RIMS Users Manual

Ohio Department of Administrative Services
General Services Division

Information Management
Office of State Printing and Mail Services

4200 Surface Road, Columbus, Ohio 43228
Telephone (614)466-1105 Fax (614)644-5799

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

What is RIMS

The Records Information Management System (RIMS) is a complete listing of all active retention schedules approved since 1975. The system contains the full text of these schedules as well as the approval information. The database also contains a list of the current General Schedules.

RIMS is also a system for submitting and approving retention schedules. This electronic process supersedes the filing of the Records Retention Schedule (ADM-3500). - RIMS allows editing of rejected schedules and streamlines revisions to previous schedules by automatically importing the information from the outdated schedule. The system also allows the schedules to be approved electronically, reducing the approval time required.

RIMS is also an excellent reference tool. All active retention schedules on file with the state are included in the database. Agencies can use this to search for retention periods of similar or related records and the general public mayuse the system to locate find information. needed.

History of RIMS

The first stage in development of RIMS began in 1988 with the creation of the Scheduling Index. This was a database that contained a summary of active schedules for each agency. It was limited in that it could only contain the basic information of the schedule such as the title, summary of retention period and approval date. The information was printed and provided to the agencies. The normal process of processing retention schedules continued.

It was decided later that a new system should be developed that would allow the retention schedules to be approved online and include the text of the description and the retention period. Development began on OLIMPAS (On-Line Information Management Program Administrative Support). This system could only accept a limited number of characters for both the retention period and series description. The information from the Scheduling Index was uploaded into the system. Before the system could be fully implemented, funding was cut and the programming was never completed.The information was updated
until 1994.

In 1994, a second Scheduling Index was created that included full text of the description and retention period. The information was downloaded from OLIMPAS and incorporated into the database. The process of approving retention schedules continued using a multipart form that had to be reviewed and signed.

The Ohio Historical Society received a grant a few years later to develop a system for the public to locate documents. The result was the Government Information Locator System (GILS). The State Archivist incorporated the retention schedule index and added an online submission and approval process. Unfortunately, the funding for this program also ran out in 2000.

 Information Management then developed the RIMS program. All information from the previous systems was incorporated and compared to the hard copy retention schedules to ensure that the information was correct. Any schedules that were still active from the original scheduling index had the text of the description and retention period added.

Levels of Access

General Public – This is the lowest level offered and does not require a username or password. Access at this level is limited to searching and viewing active retention schedules, general schedules and a list of their divisions and sections.

Records Viewer – Access at this level requires a username and password. The options available at this level are similar to the general public level. However, though the search function is more comprehensive. This level searches active retention schedules available to the public and also searches those that are in-process, obsolete and rejected.. This level allows personnel to review, but not modify schedules before they are approved.

Records Coordinator – Retention schedules can be created at this level. Destructs can also be submitted. The search functions are the same as the previous level.

Records Officer – This is the highest level that agencies are allowed. The functions are the same as the records coordinator except that any schedules created at this level go directly to the State Records Administration for approval. A records officer may also reject or delete schedules submitted by the agency records coordinators. This level mayalso designate a schedule as being obsolete and modify the divisions/sections assigned to the agency.

State Archivist and State Auditor These levels are strictly for review and approval of pending retention schedules.

State Records Administration – This level also is for review and approval of pending retention schedules, but it also has the ability to make schedules obsolete.

System Administrator - This level is for maintaining and correcting problems within the system and assigning passwords.

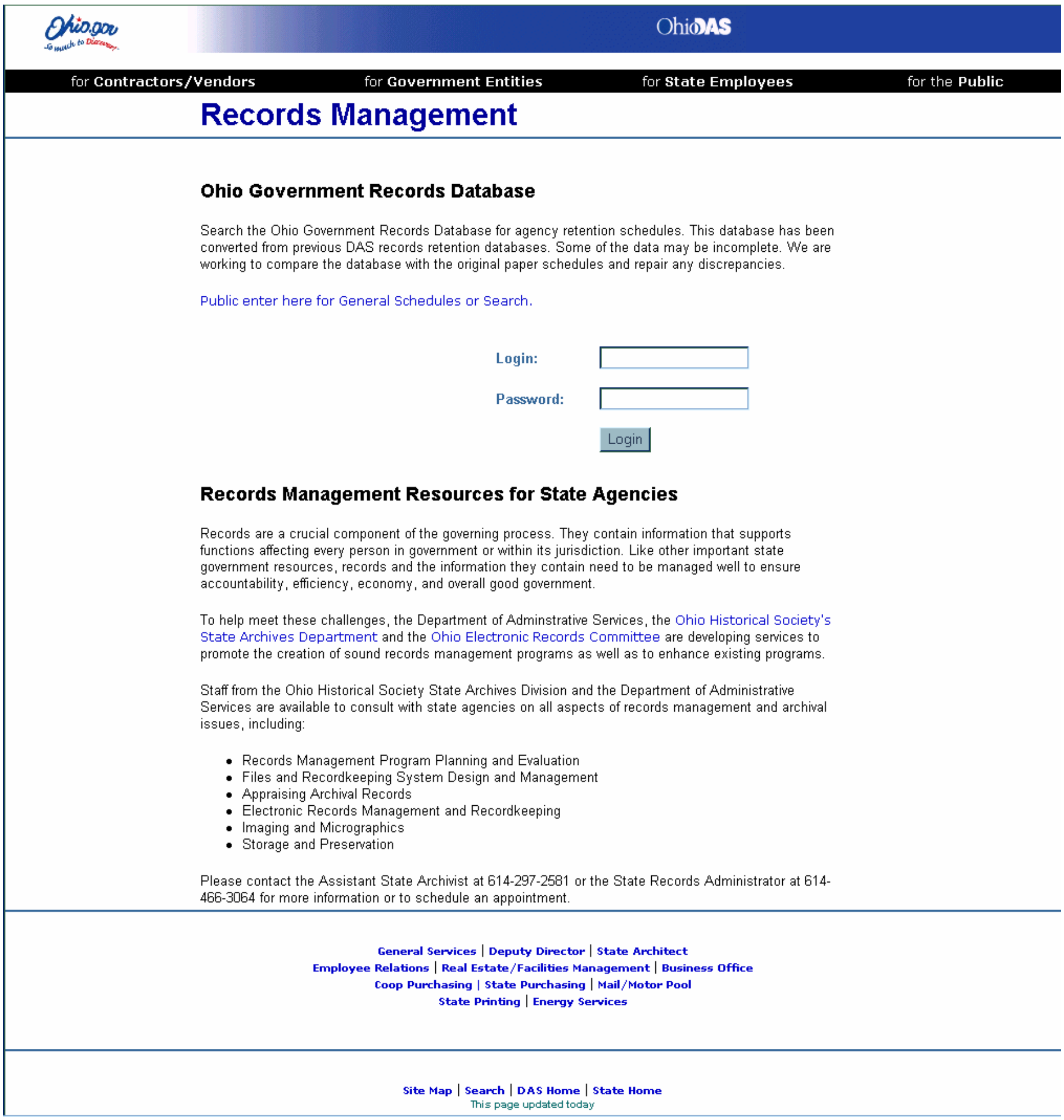
Obtaining a Password

Obtaining access above the general public level requires a username and password. The request for a password should come from the head of the agency or the designated records officer. The request should list the name of the person(s) needing access, the level desired, their email address, and phone number. The agency may also designate specific division/sections for each user. Once a user is assigned to a specific division/section,that is the only area in which schedules and destructs may be submitted. If no division or section is specified, a user will be able to submit schedules for the entire agency. If any username or password is preferred, it should be indicated.

When a person assigned a password terminates employment with the agency or is transferred and no longer requires a password, notification should be sent to the RIMS System Administrator so that the username and password can be deactivated.

Login Procedure

The login screen can be accessed from the State of Ohio Web page (www.state.oh.us). Click on the "State Employee" option to select Handbooks, Guides and Directories. The following screen will appear.



Ohio.gov

OhioDAS

for Contractors/Vendors   for Government Entities   for State Employees   for the Public

Records Management

Ohio Government Records Database

Search the Ohio Government Records Database for agency retention schedules. This database has been converted from previous DAS records retention databases. Some of the data may be incomplete. We are working to compare the database with the original paper schedules and repair any discrepancies.

