

NARA 1571, Archival Storage Standards

Effective Date: January 17, 2023

Transmittal Memo

DATE: January 17, 2023

SUBJECT: NARA 1571, Archival Storage Standards

TO: Office Heads, Staff Directors, and OIG

Purpose: This transmits an updated policy on the structural, environmental control, fire safety, preservation, and security standards for archival storage in NARA facilities.

Background/significant changes: Updates include revised guidance on acceptable relative humidity ranges, pollutant levels, security requirements, responsible program areas, and supplement references to related NARA Directives. Requirements pertaining to the storage standards for NARA archival facilities and the appraisal of NARA holdings are provided in Supplements 1, 2, 3 to this directive. Supplement 4 has the bibliography of sources. Architecture and Design Standards for Presidential Libraries, previously issued as Supplement 1, has been renumbered as Supplement 5 to NARA 1571 but otherwise remains unchanged.

Available forms: None

Cancelled policy: NARA 1571, Archival Storage Standards, dated February 15, 2002.

Related policies:

- NARA 211, Exit Inspections of Property at NARA
- NARA 260, Food and Drink Near Archival and Records Center Holdings
- NARA 1561, Records Emergency Preparedness and Recovery in NARA Facilities
- NARA 1562, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Requirements for NARA Holdings
- NARA 1571 Supplement 1, Storage Standards for Archival Facilities

- NARA 1571 Supplement 2, Temperature, Relative Humidity and Air Pollutant Tables
- NARA 1571 Supplement 3, Determining the Significance of NARA Holdings
- NARA 1571 Supplement 4, Bibliography
- NARA 1571 Supplement 5, Architecture and Design Standards for Presidential Libraries
- NARA 1572, Preventing Theft and Vandalism of NARA Holdings in NARA Facilities
- NARA 1573, Preservation, Security, and Transportation Standards for Exhibition of Original NARA Holdings
- 36 CFR Part 1234, Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities

Effective date: This policy is effective upon signature.

Contact information: For questions on this policy, please contact Allison Olson, Director of Preservation Programs at (301) 837-0678 or [by email](#).

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Deputy Archivist of the United States

Policy

1571.1 Policy

- a. NARA is responsible for the preservation of records and other documentary material in its custody. The agency protects its holdings by establishing and implementing structural, environmental control, fire safety, preservation, and security standards for appropriate archival storage in its archival facilities, in accordance with its authority to design, maintain, operate, protect, and improve facilities used by NARA for archival storage.
- b. Appropriate storage physically protects records and slows chemical deterioration. Careful attention to the design and operation of archival facilities is a cost-effective strategy to facilitate access to the records for as long as needed with limited conservation treatment intervention.
- c. This policy provides guidance to records custodians at archival facilities on carrying out their responsibility to preserve NARA holdings.

- d. NARA considers the following key factors when determining the applicable archival storage standards for NARA holdings:
 - 1. Significance of holdings, when the standards in NARA 1571 cannot be implemented. See Supplement 3 to NARA 1571 for guidance on how to determine the significance of holdings;
 - 2. Material sensitivities: recognizing that different materials react in different ways to agents of deterioration;
 - 3. Expected lifetime of holdings: the amount of time the usable life of collections can be prolonged through preservation measures; and
 - 4. Impact on the energy use and level of energy efficiency at a particular facility.
- e. “Archival facilities” include:
 - 1. NARA-owned or -leased facilities used to store archival holdings;
 - 2. GSA-owned or -leased facilities used by NARA to store archival holdings;
 - 3. Presidential Libraries acquired by agreement in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2112(a)(1)(B)(i); and
 - 4. Affiliated Archives, as defined in NARA 1501.3(b).
- f. “Holdings Areas” are those where records and artifacts can be kept for extended periods and have special environments, security, and handling requirements, and include holdings storage rooms, designated processing areas, exhibit areas, and preservation (conservation, duplication, microfilm, digital imaging) laboratories.
- g. Requirements pertaining to the storage standards for archival facilities, architectural and design standards for NARA Presidential Libraries, and the appraisal of NARA holdings are provided in supplements to this directive.

