



Government Records Procedure GRO 3

Retrieving Records

**Government Records Office
Archives of Manitoba**

PROCEDURE GRO 3: *Retrieving Records*

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PURPOSE

This procedure provides basic guidance for department/agency staff on how to retrieve and return semi-active records to the Government Records Centre (GRC).

Terms used in this procedure are defined in the [Glossary](#).

Related Procedure:

[GRO 2 Transferring Government Records](#)

AUTHORITY

[The Archives and Recordkeeping Act](#), C.C.S.M. c. A132

POLICY

To ensure the protection of government records for the duration of their scheduled retention period, controlled procedures have been established for records retrieval and return.

The Government Records Centre (GRC) is the official government facility for:

- storage of records during the scheduled retention period
- provision of secure records retrieval services to government offices

Records in semi-active storage can be retrieved from the GRC by the office responsible for the records. GRC provides secure delivery and pick-up, and tracks retrieved files.

Records transferred to Archives following the final disposal date cannot be retrieved.

Offices needing to consult archival records should contact [Government and Private Sector Archives](#), Archives of Manitoba.

Departments and agencies are charged for some GRC services.

FORM

Please visit the [forms section](#) of the [Government Recordkeeping website](#) for the current [Semi-Active Records Retrieval Form](#).

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO RETRIEVE SEMI-ACTIVE RECORDS

Government offices can retrieve and return records they have transferred for storage while they are in semi-active status at GRC. Semi-active records are those that are in storage and have not yet reached their disposal date.

1. Consult the Records Transfer List

Before contacting GRC to retrieve records, staff of the transferring office should refer to their completed copy* of the appropriate Records Transfer List.

*Following transfer of records to the GRC, copies of the Records Transfer Lists showing GRC storage locations for each box or unit of records are returned to the Records Officer, and should be distributed to the office responsible for the records. If you do not have a copy of the Records Transfer List with the "Location Number" section completed, please contact your department or agency Records Officer.

2. Identify records to be retrieved

Check the "Disposal Action" and "Disposal Date" in the header section of the Records Transfer List.

- If the disposal date is in the future, this indicates that the records are in semi-active storage and you may proceed with ordering the records from the GRC using the [Semi-Active Records Retrieval Form](#).
- If the disposal date has passed and the records are archival **(A)**, contact [Government and Private Sector Archives](#) .
- *Minister's Files – Change of Government:*
At a change of government, records of Ministers' offices and Executive Council which are in semi-active storage at GRC and have a disposal action of **(A)** are transferred immediately to the Archives. In this case, the disposal date on the Records Transfer List is superseded by the official date of the change of government. Contact [Government and Private Sector Archives](#) for information on access to these records.

ORDERING RECORDS

1. **Download the current version** of the [Semi-Active Records Retrieval Form](#)

NOTE: this form is designed to accommodate both single page and multiple page requests. Simply use the Tab key on the last row of the table to add more rows as required, and if multiple pages form the request, the required header and footer information will automatically carry-over.

2. **Complete all the necessary fields** on the form, including:

- a. date of request
- b. requester information
- c. additional delivery information, only if different from requester information (e.g. when ordering files for another staff member in your office/unit)
- d. desired method for accessing the records – by default the records will be delivered by signature service but records may also be viewed at GRC or picked-up by the department/agency’s courier for urgent or large volume requests
- e. file name, file number or record identifier and the corresponding storage location number (aisle-bay-shelf-box) for each record you wish to retrieve

3. Requesters are encouraged to **group their files on a single request form** and **limit their submissions to one request form per day**.

4. **Sort the records by storage location** when more than one record is being requested. E.g.:

FILE NO.	FILE TITLE	LOCATION NO.			
		Aisle	Bay	Shelf	Box
751		12	2	2	16
76	Doe, Jane	161	3	2	20
	Complete Box	200	10	8	7

5. **Send** completed request form **by email** to recordsrequests@gov.mb.ca

- the attachment must be in .docx format; alternate formats (.pdf) are not accepted
- only one request form per email is permitted
- for more urgent requests please indicate “RUSH” in the email subject line and follow-up with a call to GRC at 204-945-6673

NOTE: processing of a request may be delayed if information on the Request Form is missing or incorrect, or if the records requested are not available. In addition, some requests may require special arrangements for processing and/or delivery. In this case, you will be contacted by GRC.