Public enter here for General Schedules or Search.

Login:

Password:

Login

Records Management Resources for State Agencies

Records are a crucial component of the governing process. They contain information that supports functions affecting every person in government or within its jurisdiction. Like other important state government resources, records and the information they contain need to be managed well to ensure accountability, efficiency, economy, and overall good government.

To help meet these challenges, the Department of Adminstrative Services, the Ohio Historical Society's State Archives Department and the Ohio Electronic Records Committee are developing services to promote the creation of sound records management programs as well as to enhance existing programs.

Staff from the Ohio Historical Society State Archives Division and the Department of Administrative Services are available to consult with state agencies on all aspects of records management and archival issues, including:

- Records Management Program Planning and Evaluation
- Files and Recordkeeping System Design and Management
- Appraising Archival Records
- Electronic Records Management and Recordkeeping
- Imaging and Micrographics
- Storage and Preservation

Please contact the Assistant State Archivist at 614-297-2581 or the State Records Administrator at 614-466-3064 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

General Services | Deputy Director | State Architect
Employee Relations | Real Estate/Facilities Management | Business Office
Coop Purchasing | State Purchasing | Mail/Motor Pool
State Printing | Energy Services

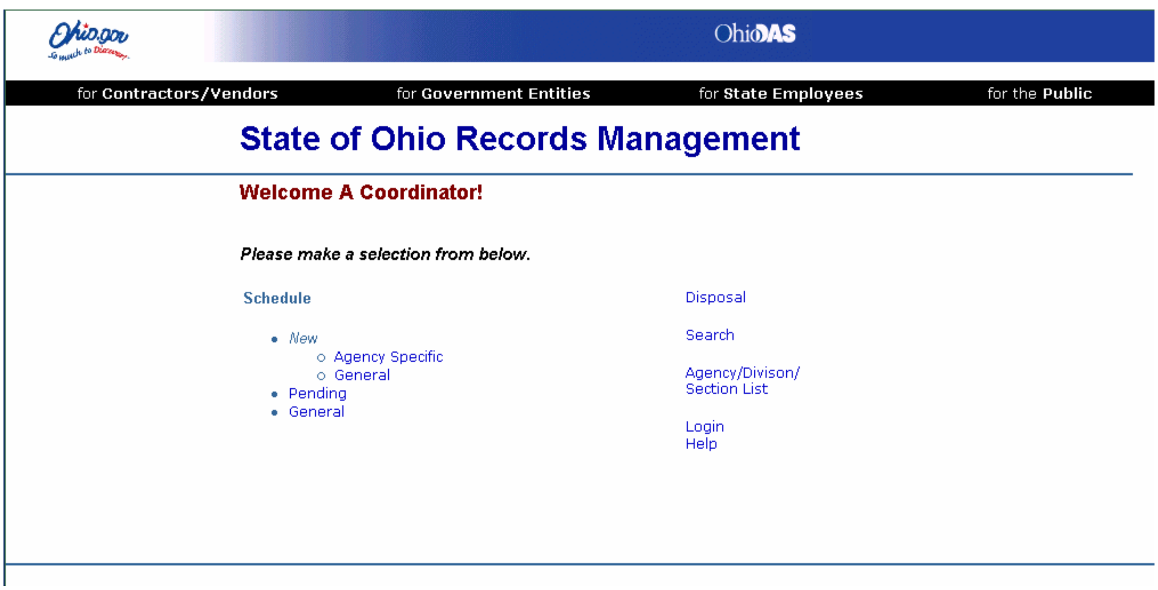
Site Map | Search | DAS Home | State Home
This page updated today

To log on as a member of the general public, select the blue line that says, "Public enter here for General Schedules or search." Otherwise, enter the user name and password that has been assigned and the appropriate menu will appear.

If a login is inactive for more than 15 minutes, the system will log it out and the username and password must be re-entered to continue.

Different levels of access will get different menus. Members of the general public or a records viewer will get the basic menu.

A records coordinator menu adds the ability to create schedules and submit destructs.



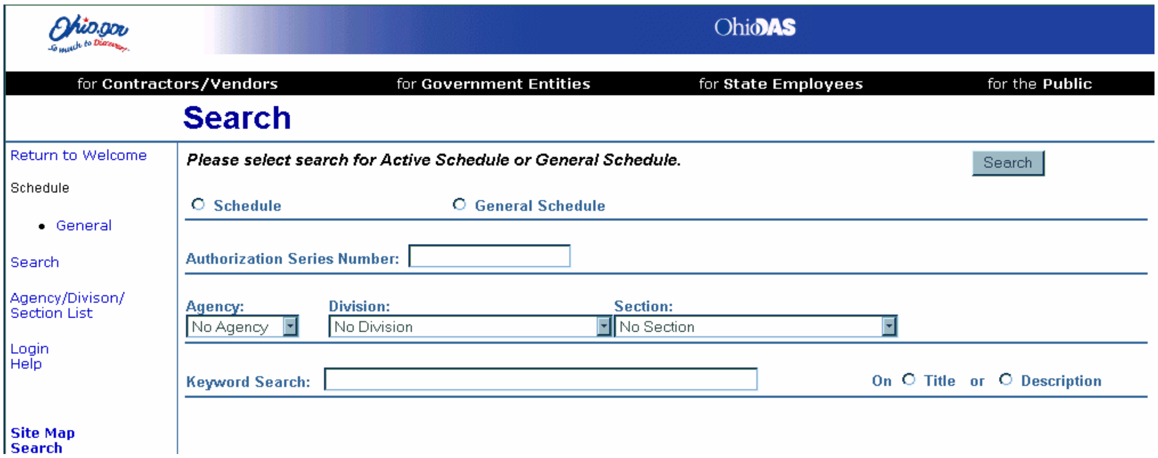
Finally, the records officer menu adds the ability to make schedules obsolete and to add/edit the division and section information.


Ohio.gov
OhioDAS
for Contractors/Vendors
for Government Entities
for State Employees
for the Public
State of Ohio Records Management
Welcome A Officer!
Please make a selection from below.
Schedule
New
Agency Specific
General
Pending
Obsolete
General
Disposal
Search
Agency/Division
/Section New
Agency/Division
/Section Edit/Delete
Agency/Divison/
Section List
Login
Help

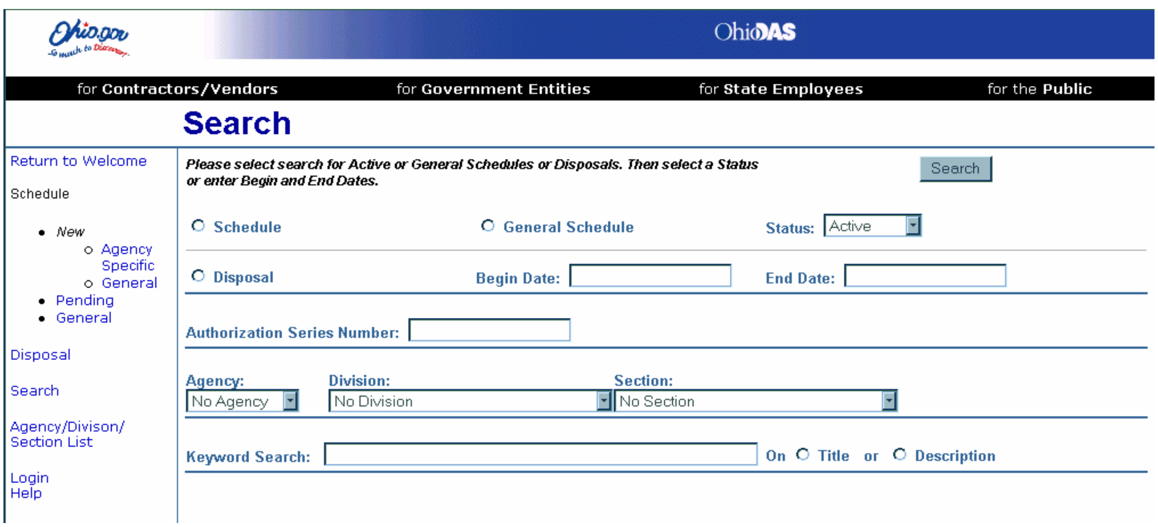
II. Conducting Searches of Schedule Information

The Search Screen

One of two search screens will be displayed depending on the level of access. The general public will see a screen that only allows searches of active retention schedules.