1571.2 Scope and Applicability

- a. This policy applies to the storage of all archival records and holdings in NARA’s legal and/or physical custody at archival facilities, all of which will be referred to herein as “NARA holdings” in this policy. Examples of NARA holdings include:
 - 1. Records, as defined in 44 U.S.C. 3301 (“books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics”);
 - 2. Historical materials, as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2101(2), including artifacts, artwork, and other museum holdings, and assassination records as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2107;
 - 3. Presidential records, as defined in 44 U.S.C. 2201(2), that are in the physical and/or legal custody of NARA;

4. Supreme Court records and the records of Congress deposited in NARA's physical custody.
- b. New space leased for archival programs on a short-term basis while a permanent archival facility is being built or renovated must meet these standards to the extent feasible and financially practicable. In all cases, new space leased on a short-term basis must meet the facility standards for storage of permanent Federal records specified in 36 CFR 1234.
- c. If an archival facility cannot be brought into conformance with every standard in this policy, the affected program office determines the needed mitigating action that will be taken to minimize threats to the holdings. RX and the Executive for Business Support Services will provide technical advice and consultation with the program office on mitigating action. Mitigating actions must be approved by the Chief Operating Officer (COO).
- d. Research Services will serve as the affected program office for the Affiliated Archives.

1571.3 Responsibilities

In addition to the authorities delegated in NARA 101, NARA Organization and Delegation of Authority, the following responsibilities are assigned in order to effectively implement this policy.

- a. **Real Property Planning Division (BR)**
 1. Coordinates planning for NARA archival records storage development in GSA and commercially leased facilities; and
 2. Coordinates development of building requirements and provides project liaison for new and upgraded GSA and leased records storage facilities.
- b. **Space Planning and Projects (BFS)**
 1. Conducts periodic building condition surveys of NARA-owned facilities as outlined in Supplement 1, paragraph r, which starts with "Frequency of building condition surveys conducted at NARA-owned facilities". BFS also assists program offices in establishing and maintaining a system-wide facility improvement and renovation program;
 2. In coordination with other NARA offices, establishes architectural and design standards for NARA-owned facilities;
 3. Furnishes professional and technical advice to NARA project managers and local NARA managers on the design and construction of NARA archival facilities that the latter are responsible for. That advice includes building requirements for GSA and commercially leased storage facilities;

4. Acts as project manager for NARA archival facility design and construction projects.
- c. **Preservation Programs (RX)**
1. Coordinates the development and implementation of NARA archival storage standards and policies;
 2. Provides technical advice and consultant services on preservation storage requirements to Research Services (R), Federal Records Center Program (AF), Office of Presidential Libraries (LP), Legislative Archives (LL), and Business Support Services (B);
 3. Reviews design and construction plans for archival storage facilities for preservation standards and best practices;
 4. Provides specifications, testing, and approval of construction, finishing, and other materials that will come into contact with holdings or could affect the archival storage environment or exhibition of original NARA holdings (e.g. paint, adhesives and finishes, carpeting, pesticides, and cleaning supplies);
 5. Develops holdings-based environmental monitoring programs for storage, work, and exhibition areas; evaluates environmental conditions in these areas; and advises facility and records storage managers on maintaining preservation environments. As used herein, the “records storage manager” is the onsite manager at a NARA Field Office or Offsite Archival Storage facility for the NARA program area controlling the space where the archival records are stored;
 6. Identifies facility or environmental conditions at existing archival facilities that do not support long-term preservation of NARA holdings and discusses mitigation strategies with the appropriate program office, facility staff, and B;
 7. Coordinates Records Emergency and Integrated Pest Management Program planning;
 8. Undertakes Preservation Reviews of NARA-owned and -leased records storage facilities to identify high-level preservation risks and potential mitigation strategies; and
 9. Provides documentation and advice on facility condition, maintenance, and other risk management issues for lease renewal projects.
- d. **Research Services (R), Legislative Archives, Presidential Libraries, and Museum Services (L), and Agency Services (A)** implement policy, procedures, and management controls as required by this policy and related supplements and directives, and develop specific guidance as needed to address internal operating procedures within the office programs.
- e. **Presidential Library Directors** administer the day-to-day facilities management program of the library in coordination with LP, holdings preservation programs in

consultation with LP and RX, and major renovation and restoration projects in coordination with LP and B, and in consultation with RX on projects affecting NARA holdings or holdings areas.

