

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Impact of the New GRS on Agencies

Revised June 2016

IMPACT ON AGENCY RECORDS SCHEDULING

1. Should an agency proceed with scheduling records that are going to be covered by a GRS?

If an agency needs disposition authorities ahead of the GRS timetable, it should go ahead and schedule the records. There is no guarantee that new record series proposed for the GRS will ultimately be included. Many factors may either delay certain series or prevent their inclusion in a GRS.

2. Will NARA stop accepting agency-submitted schedules, or processing schedules already in the queue, in anticipation of a pending new GRS?

NARA continues to accept and process agency schedules even if the records may be covered by a pending GRS. An agency may also withdraw a submitted schedule or an item on a schedule at any time. If you have questions about when a GRS is scheduled to be revised please contact the GRS Team at GRS_Team@nara.gov.

3. Do new GRS items supersede agency-specific disposition authorities?

According to 36 CFR 1227.12, agencies *must* use a new or revised GRS only when the GRS states that agencies must follow the provisions without exception. In all other cases, if your agency has an existing schedule and the new or revised GRS permits use of existing agency-specific schedules, you may choose to follow either your agency-specific disposition instruction or the GRS. If your agency chooses to follow its own schedule, you must notify NARA at GRS_Team@nara.gov within 120 days of the issuance of the new or revised GRS.

4. If the new GRS does not meet an agency's disposition needs what should the agency do?

If the agency already has an approved agency schedule and the GRS permits the use of existing agency schedules, the agency may choose to use its own schedule, notifying NARA at GRS_Team@nara.gov of its intent within 120 days of the new or revised GRS issuance. If an agency does not have an approved schedule for the records and the new or revised GRS allows for deviations, the agency may request a deviation from the GRS by submitting a schedule to NARA that explains why a deviation is necessary for the agency's records. Please keep in mind that, as long as the agency disposition instruction is within the parameters set by the GRS, a deviation request is not required.

5. Are new GRS schedules mandatory?

The GRS is mandatory, but unless an item or schedule says that agencies must follow it without exception, an agency may request a deviation from a specific GRS item by submitting a schedule to NARA with a justification for the deviation. This rule applies to permanent GRS items as well. However, please keep in mind that while an agency may request a deviation, NARA may not agree to approve it, especially for permanent records. Currently, the only GRS items that must be followed without exception are GRS 2.8, items 060, 061, 062, 063, 070, 071, 072, 080, and 081.

IMPACT ON RECORDS IN FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS

6. Should agencies continue to use existing GRS items to transfer records to the Federal Record Centers (FRCs) or other storage facilities and the NARA custodial units even though the items are being revised?

Yes. If NARA determines existing GRS disposition or retention instructions are in significant conflict with proposed GRS revisions, it will inform agencies not to destroy the affected records until the GRS changes are approved and ready for implementation. This information will be distributed via the [GRS web page](#) and an RM Communications email to agencies.

7. Does NARA provide FRCs with the new GRS retention requirements for records in storage?

The FRC Program is an internal stakeholder in the GRS revision process and is kept well-informed about disposition changes affecting records in storage. The GRS Team provides the FRC Program with copies of the crosswalks for mapping new GRS disposition authorities to superseded ones. However, these crosswalks cover only records retired by agencies under old GRS authorities. Agencies need to notify the Federal Records Center Program (FRCP) of any agency-schedule retention requirements that are superseded by new GRS items, including revised manual citations, if applicable.

8. Does NARA charge my agency for the mass data changes that result from new GRS authorities superseding old GRS ones?

No. Your agency will not be charged because mass data changes are a baseline service provided by the FRCP to agencies, paid for in the initial processing fee for each transfer. The FRCP will automatically update records center holdings coded under superseded GRS disposal authorities to new GRS authorities in the Archives and Records Centers Information System (ARCIS). Agencies incorporating a new GRS into their comprehensive records schedules, and desiring mass data changes to ARCIS, must inform the FRC Program of revisions in the retention period or item numbering within their comprehensive agency schedule.