Users with a username and password will see a screen that allows searches ofthe active schedules and others that are in process, obsolete, or rejected.

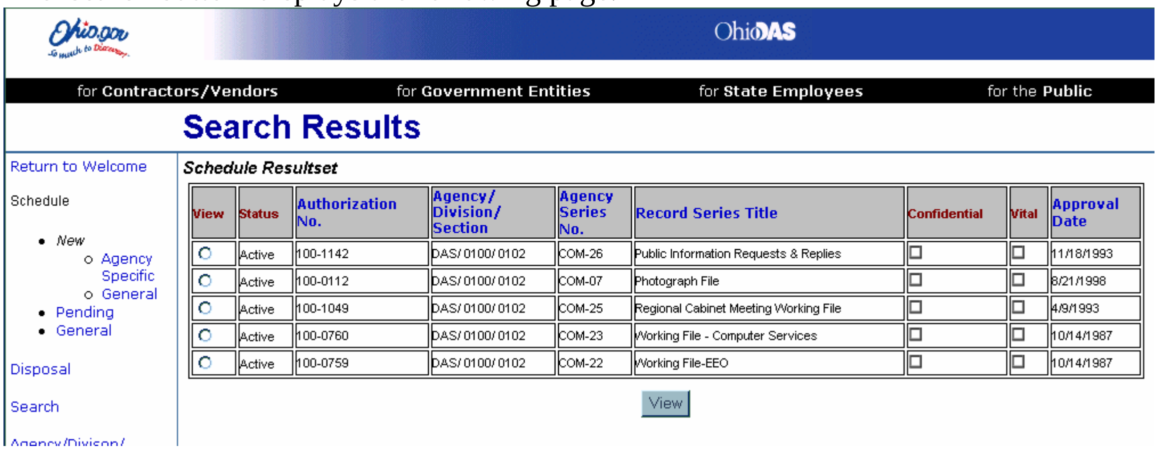


Finding All Active Schedules for an Agency

When searching for active schedules, use the “General Public”option to indicate the schedule by checking the spot next to that option. Click on the field “Agency” and scroll down to the three character code that corresponds to the agency you need. Press the “Search” button in the upper right hand corner to view the list of active schedules. Results can be further narrowed by selecting a division and section. If the request results in more than 500 records, an error message will appear asking that the search be refined.

The process for users other that the general public is the same with the exception that the box marked “Status” must indicate active schedules.

The search button displays the following page.



Ohio.gov So much to Discover

OhioDAS

for Contractors/Vendors | for Government Entities | for State Employees | for the Public

Search Results

Return to Welcome

Schedule

- *New*
  - Agency Specific
  - General
- Pending
- General

Disposal

Search

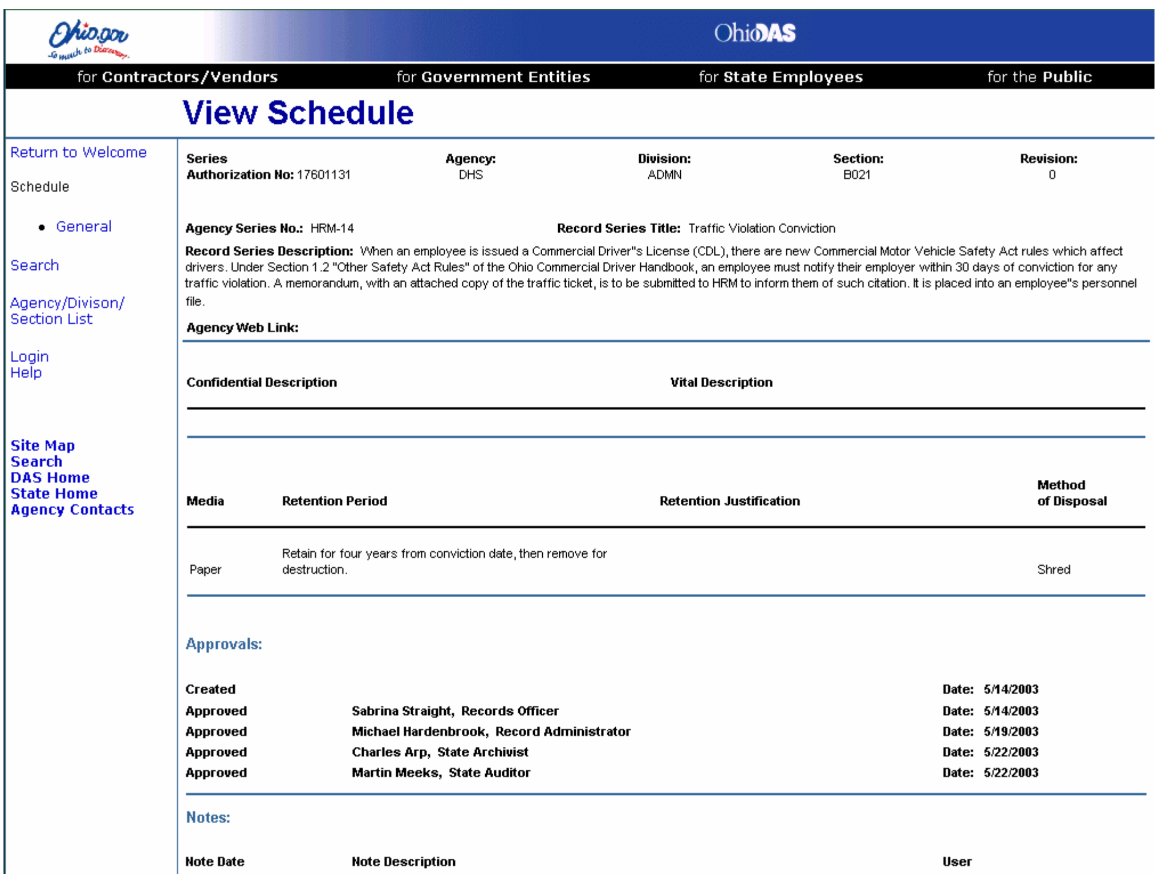
Agency/Divison/

Schedule Resultset

View	Status	Authorization No.	Agency/ Division/ Section	Agency Series No.	Record Series Title	Confidential	Vital	Approval Date
○	Active	100-1142	DAS/ 0100/ 0102	COM-26	Public Information Requests & Replies	☐	☐	11/18/1993
○	Active	100-0112	DAS/ 0100/ 0102	COM-07	Photograph File	☐	☐	8/21/1998
○	Active	100-1049	DAS/ 0100/ 0102	COM-25	Regional Cabinet Meeting Working File	☐	☐	4/9/1993
○	Active	100-0760	DAS/ 0100/ 0102	COM-23	Working File - Computer Services	☐	☐	10/14/1987
○	Active	100-0759	DAS/ 0100/ 0102	COM-22	Working File-EEO	☐	☐	10/14/1987

View

To view one of the schedules from the list, highlight and press the “View”button next to the schedule. The schedule will be displayed on the following screen.



Ohio.gov So much to Discover

OhioDAS

for Contractors/Vendors | for Government Entities | for State Employees | for the Public

View Schedule

Return to Welcome

Schedule

- General

Search

Agency/Divison/ Section List

Login
Help

Site Map
Search
DAS Home
State Home
Agency Contacts

Series Authorization No: 17601131	Agency: DHS	Division: ADMN	Section: B021	Revision: 0

Agency Series No.: HRM-14 **Record Series Title:** Traffic Violation Conviction

Record Series Description: When an employee is issued a Commercial Driver"s License (CDL), there are new Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act rules which affect drivers. Under Section 1.2 "Other Safety Act Rules" of the Ohio Commercial Driver Handbook, an employee must notify their employer within 30 days of conviction for any traffic violation. A memorandum, with an attached copy of the traffic ticket, is to be submitted to HRM to inform them of such citation. It is placed into an employee"s personnel file.