- f. **Research Services Field Archives Directors and Agency Services Federal Records Center Directors at FRC facilities with physical custody of accessioned archival records** are the designated archival storage managers at those facilities. They manage holdings areas, implement environmental monitoring programs, and collaborate with RX on preservation concerns.
- g. **Field Support Officers** (BQ) provide administration services for Archives Field Office and Federal Records Center facilities and liaise with GSA, building owners, and contractors during facility development and renovation projects, and then ongoing operations, including response to maintenance problems and issues with storage environments.
- h. **Security Management** (BX) coordinates physical and operational security requirements for holdings storage facilities.
- i. **Facilities and Property Services** (BFF) is responsible for the day-to-day facility management program of the National Archives Building (AI) and the National Archives at College Park (AII).
- j. **Holdings Protection and Recovery** (CH) advises other NARA offices concerning the security of materials on exhibit or loan, and conducts announced and unannounced verification and compliance inspections to mitigate internal and external threats by improving oversight, surveillance, and access controls to holdings.
- k. **Chief Operating Officer** (COO) approves mitigating actions to reduce any outstanding risks associated with the inability to fully comply with a standard due to, for example, structural restraints in an existing building or prohibitive costs required to renovate an existing storage facility or to construct new archival storage.
- l. **Chief of Management and Administration** ensures economical, effective, and accountable operation of NARA administrative and management functions, provides strategic direction for facility management, and oversees systems for internal controls and evaluation of strategic risks.
- m. **Custodial units** are NARA archival and museum staff who have and provide high levels of knowledge about the holdings in NARA's physical or legal custody, including their media and format, relative values, national significance, access restrictions (classified national security information or other statutory or regulatory restrictions, and privacy). Custodial units help approve and implement the holdings storage practices described in the supplement. Custodial units assess the significance of holdings in their custody, when needed.

1571.4 Authorities

- a. 44 U.S.C. 2109, which makes the Archivist of the United States responsible for the preservation of records or other documentary material transferred to the Archivist's legal custody. Appropriate storage conditions are essential for preserving archival records.
- b. 44 U.S.C. 2112 and 2903, which make the Archivist responsible for custody, control and operation of certain buildings, land, and space.
- c. 44 U.S.C. 2112(a)(2), which requires the Archivist to promulgate architectural and design standards for new and existing Presidential Libraries.

1571.5 Releasability

Unlimited. This directive is approved for public release.

1571.6 Records management

Records created in following this directive are primarily covered by the following items in the [NARA Records Schedule](#):

- Building Design and Construction Records, file numbers 610 and 611
- Records Storage and Security Files, file number 1442-2
- Environmental Condition Report - file number 1438
- Environmental Condition Operating Records - file number 632
- Preservation Project Case Files including preservation reviews - file number 1436
- Some operational and administrative records are covered by [General Records Schedule](#) items.

Due to the complexity, and the potential permanent value of some of these records, consult with [Corporate Records Management](#) before implementing records disposition.

NARA 1571 Supplement 2 Temperature, Relative Humidity and Air Pollutant Tables

Effective Date: January 17, 2023

Table 1: Temperature and Relative Humidity Standards

Overall Temperature and Relative Humidity Guidelines

This guidance reflects research evidence of the effects of temperature and relative humidity on collection materials that supports moving away from set points towards bands. It also reflects research showing that different materials have different requirements, and past storage conditions a material was exposed to can affect its storage requirements for the future. The guidelines for temperature and relative humidity conditions balance long-term preservation of the holdings and energy efficiency.

The rates of chemical, biological, and physical deterioration increase as temperature and relative humidity increase; therefore, keeping holdings in a low temperature and moderate relative humidity environment is the most efficient and cost-effective way of prolonging the life of the holdings.

Very low temperatures are effective in slowing chemical degradation and should be maintained for highly sensitive materials. Acidic papers, magnetic media, and many films and plastics have a usable life of only decades if stored at temperatures at or above 70°F.

