Requirements](#) (Principle 3)

[Recordkeeping Standards](#)

[High-risk/High-value Records and Information](#)

Records Systems Checklist (contact GRO)

Revised: October 2024

Government Records Office, Archives of Manitoba
T: 204-945-3971 | E: GRO@gov.mb.ca
Visit our web site to learn more about [Government Recordkeeping](#)



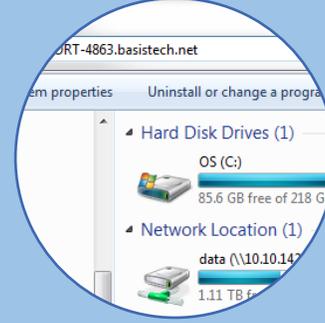
EDRMS

- electronic document and records management system
- best practice - essential for high-risk/high-value records
- records created in context
- captures authentic, reliable, useable records with integrity
- enables migration / exporting
- systematic, auditable disposal



Print to File

- effective method for already well-established practices
- necessary for archival records not managed in a system with EDRMS capabilities
- problematic for complex records, dispersed work groups



Non-EDRMS

- interim practice, adequate only for low-risk/low-value records
- e.g. shared/network drives, cloud document libraries, MS Teams
- may not capture authentic, reliable, useable records with integrity
- may not enable migration/exporting
- no auditable disposal



Unacceptable Storage

- electronic records need to be exported or copied into an acceptable recordkeeping system
- examples include: disks, USB drives, personal drives, phones, personal folders, private devices, or accounts
- paper-based records in basements, attics, other environmentally fragile areas

Illustration 2: Common types of recordkeeping systems