Agency Web Link:

Confidential Description **Vital Description**

Media	Retention Period	Retention Justification	Method of Disposal
Paper	Retain for four years from conviction date, then remove for destruction.		Shred

Approvals:

Created		Date: 5/14/2003
Approved	Sabrina Straight, Records Officer	Date: 5/14/2003
Approved	Michael Hardenbrook, Record Administrator	Date: 5/19/2003
Approved	Charles Arp, State Archivist	Date: 5/22/2003
Approved	Martin Meeks, State Auditor	Date: 5/22/2003

Notes:

Note Date	Note Description	User

All information from the schedule is displayed including the dates that each entity approved the schedule. On some older schedules, these signatures are replaced by one entry that says “Transfer User”. This was used when information was loaded into the system and only the date the schedule became active was available.Hard copies of these schedules with all the signatures are stored by the State Records Administration.

Finding a Specific Schedule Using an Authorization Number

Each schedule is assigned a unique authorization number upon approval. This number can be used in the search. Select a schedule, type the authorization number and press the "search" button.

Using a Keyword Search

Schedules can be found using keywords from titles and descriptions in the retention schedule. These searches can help find record series that are related in other agencies or a schedule for a record series when the authorization number is unavailable. Select schedule, type in the keyword in the appropriate box, and select whether to search the title or description. If the search results in more than 500 schedules the user will be prompted to narrow the search.

Search for Schedules With Different Status

The search screen for users with user names and passwords has a "Status" box. The default on this box is active. Pressing the down arrow in the box displays the other three types of schedules that can be searched: in-process, rejected, and obsolete. In-process schedules are those that are in the approval process and awaiting final approval. Obsolete schedules are those that were declared obsolete, by the records officer or when revised by an updated schedule. (NOTE: RIMS only contains information on schedules that were made obsolete through the system. For schedules that were made obsolete prior to 2002, please contact the State Records Administration.) Rejected schedules are those that have been submitted for approval, but have been returned to the originator for corrections by one of the signatories. Once the status of the schedule has been indicated, the search operates identical to an active records search.

III. Submitting a Retention Schedule

Definition of a Retention Schedule

A retention schedule states how long a record series needs to be retained. Retention schedules are required to be filed for all record series maintained by any state office. Section 149.34 of the Ohio Revised Code states:

> The head of each state agency, office, institution, board, or commission shall do the following: ...(B) Submit to the state records program, in accordance with applicable standards and procedures, schedules proposing the length of time each record series warrants retention for administrative, legal, or fiscal purposes after it has been received or created by the agency. The head also shall submit to the state records program applications for disposal of records in the head's custody that are not needed in the transaction of current business and are not otherwise scheduled for retention or destruction. (C) Within one year after their date of creation or receipt, schedule all records for disposition or retention in the manner prescribed by applicable law and procedures.

The Ohio Revised Code also states in Section 149.333 that no record can be destroyed in the absence of an approved retention schedule.

Approval Process

For a schedule to be active it most be approved by four signatories in the following order; the agency records officer,the State Records Program, the State Auditor and the State Archivist.

Each has a different responsibility in the approval process. The records officer is responsible for ensuring that the schedule meets the needs of the agency. The State Records Program guarantees the schedule includes all the elements of a good retention schedule and is consistent with the standards set for the same. The State Archivist reviews the schedule to determine if it has historical value. The State Auditor is responsible for reviewing the fiscal value of the series. A schedule must have each of these approvals to be declared active..

If a schedule is initiated by a records coordinator, it is sent to the records officer of the agency for review. The records officer can either approve or disapprove the schedule. If the schedule is rejected, it is sent back to the originator to make the necessary corrections.

When the records officer approves (or originates) the schedule, it is sent to the State Records program. The schedule is reviewed and approved, or rejected. If rejected, it is sent back to the agency for revisions. If approved, it is sent simultaneously to the State Auditor and State Archivist. If either rejects the schedule, it is sent back through the process so the agency can make the corrections. It is moved into active status once both approve

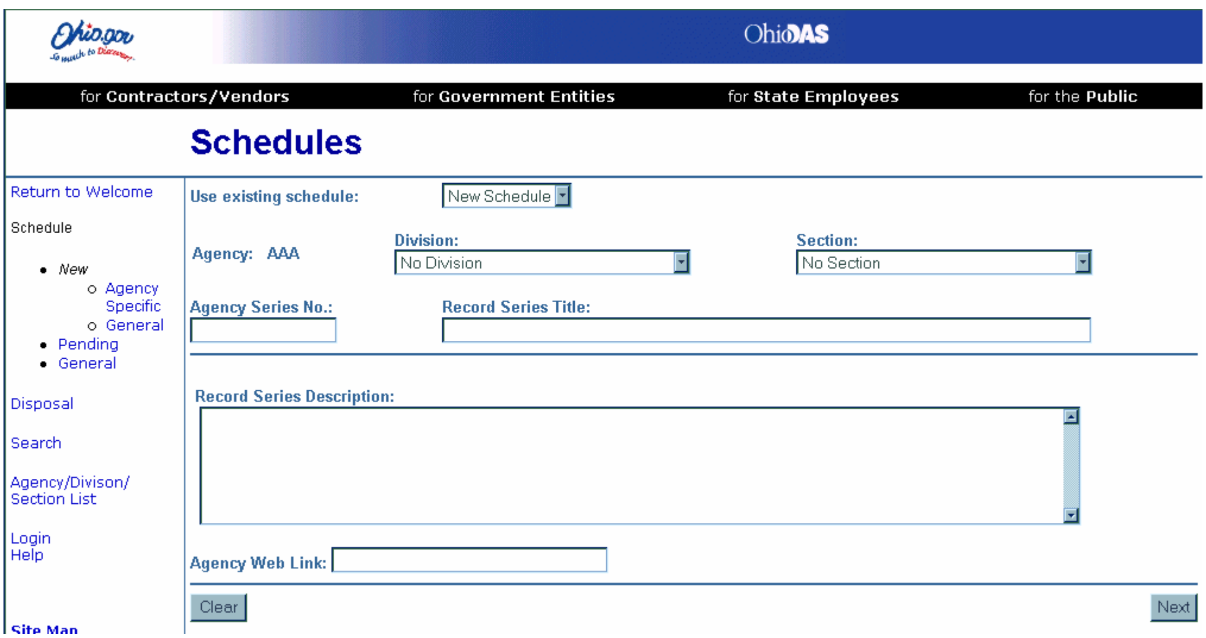
Elements of a good retention schedule

The main element of good retention schedule is that it be easy for the general public to understand. . A vague retention schedule could lead to unnecessary public records requests. The retention schedule should also include a complete and concise retention period. The reader should be able to quickly determine the criteria for destroying or maintaining records.

Completing a retention schedule

If you are logged on as either a records coordinator or a records officer there will be a section of the menu called "New." There are two options under this section: "Agency Specific" and "General Schedule" If you are revising a previous schedule or submitting a schedule for a series that is not covered by the General Schedules, you should chose "Agency Specific." (Submitting items covered by the General Schedules will be covered in a later chapter.)

This page will be displayed when the "Agency Specific" option is selected:

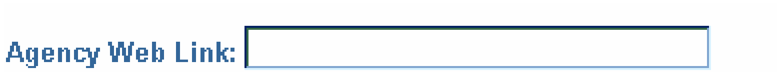


This is the first page of the retention schedule submission. At the top is an option for using an existing schedule. The default is listed as "New Schedule".

This box should be left blank if the series has never had a retention schedule filed for it. When filing a revision to a previous schedule, the down arrow on the box will produce a drop down menu of authorization numbers of active schedules on file for the agency assigned to the user. Selecting one of these numbers automatically pulls all of the information from the current schedule into the file so that the updates can be made.