Standard Storage: Low Sensitivity Holdings

Holdings not readily affected chemically and mechanically by higher temperatures, relative humidity, and pollution. Most papers, paper-based black-and-white photographs, polyester-based black-and-white film, ceramics, glass, and metals are examples of low-sensitivity holdings. It also includes holdings where cold storage does not increase the longevity of the holding, such as electronic and magnetic media, and may cause damage.

Cold Storage: High Sensitivity

Holdings highly affected by temperature and relative humidity and pollution. These include cellulose acetate photographic media, and color films, and color prints of high significance.

Specific microclimates (cases, sealed frames, special housings) may be required for some materials on exhibit and in storage. Materials might include parchment, some photographic holdings, ivory, organic composite artifacts, fragile bound volumes, and unstable metals. Items loaned from other institutions may require tighter relative humidity control depending on the loan agreements.

Location	Material Sensitivity: Types of holdings or media	Storage Temperature	Relative Humidity Range
Textual Holdings Storage (and Mixed Storage*)	<i>Low Sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, or rooms where textual records are housed for long-term storage.	Paper: Textual records including bound volumes.	50 - 65° F	30 - 50%
Non-textual Holdings Storage	<i>Low Sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, or rooms where non-textual records such as audiovisual media, microfilm, photo albums, and cartographic materials are housed for long-term storage.	Photographic: black-and-white paper prints, polyester-based film material, glass plate negatives. Color Prints*: Cibachrome, Polaroid, and chromogenic * To slow the rate of change it is recommended that color prints identified as significant should be kept in cold storage.	50 - 65° F	30 - 50%

	Paper: maps, plans, punch cards		
	Electronic Media: computer tapes and disks, optical disks, hard drives (These materials are included in low sensitivity, because cold storage does not increase their longevity and can cause damage to this type of holdings.)		
	Audio / Visual Media: video tapes, audio tapes, disk recordings, wire recordings (These materials are included in low sensitivity, because cold storage does not increase their longevity and can cause damage to this type of holdings.)		
Artifact Holdings Storage	<i>Low Sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, or rooms where two- and three-dimensional artifacts are housed for long-term storage. Typically located in Presidential Libraries.	Ceramics, glass, stable metals, tanned leather, textiles, stable oil and acrylic paintings, furniture, watercolors, most modern books	50-65° F	30 - 50%
	<i>Medium sensitivity</i>		
	Untanned skin products, organic composite objects, flaking surfaces	50-65° F	40-50%

	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
	Parchment, ivory, lacquerware, unstable glass, unstable efflorescent ceramics, unstable iron and bronze, some plastics	Generally, 50-65° F. Some plastics may benefit from cold storage.	Specific microclimates created through use of conditioned silica gel in storage cabinets, cases, sealed frames, or special housings may be required for some high sensitivity artifacts
Cold storage	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, or rooms used to store sensitive media known to deteriorate rapidly at higher temperatures. Lower temperatures prevent deterioration of media in good condition and slow down existing autocatalytic decay.	<p>Cellulose acetate-based media: motion picture and still picture film negatives, aerial film, x-rays, microfilms and microforms, vesicular microforms, slides, animation cells</p> <p>Color: still picture negatives and transparencies, and motion picture film</p> <p>Plastics: dependent on type of plastic and significance. Microclimates may also be considered.</p> <p>Nitrate film: has many storage requirements beyond temperature and humidity. Please contact RX if identified.</p> <p>To slow the rate of change it is recommended that color prints identified as significant should be kept in cold storage.</p>	35° F Do not allow temperature to go below 32° F. This will prevent the accumulation of damaging moisture from micro-condensation that can occur during freeze – thaw cycles.	30-40%

Cold Storage Transition / Acclimation Room	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
Room used to slowly acclimate holdings stored in cold storage to higher temperatures before they are moved to processing or other rooms for use. Holdings remain in Acclimation Room 4 - 24 hours to prevent micro-condensation, according to RX guidance.		Dependent on dew point calculations. (consult with RX) For 35° F Cold Storage, Acclimation Room should be 50° F	30-50%
Frozen storage	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, rooms, and stand-alone freezers used to store sensitive media known to deteriorate rapidly at higher temperatures. Alternative to cold storage, especially for highly sensitive, highly significant, or deteriorated holdings.	Priority is given to deteriorated motion picture film.	<30° F Do not allow temperature to go above 32° F. This will prevent accumulation of damaging moisture from micro-condensation during freeze – thaw cycles.	30-40%
Frozen Storage Transition / Acclimation Room	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
Room used to slowly acclimate holdings stored in frozen storage to higher temperatures before		Dependent on dew point calculations.	30-40%