DELIVERY

- Records will be **packaged in a custom envelope/box**, with a copy of the processed request form, and assigned a unique tracking number (e.g. 21-0729). The request form must be kept with the records at all times to ensure they are properly tracked throughout the retrieval process and not integrated into the active file system or transferred as a new transfer.
- Records will be **delivered by signature service** and the standard turnaround time is three business days. Requests received at GRC by the end of the day will be processed the next day and, for offices in Winnipeg, delivered by the following morning (e.g. a request received on a Tues. will be processed Wed. and delivered Thurs.). For all other offices throughout Manitoba delivery may take an additional 1-2 business days, location dependent.
- **Same-day access to semi-active records** is possible for urgent requests received before 2:30 PM and followed-up with a call to GRC (204-945-6673). GRC will contact you when the records are ready for pick-up by your courier of choice. Pick-up hours are Monday to Friday, between 8 AM and 3 PM.

RETURNING RECORDS

Records should be returned as soon as possible. **Do not file retrieved records with active records in the office or return them as part of a new transfer of records.**

Return records **in the envelope/box they were delivered in with a copy of the request form** by one of the following methods:

- **In Winnipeg** – contact GRC to request pick-up of the records:

T: 204-945-6673, or

E: recordsrequests@gov.mb.ca

NOTE: Records will be picked-up within 1-2 business days

- **All other offices throughout Manitoba** – return the records by signature service option via the courier service of your choice. As the sender, your office/department is responsible for the cost of the courier service.

All records for return should be addressed to:

Government Records Centre
410 De Baets St
Winnipeg MB R2J 4J2
T: 204-945-6673

CONTACTS

For inquiries about this Procedure, contact:

Government Records Centre (GRC)

phone: 204-945-6673

email: recordsrequests@gov.mb.ca

To request access to archival records, contact:

Government and Private Sector Archives (GPSA)

phone: 204-945-3971

email: gpsa@gov.mb.ca

website: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/gpsa/index.html>

For inquiries about the management of government records, records scheduling, and records advisory services to government, contact:

Government Records Office (GRO)

phone: 204-945-3971

email: GRO@gov.mb.ca

website: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/gro/recordkeeping/index.html>

GLOSSARY

archival records – records transferred to the Archives for permanent preservation following the scheduled disposal date.

Archives – the Archives of Manitoba.

disposal action – the action to be taken at the end of the total retention period: either Destroy or Transfer to Archives.

disposal date – the exact date that records in a Transfer are due for disposal. This date is calculated based on the latest date of the records in the Transfer and the retention period provided in the Records Schedule the records have been transferred under.

Government Records Centre (GRC) – the facility operated by the Government Records Office (GRO), that provides centralized records storage, retrieval and destruction services for all government departments and agencies.

Government Records Office (GRO) – a unit of the Archives of Manitoba responsible for the government's records management program.

Records Officer – the person responsible for communicating GRO procedures within their department/agency and for coordinating the transfer of records to the Records Centre for storage and disposition.

Records Schedule – a formal document that identifies government records, establishes their retention periods and provides for their disposition. Also referred to as a Schedule.

Records Transfer List – a standard form which serves as a request to transfer records and becomes the official record of what was transferred to the Government Records Centre for storage and disposition.

retention period – the minimum time that records must be retained prior to the disposal action, as set out in the Records Schedule.

retrieval – temporary return of semi-active records for use by the office responsible for the records.

Schedule – see **Records Schedule**.

semi-active records – records stored at the Government Records Centre during their scheduled retention period, prior final disposition (destruction or Transfer to Archives).

semi-active storage – the off-site storage provided by the Government Records Centre for government records during their scheduled retention period and prior to the disposal date. Records in semi-active storage are no longer in 'active' (frequent) use by the creating office, and therefore may be moved to less costly, off-site storage at the GRC.

Transfer – the basic unit for managing records at the Government Records Centre. A Transfer is a group of records: covered by one Records Schedule and by one numbered component if applicable; *and* having the same disposal date; *and* shipped together to the Government Records Centre. A unique identifier, known as a Transfer Number, is assigned to a Transfer by the Government Records Centre and used to track the records through semi-active storage and disposition.

Transfer to Archives – one of the possible disposal actions authorized by a Records Schedule. Records of archival value are scheduled for Transfer to Archives, which means they will be permanently preserved. This *should not be confused* with the transfer of records to the Government Records Centre for semi-active storage.

transferring office – the office responsible for transferring records to the Government Records Centre (usually the office that created the records).