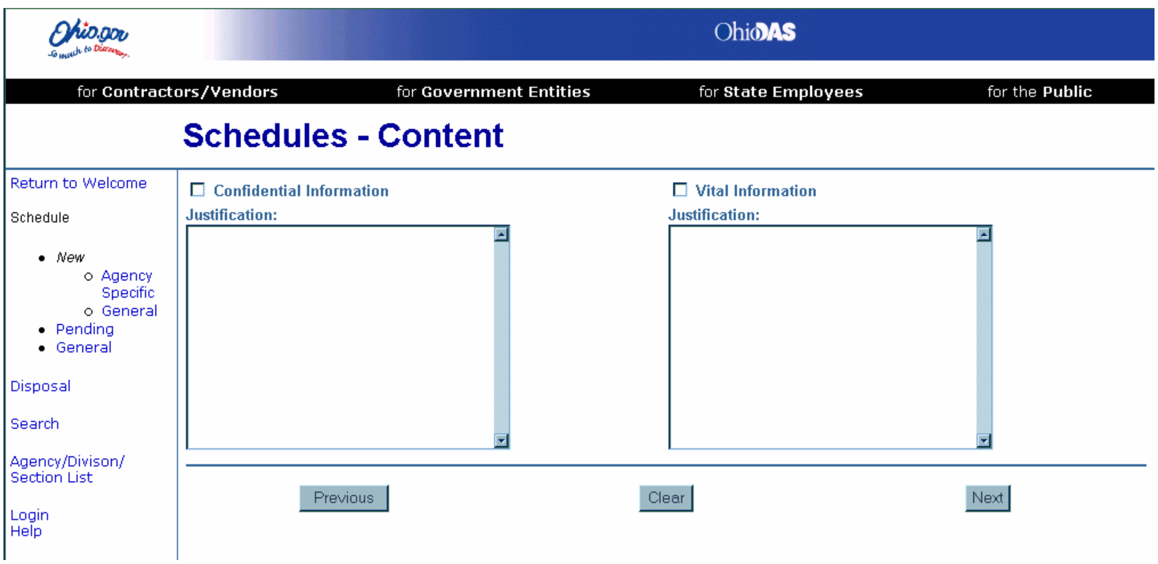
Select the division and section the records are assigned to,if any,and assign it an agency series number. Type the title and description of the records being scheduled or edit the entry if a revision is needed. Remember, the combination of the title and description should convey to the general public what the record series is, why it was created, and the type of information it contains.

There is an additional box on this first page that will not be familiar to personnel who have completed retention schedules under the old paper system. This box is called "Agency Web Link."



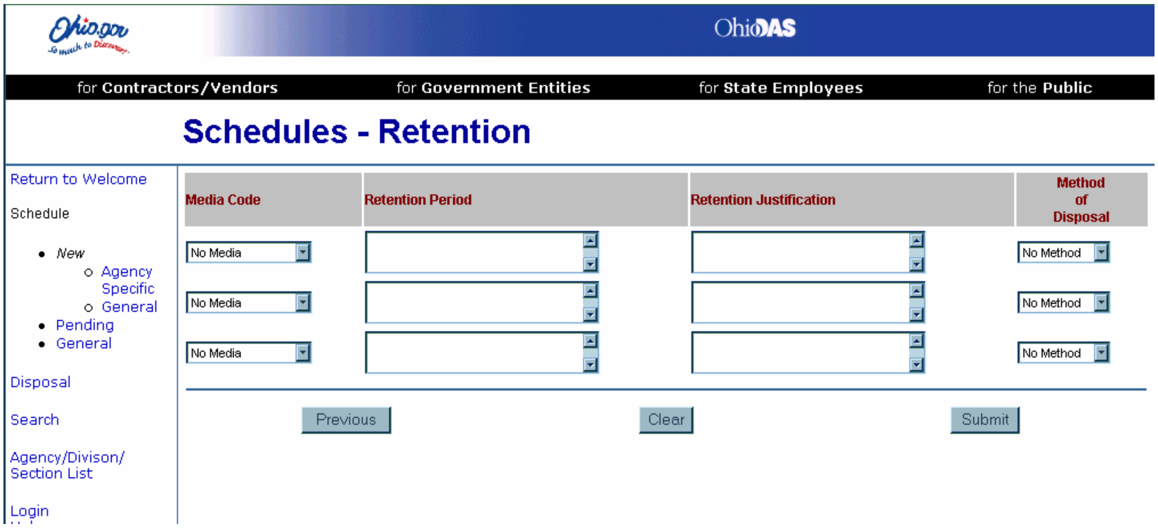
This box is optional. It is a hold over from the GILS (Government Information Locator System) database that was a predecessor to RIMS. Its purpose is to provide a link to the information if it is available on the Internet.

Once the information has been completed on this page, press the "Next" button to proceed. This will bring up the "Content" screen. (NOTE: Once this button is pushed, a record is created in the system. If the schedule is not completed, it will not allow another one to be submitted for the same series.)



This screen indicates if the record series contains confidential or vital information. If either is checked, RIMS will not proceed without a justification stating why the record series has that value. If both are checked, then a justification must be entered for each.

Once this screen is completed, hit the "Next" button to proceed to the final screen of the retention schedule.



The last step in the scheduling process is to indicate what media the record series exists on and how long it is to be retained. There are three options; paper, microfilm and electronic. Complete the corresponding box for each option used. Record series can have up to three media but only one of each. If the same media is entered for a second line, RIMS will respond with an error message.

The next column is for the retention period. It may be based on an actual event rather than a time period. The retention period should clearly state how long the series is to be retained. Directions such as "retain until determined of no value" do not clearly state the criteria for disposal.

A retention schedule is justified if the retention period is more than five years or more than five years after an event. A retention period of retain "until employee terminates employment" would not require a justification even though many of the records will be retained for 20 years or more. The system does not prompt you if you do not include one when required but the schedule will be rejected by the State Records Administration.

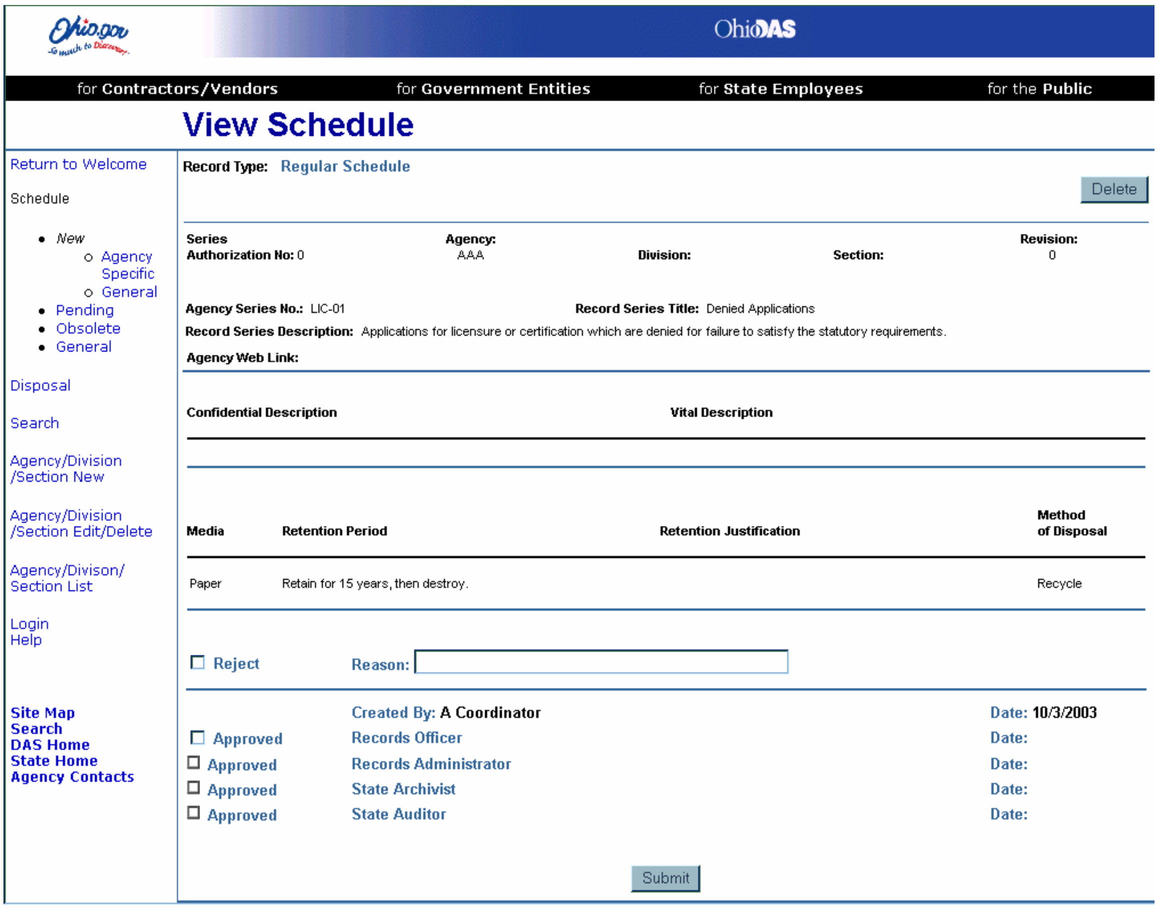
The final step requires a method of disposal. The options are shown on the pull down menu by clicking the down arrow in the required box. Be sure that the method of disposal matches the retention period. Do not indicate a method of wastepaper for a series that has been designated as "confidential" or indicate that the method of disposal is "permanent" when the series is retained two years. Once the method of disposal has been chosen, click the "Submit" button to send the schedule to the next step in the approval process.