they are moved to processing or other rooms for use. Holdings remain in Acclimation Room for a period of time dependent on temperatures and material vulnerability to micro-condensation.			
Mixed Media Storage Rooms	<i>Mixed Sensitivity</i>		
Stacks, bays, or rooms used to store records that are predominately paper-based but which may have non-textual or artifact holdings interspersed.		50-65° F	30-50%
Holdings Work Rooms	<i>Mixed sensitivity</i>		
Rooms in which original records are processed, researched, digitized, conserved, or otherwise used. Includes designated processing, preservation, digitization, and research rooms.		50-75° F	30-55%
Exhibit Galleries or Areas	<i>Low and Medium Sensitivity</i>		

Rooms or spaces where holdings are displayed, typically in exhibition cases or frames, which meet preservation and security requirements outlined in NARA 1563.		50-75° F	30-55%
Exhibit Cases Displaying Original Holdings	<i>High sensitivity</i>		
Display cases or frames used to exhibit original holdings.		Specific microclimates created through use of conditioned silica gel cases, sealed frames, or housings may be required for some materials on exhibit. Items loaned from other institutions may require tighter RH control, depending on loan agreements.	Specific microclimates created through use of conditioned silica gel cases, sealed frames, or housings may be required for some materials on exhibit. Items loaned from other institutions may require tighter RH control, depending on loan agreements.

Table 2: Air Pollutant Thresholds for NARA Holdings Storage Rooms

This table lists the gaseous air pollutants that are the primary risks to NARA’s paper-based, photographic, and audio-visual holdings. For these materials, experimental studies indicate that the listed pollutants can cause significant damage at low micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3) concentrations over periods of a few years or decades. This risk to the bulk of holdings can be cost-effectively reduced at the room level by air filtration. Certain artifacts or groups of special materials may be more sensitive or affected by pollutants not listed. While room-level air filtration may assist in protecting these specific holdings, the use of microclimates and other protective measures is a more effective approach.

Outdoor Generated Pollutants	Common Sources	Maximum Concentration After Air Filtration µg/m³ : micrograms per cubic meter ppb : parts per billion
Sulfur dioxide (SO ₂)	Coal combustion, industrial processes	5 µg/m ³ or 1.9 ppb
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	Engine exhaust, power plants, industrial processes	5 µg/m ³ or 2.6 ppb
Ozone	By-product of engine exhaust	5 µg/m ³ or 2.5 ppb
Indoor Generated Pollutants		
Acetic acid	Cellulose acetate-based materials Paper Certain woods and wood-based products Cleaning products Adhesives during cure	250 µg/m ³ or 100 ppb

Note: Degrading cellulose acetate film releases high levels of acetic acid. Nearby un-degraded film may absorb this vapor and catalyze new deterioration. In principle, air filtration to low $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ acetic acid levels could reduce this risk, but this approach does not address the already-degrading film. Cold storage is a much more effective and cost-efficient preservation method for holdings at risk from acetate film degradation sometimes called “vinegar syndrome.” The $250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (100 ppb) concentration indicates the presence of severely deteriorating film.

Note: While ozone is listed as an outdoor pollutant, it may also be generated by some photocopiers and printers.

Note: Pollutant limits for exhibit cases and other types of microclimates are more restrictive. Upper limits are: sulfur dioxide $2.7 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (1 ppb); formaldehyde $5.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (4.0 ppb); acetic acid $10.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (4.0 ppb)

Supplement 3 – Determining the Significance of NARA Holdings

Effective Date: January 17, 2023

1. The significance of NARA holdings and the sensitivity of the material may be taken into account when the standards in NARA 1571 and related Supplements cannot be feasibly implemented in an existing archival facility or when determining the applicable archival storage standards.
2. The significance of holdings usually at a series level guides decisions about the preservation, storage, access needs, processing, and digitization of records and is determined by an appraisal of characteristics after accessioning. Significance is evaluated along several dimensions that indicate how valuable the records are as sources of information, as artifacts, as evidence of government actions, as guarantors of individual rights, to ensure government accountability, and as continued value for understanding the actions of the government. Appraisal of significance weighs factors such as intrinsic value, evidential value, the nature of the government function and activity represented by the records, age, and historical importance. The results are generalized to three levels of significance: low, medium, and high.
3. Specific records within a series (items, files, volumes, etc.) may have high significance even though the series as a whole does not (this includes “specially protected holdings,” which are unclassified or national security classified holdings to which extra physical, intellectual, and access controls are assigned because they bear exceptional intrinsic or monetary value and are therefore subject to heightened risk of theft or vandalism). When it is not possible or practical to treat specific records differently than the whole series, the whole series should be treated at the same level as the most significant records. An example where this is not the case is where highly significant items or files are separated as specially protected holdings.
4. Records with low significance have little or no intrinsic value, were the product of minor or routine government functions, and have limited informational or evidential value. These are often series created by functions in the course of administering a business process or a routine program such as providing individual entitlements, carrying out registrations (such as draft cards and passports), issuing licenses, or providing services. Other series held by NARA or published sources may contain the same amount of information. These records were usually created after 1900.
5. Moderately significant records may have low or limited value as artifacts, but contain important information about, or were produced as a result of, major government processes and functions. They provide evidence of the basis for substantive functions performed by a Federal agency, commission, or court, and possess evidentiary value for documenting policy formation and government decisions at leadership levels. The information contained in the records is generally considered to be unique to the records, with no other known sources having the same range and type of information or reflecting the way it is organized. Age may also be a factor, and records that otherwise may be considered of low significance could be designated as having moderate significance primarily because they date to a period when few records survived or before the National Archives was created. Generally, all records created

before 1900 should be considered as moderately or highly significant regardless of other characteristics.

6. Highly significant records have characteristics that are similar to moderately significant records, but the importance of the original physical copy of the record is as great as, or even greater than, the importance of the information contained. These records have either great intrinsic value as unique artifacts, association with significant historical events, or the nature of the original documents conveys important information that reproductions or other sources cannot convey. The records may be considered international or national historical icons or treasures, unique or irreplaceable, and have few peers, or they may be viewed as works of art in addition to sources of information. These records may also provide exceptional documentation of functions and activities at the highest levels of government. Handmade annotations by historic figures and great age (generally NARA holdings created before 1800) may be an important determinant of high significance independent of most other characteristics. Highly significant records often have a high monetary value and may be attractive targets for theft. Significant harm to the Federal Government would occur if these records were lost.

Example Archival Significance Worksheet

Purpose:

Use this worksheet to determine how significant a series of records are to assist in making decisions about storage, processing priorities, selection for digitization, and recommendations for reappraisal. Factors determining significance include research importance, level of use, and uniqueness. This worksheet is based on appraisal criteria in NARA 1441 and worksheets used by other cultural management organizations, such as the Smithsonian.

Limitations concerning level of use (#7):

- The amount that records have been used must be based on a fairly subjective assessment, considering knowledge of reference activity. At this time the amount of actual records use is not consistently recorded below the record group level. Recording researcher pull requests through an electronic pull request system would be needed to provide more accurate data on usage at and below the series level.
- Certain records may be regularly used by researchers yet only make up less than 1% of the whole series.
- Low use may be due to the use of surrogates (microfilm, digitized, etc.) in lieu of the original records.

- Low use may be due to restrictions on access and therefore may not indicate a lack of demand or interest in the records.

Step One: Identify the score for each of the following four factors, according to the criteria. Examples are included for each criterion to guide evaluation.