Tracking Approval Process

Progress can be checked using the search screen once a schedule has been submitted. Only users that have a user name and password can view schedule information for schedules that have not yet been approved. The search function works the same as a search for an active schedule. To find the schedules that are pending simply do a search and change the status box from "Active" to "In-process." This will produce a list of schedules that have been submitted but not fully approved. A look at the approvals on the bottom will indicate who has reviewed the schedule and whether they approved or rejected it. If a signature is missing, it means that person has yet to review the schedule.

Approving Schedules (Records Officer Only)

Schedules are created by a records coordinator go into the “Pending” box of the records officer for the agency. The number of schedules pending review will be indicated in parenthesis next to the word “pending.” Checking the “Pending” box will produce a list of the schedules awaiting review. Checking the “View” box of one of the schedules and pressing the ”View” button will produce a schedule review screen.



There are three actions that can be taken by the records officer on a pending schedule. The first of these is the “Delete” button located in the upper right hand corner. Pressing this button erases the schedule from the system. This option should only be used for extreme cases.

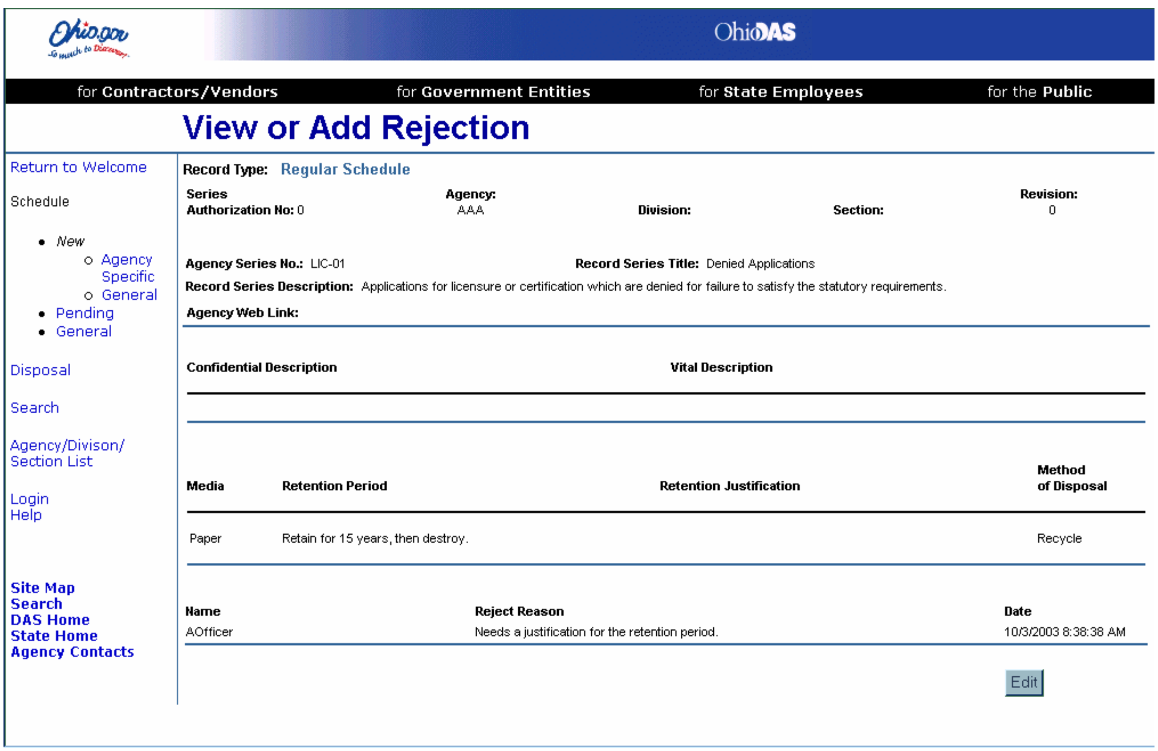
The next option is to check the reject box and type a reason for rejection in the space provided. The schedule will be returned to the record coordinator’s pending list with the reason that the schedule was rejected. The coordinator can then make the necessary changes and resubmit the schedule for approval.

The final option is to approve the retention schedule by clicking the “Approved” box next the line that says “Records Officer.” This option sends the schedule to DAS State Records Administration for the next step in the approval process.

What To Do If Schedule Is Rejected

Schedules can be rejected for various reasons. When a schedule is rejected it shows up in the “Pending” menu with a status of “R” for rejected. There is no notification that a schedule has been rejected, so it is advisable to check the pending box periodically if schedules are in process. The number of schedules in the box will be indicated next to the pending option.

To correct the schedule, highlight the “View” dot next to the schedule and press the “View” button at the bottom of the list. This schedule should appear.



The schedule appears as it was submitted with the notes at the bottom from the person that rejected it. There is an “Edit” button in the lower right hand corner. Pressing this button pulls up the original three screens of the retention schedule so corrections can be made. The schedule is then resubmitted for approval. A records officer receiving a rejected schedule created by a records coordinator has the option of adding the reasons for rejecting it and retuning it the records coordinator for correction.

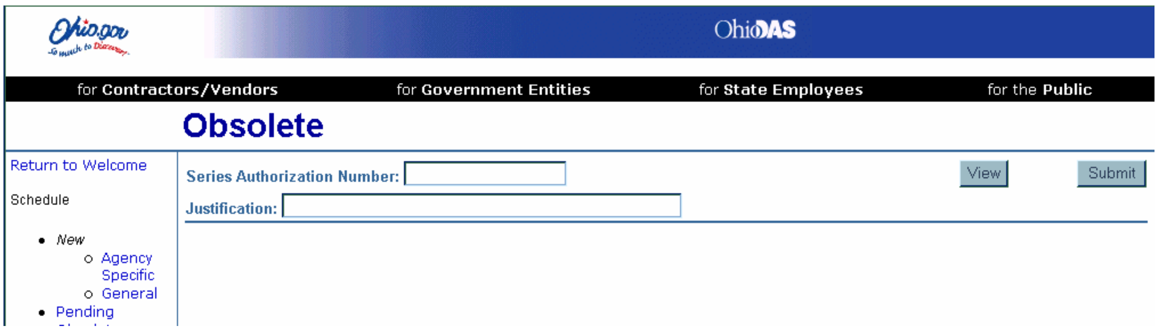
What To Do If Timed Out Before the Schedule Is Completed

RIMS has a built in security feature that logs a user out after 15 minutes of inactivity. Longer interruptions may prevent a user from completing the schedule. Revisions will not allow another schedule to be submitted for the same series. DAS State Records

Administration should be notified to correct this. The RIMS System Administration has a routine that deletes incomplete schedules. When requested, this routine will be run first thing the following morning to minimize the effect on other users who may be entering information into the system.