Factors	Description	Criteria
<p>1. Intrinsic significance of the physical item</p>	<p>Evaluate the significance of the physical item apart from its content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there any special symbolic significance of the physical item (e.g. the Constitution, Declaration, treaties)? • Is there an association with an important historical figure (a President), or landmark event (Brown vs. Board or Roe vs. Wade)? • Is the physical form important? Is it an artistic work or does it include artistic work? • Age-- does the material have significance because of great age-- for instance, making it scarce or providing rare insight into functions and activities? • Unique physical features 	<p>0- Records that have no, negligible, or undetermined physical significance. A reproduction could replace the original. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bankruptcy case files</i> • <i>Non-trial case files</i> • <i>Soil conservation documents, and etc.</i> <p>1- Records that have limited physical significance with minor intrinsic interest. However, a reproduction could replace the original. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Naturalization and passport records containing photographs</i> • <i>Indian School Student Case files</i> • <i>Military draft cards</i> <p>2- Records that have moderate significance due to an unusual physical form or shape that can't easily be reproduced. The physical form or shape provides some informational value about</p>

		<p>the document to the researchers (enhances the content for the researcher). Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Railroad right-of-way maps</i>• <i>Ship drawings (minor drawings)</i> <p>3- Records that have high physical significance as a result of the association with historical events, persons, or age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Written opinions of the Supreme Court (Highest Court in the U.S. Government) or equivalent type Federal entity (FISC Court)</i>• <i>Documents signed by heads of cabinet departments and heads of other agencies</i>• <i>Age of the document, such as 17th and 18th century records. (And in some cases, certain 19th century records)</i> <p>4- Records that have exceptional physical significance. Perceived to be international or national/historical icons or treasures, irreplaceable, or having few peers. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Holograph documents associated with prominent historical</i>
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		<p><i>figures (such as the “Lincoln Telegrams”);</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A unique physical artifact that has an association with an important historical event, such as Mediterranean passports or the SS passports; Confederate currency;</i> • <i>Those with high monetary value, such as the first Batman comic book, Ansel Adams photographs, Brady glass plate negatives)</i> • <i>Treaties</i> • <i>Richard Nixon’s resignation letter</i> • <i>Himmler document</i> • <i>Letters to Heads of State</i>
<p>2. Government Significance of Content</p>	<p>Evaluate the overall importance of the records in providing evidence of the substantive functions performed by a creating agency or court. How significant is the content of the records for citizens or a branch of government to determine the reasons, or nature of governmental decisions, actions, or policies? How significant is the content for providing evidence of policy formation, governmental processes, deliberations, decisions, actions, and impact?</p>	<p>0- Records that have no, negligible, or undetermined significance. Reappraisal should be considered.</p> <p>1- Records that have limited informational significance. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bankruptcy Case Files,</i> • <i>Railroad Retirement board,</i> • <i>Interstate Commerce Commission Railroad Dockets,</i> • <i>Bituminous Coal Commission records</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>National Science Foundation Grant case files</i> <p>2- Records that have moderate significance due to the information value and possibly some evidentiary value. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Civil works project files, such as Dam construction.</i>• <i>Records of formerly used defense sites.</i>• <i>U.S. Patent Case Files</i>• <i>Indian Claims Commission Records</i> <p>3- Records that have high significance as a result of key informational and evidentiary value. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>International Boundary Commission Records</i>• <i>Records of the Department of State</i>• <i>Department of Justice classification case files</i>• <i>Records about the Tuskegee Airman Study, Center for Disease Control:</i>• <i>Information on Looted Art from World War II.</i>• <i>Government Accountability Office</i>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Records of hearings, testimony, etc. preceding major decisions.</i> <p>4. Records that have exceptional significance due to critical informational and/or evidentiary value. Significant harm to the Federal Government would occur if lost. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>records of the FISC Court</i>
<p>3. Historical Research significance of Content</p>	<p>Evaluate the overall importance of the records in providing unique evidence of a historical event, topic, or persons.</p> <p>How significant is the content of the records for providing information to researchers about important historical events, topics or persons?</p>	<p>1- Records that have limited historical significance. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Land Grant Records</i> • <i>Environmental Impact Statements</i> • <i>Records of the Office of the Housing Expediter</i> <p>2- Records that have moderate significance due to the historical value. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>WW2 Naval shipyard records</i> • <i>Early records of the U.S. Mint</i> • <i>Records relating to Native Americans</i> <p>3. Records that have high historical significance. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Central Files of the records of the Department of State</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Policy files of cabinet departments and independent agencies:</i> • <i>Records concerning the Manhattan Project or Oak Ridge Lab</i> • <i>early TVA records</i> • <i>Army Command records such as General Subject Files</i> • <i>Related case files and other materials relating to Brown vs. Board of Education</i> • <i>Records of the Office of Strategic Services</i> <p>4. Records that have exceptional historical significance due to documentation of a major event, topic, or person. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Papers of the Continental Congress</i> • <i>Watergate Commission</i> • <i>JFK Assassination Records</i> • <i>September 11 Commission</i>
<p>4. Rights and Interests Significance</p>	<p>Evaluate the overall importance of the records as a source of unique information about subjects, events, processes, or individuals regardless of historical significance. How significant is the content of the records for providing unique</p>	<p>0- Records that have no, negligible, or undetermined non-historical significance as a unique source of information about a subject, event, topics, or person. Reappraisal should be considered.</p>