<u>Making a Schedule Obsolete (Records Officer Only)</u>

If a record series is no longer created or transferred to another department, the old schedule must be made obsolete. The ability to remove a schedule from active status is available only to the record officer of the agency. Select the "Obsolete" function from the welcome menu and the following form will be displayed.



The user must type the authorization number of the obsolete schedule that is obsolete and provide a detailed explanation of why it is obsolete. For example, if the records are now covered by another schedule, list that schedule. Press the "Submit" button to mark the schedule as obsolete. Schedules should not be marked as obsolete until all records have been destroyed pursuant to the schedule or the schedule now covering them has been approved.

Schedules declared obsolete are not immediately removed from the system. The request is forwarded to the state records administration for review prior to removal from the active list. If declared obsolete, schedule changes will no longer appear under an active records search. The schedule and the justification will be retained under obsolete schedules.

IV Common Reason Schedules Are Rejected

Schedules are rejected for many reasons including recurring problems listed below.

Vague record series title – The combination of the title and description should adequately describe a series to someone who is not familiar with the operations of the department. Keywords in titles can be searched in the RIMS system. The title is also displayed in the search results screen.

<u>Vague Title</u> 1982 Bank One Reports

This title refers to records of a specific year. Unless the schedule is a one-time disposal, inclusive dates should not be used anywhere in the schedule. Submitting schedules in this manner would require schedules to be filed for each record series once a year. The title also refers to a specific bank despite the fact that other banks were used in the same records series. The title itself is vague. The reader is not told what type of reports are involved. The title below is much easier to understand.

<u>**Corrected Title**</u>
Interest and Dividends Reports

Vague record series description – Any description should answer two things about a record series. It should indicate what information the series contains and why that information is retained. A description that is vague or incomplete can lead to unnecessary public records request and confusion within the department.

<u>**Vague Description**</u>
Cash dividend on $ ____ shares of ____, No. ____ @ _____, Payable ____; States History File-Multiple Inq. by Tran/IP, Key ____, Short Title, Tran. Code, Batch #, Asset #, Org/Seq #, Inc. cash, shares, tax cost.

The description above is taken verbatim from one that was submitted to DAS for approval. There is no way to determine what this series is unless you deal with the records on a daily basis. The writer listed every blank on the form rather than provide a description of the series itself. Many abbreviations are used without explanation. There is no way for the reader to understand what they mean. As stated earlier, the combination of the title and description should adequately explain the series to someone who has no idea of how the deparment operates. Abbrievations should not be used.

<u>**Corrected Description**</u>
Reports received from banks with which the department has accounts. These reports detail the amount of interest and dividends paid to each account. These reports are received annually and are used to update account totals and to calculate which investments pay the greatest returns.

The above description states what the records are and why they are retained. It explains the record series succinctly, even to individuals not familiar with the functions of the department.

More than one series per schedule – A record series is a group of related records that are filed together, have a unified purpose and have the same retention period. Schedules that group more than one series together will not be approved.

<u>**More Than One Series**</u>
Administrative Office Records – This series contains records retained by the Administrative Office. These can include, but are not limited to, personnel records, fiscal records, correspondence, phone logs, and other miscellaneous records.

This example includes a number of items that would be retained by an administrative office, but they should not be lumped together because they don't have the same value.

For example, phone logs would not have the same purpose or value as personnel records. In addition, it is impossible to tell what “miscellaneous records” are.

Retention Periods are vague – A retention period should clearly state how long the series must be retained. This can be based on an event rather than a time period as long as that event is clearly defined (i.e. retain until audited by Auditor of State and audit report is released). If a period is based on more than one event, the retention period should clearly indicate which event takes precedent or if all events must be completed before their records can be destroyed.

<u>Vague Retention Period</u> Retain until no longer needed then destroy,

In many cases the exact retention period cannot be easily determined because it is affected by more than one event. Instead of using a retention period like the one above, include all the items that must occur prior to destruction. This type of retention period could lead to problems if a public record request was made. There is noindication of the criteria used to determine when the record series can be destroyed or when the series was no longer needed. “Indefinitely” does not define a retention period. The Ohio Revised Code saysthat a retention schedule should state the length of time that a record series warrants retention.

<u>Corrected Retention Period</u> Retain until asset sold and all audits are complete then destroy.

This example clearly explains what has to happen before a records series can be destroyed. . If a destroyed record were requested it would be easy to show that the criteria were met for destroying it.

Retention Periods are too long or too short – A series should be retained only for the length of time that it has value to an agency. Excess files take up valuable space . Some records officers designate everything for permanent retention. Don’t. The word “permanent” is not an abstract term for a long retention; it is taken literally and should be reserved only for those records with historic value.

Others believe they can schedule records for a very short time in order to sve filing space. Doing so runs the risk of destroying records prematurely.**Retention periods not given for each media –** According to the Ohio Revised Code Section 149.011 a record can be ‘any device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic’. Each media must have a separate retention period to qualify as a complete schedule.

Inadequate or missing justification for retention periods over 5 years – Any schedule with a retention period over five years or five years after an event must be justified. The justification should clearly describe why the series needs to be retained for that time period. Justifications such as“for reference” will not be accepted because they do not give adequate reasons for retaining the series.

Inadequate justification for confidential and/or vital designation – RIMS will not allow a schedule to designate a record series as “confidential”or “vital” without adding a justification. The justification should clearly state why the series warrants this designation. If the series is checked as confidential, it should state why the record series is excluded from being a public record as outlined in ORC 149.43. In the case of vital designation it should state why the series is essential to the operations of the agency.

By avoiding these common errors, a schedule is more likely to be approved quickly.

V. Reporting General Schedules

What are General Schedules?

The General Schedules are those for record series that are common to most or all state agencies. They provide common retention periods and eliminate the need for agencies to develop schedules for the included series. The General Schedules are broken down into four different categories: general administration records, personnel records, fiscal records and information technology records. Each category is further reduced into subcategories. Each General Schedule gives a description of the record series and the retention period. To view a complete list of the General Schedules, click the “General” option on the lower side of the left column of the welcome menu.

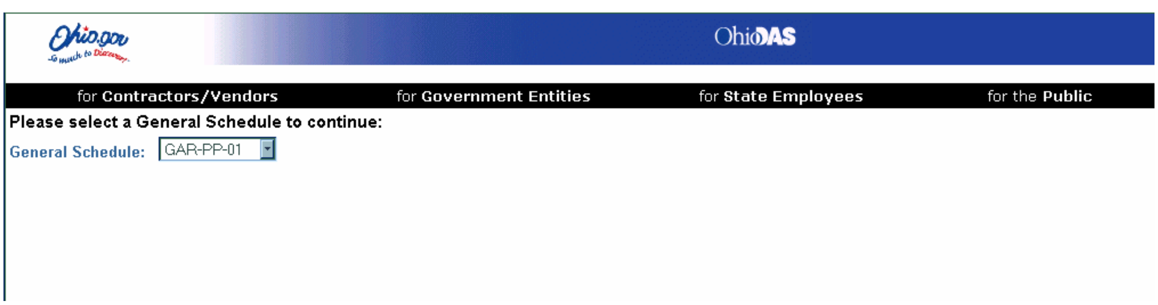
When to Use the General Schedules

To apply the general schedules to a record, it must exactly match the description and the agency must follow the indicated retention period. If one of these conditions does not apply , the agency must submit an agency specific schedule as outlined in Chapter III.