	<p>non-historical information to researchers about subjects, events, processes, or individuals?</p> <p>Records with non-historical significance establish rights, provide important scientific or technical information, data or other information that furthers scientific research, genealogical information, or provide information used by students and educators for non-history educational purposes.</p>	<p>1- Records that have limited non-historical significance as a unique source of information about a subject, event, topics, or person. Examples of such records might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Technical Information Service</i> • <i>Defense Technical Information Center</i> <p>2- Records that have moderate non-historical significance as a unique source of information about a subject, event, topics, or person. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fishing Logs</i> • <i>Railroad Retirement Board Personnel files</i> • <i>Records of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States</i> • <i>Japanese-American Reparation Act Claims Case files</i> • <i>Government Publications Office</i> <p>3. Records that have high non-historical significance as a unique source of information about a subject, event, topics, or person. Examples of such records might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>USCIS A-Files</i> • <i>Records of Naturalization</i>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Official Military Personnel Files</i> • <i>War Relocation Authority Internee Case Files</i>
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Step Two: Answer yes or no to questions 5-7

5. Uniqueness	<p>Is the information contained in the records unique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the only source of information. • The same information is not available in other NARA holdings. • The information is not available in other publicly available sources (published or not). • If other sources exist, this source provides additional information not found in any other source. 	<p>Yes No (not unique)</p>
6. Usability of Records	<p>Are the records physically usable in their current condition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These records be provided to researchers. • The records are in a media type that can be used in its current format. 	<p>Yes No (not usable)</p>
7. Level of Use (a)	<p>Have these records been used in the past 10 years? Base this on actual or estimated researcher use of the records (see “limitations” above).</p>	<p>Yes No (no use)</p>
(b)	<p>If 7a is “yes”, is all use limited to less than 10% of the series?</p>	<p>Yes (less than 10%) No</p>
(c)	<p>If 7a is “yes”, has use averaged one or more times each year?</p>	<p>Yes (used one or more times per year) No</p>

Enter amount of use, if an estimate is available. Indicate the period of the estimate (e.g., monthly, annually, over decade) _____

Guidance for Interpreting and using the results

Exceptional Significance: at least one category = 4

Highly Significant: at least one category = 3 and no score is higher than 3 in any category

Moderately Significant: no score is higher than 2 in any category

Low Significance: All categories = 0 or 1

Step 1 (questions 1-4) indicates the significance of records. For records scored “Highly Significant” or lower, the significance may be rated even lower if the records are not unique (question 5) and/or they are not physically usable in their current condition (question 6). The answers to step 2 (questions 5-7) should be used with significance to make recommendations about prioritizing processing actions, digitizing records, candidates for internal disposal, and relocating records.

Supplement 4- Bibliography

Effective Date: January 17, 2023

The research evidence supporting this directive and its supplements is drawn from the sources listed below.

Standards Publications

ISO: 1820 -2011 Imaging Materials – Reflection Prints – Storage Practices

ISO: 18933:2012 Imaging Materials – Magnetic Tape – Care and Handling for Extended Use

PAS: 198: 2012, Specification for Managing Environmental Conditions for Cultural Collections, British Standards Institute

NFPA: 232-2017 Standard for the Protection of Records

Temperature and Relative Humidity

ASHRAE (2007) ASHRAE Handbook, Chapter 21: “HVAC Applications, Museums, Galleries, Archives and Libraries. Atlanta, GA: American, Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers Inc, ASHRAE.

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