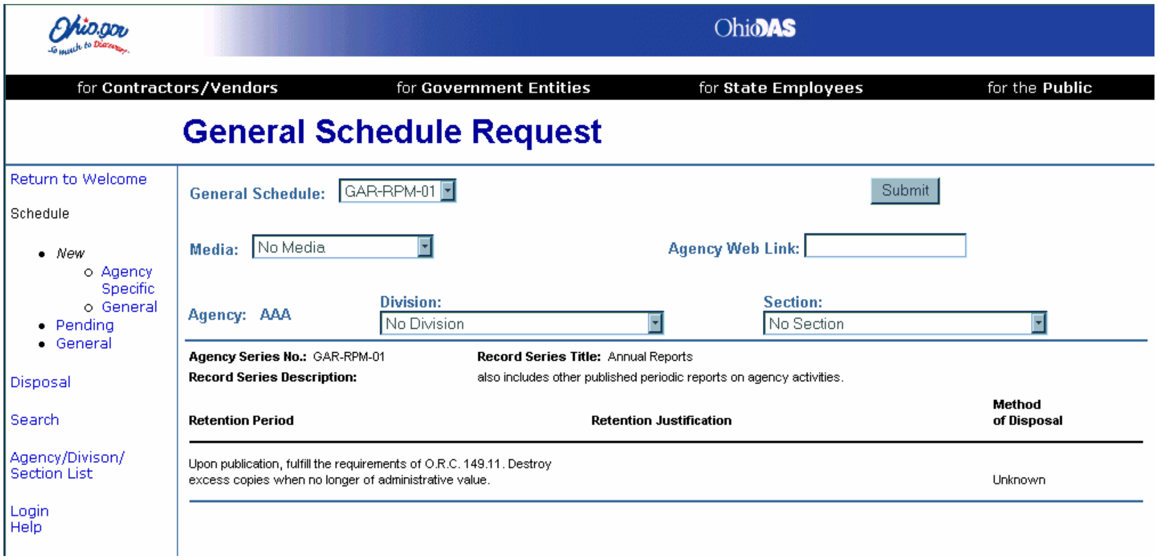
Submitting General Schedules

There is no approval required for General Schedules since they have already been approved for use by all the signatories. However, agencies do need to notify the state records administration of what series are being retained. There is an option on the menu for submitting notification of a General Schedule. An agency only needs to send a notification for each series once. This one notification will indicate that the office retains those types of records and that they are retained for the stated time period.

To add a General Schedule to the list of the agencies schedules, simply click the “General” button under the “New” portion of the welcome screen. A screen like this will be displayed.



Select the General Schedule that is to be added and this screen will be displayed.



Indicate what media the series exists on and the division/section information. The description or retention period information can not be modified. If the requirements of the agency require a different retention period, an agency specific schedule must be filed as outlined in Chapter and go through the normal approval process.

Once all the information is correct, press the “Submit” button in the upper right hand corner. RIMS will then display that your request has been approved and indicate the authorization number that has been assigned.

VI. Documenting Records Disposal

Why Documenting Disposals is Important

When a retention schedule is approved it is authorization for records to be destroyed once their retention requirements have been met. When disposals occur, they should be documented by the records officer. This documentation could be used as evidence that the records were destroyed properly should they become the subject of a public records request. Without this documentation, it could be difficult to prove that the records were destroyed in accordance with the retention schedule, especially if the schedule has been revised after the disposals have occurred.

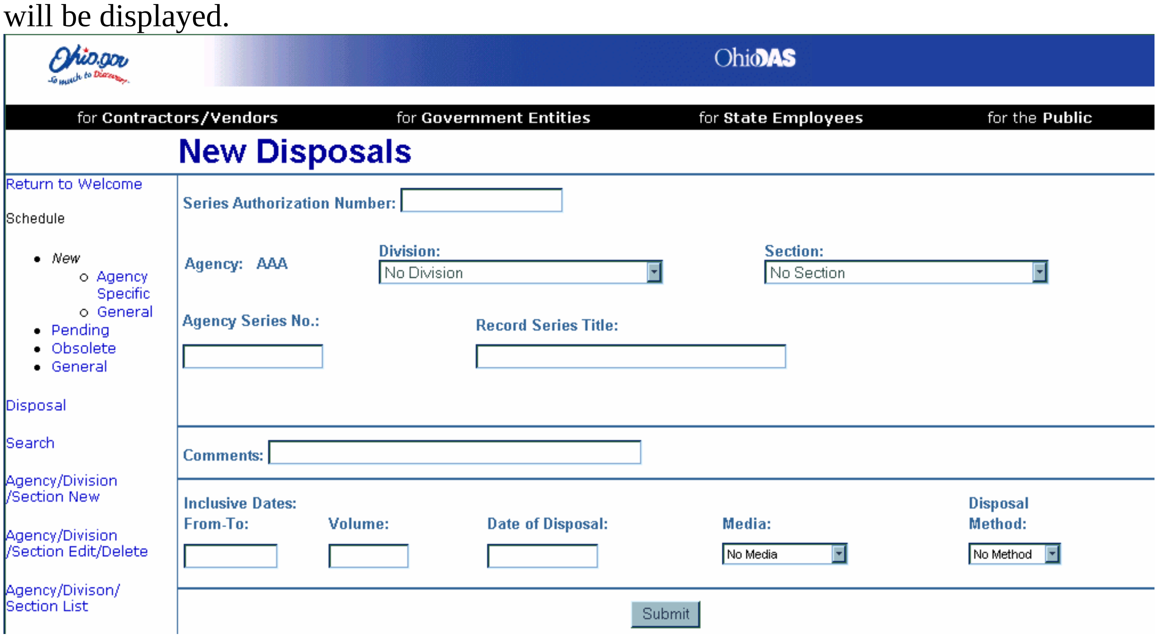
What Should Be Included in Disposal Documentation

The documentation of record disposal is the responsibility of the records officer for the agency. The documentation can be in any form but should include some basic information. It must indicate the retention schedule or General Schedule covering the series. The schedule or General Schedule must be active at the time of disposal and all the records destroyed must have met the retention requirements.

The documentation also should include the date of disposal and the approximate volume of the records destroyed.

Documenting Disposals Using RIMS

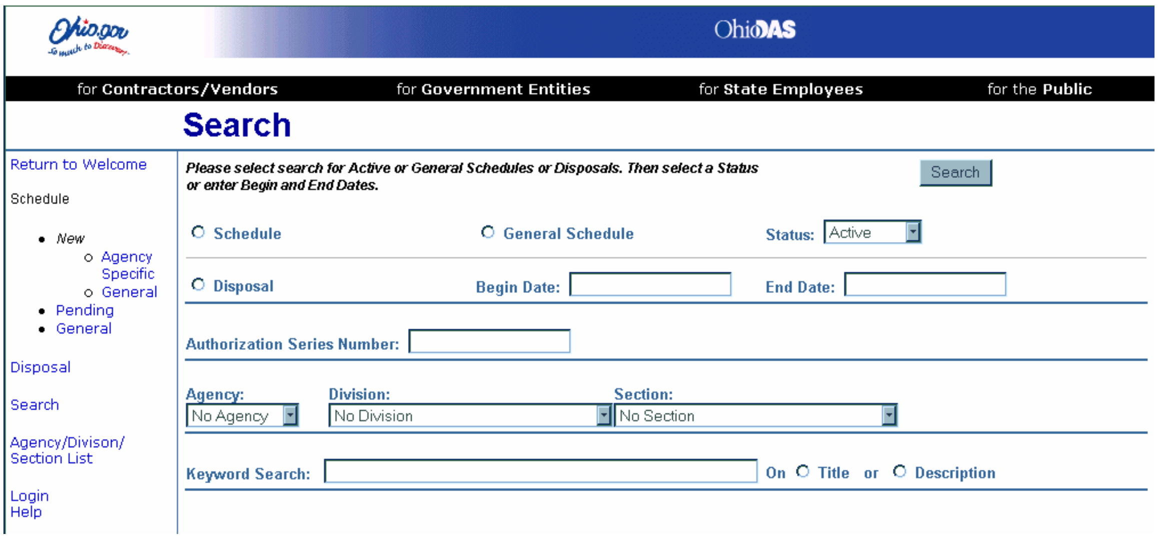
RIMS does offer an alternative to creating agency systems. Using the "Disposal" option on the welcome screen (Records Officer and Records Coordinator only) will give you a form to complete to store the disposal documentation in RIMS. The following screen will be displayed.



Complete the information indicated and press “Submit for storage in RIMS. It is the responsibility of the records officer to monitor destructs for their agency to ensure compliance with approved retention schedules.

Searching for Destructs Stored in RIMS

Disposal information that has been stored in RIMS can be searched by any user with a user name and password. The search screen contains a disposal section.



Click on the “Disposal” button and type in the inclusive dates of the destructs you are searching for and the appropriate agency information. Clicking on the “Search” button will provide a list of all disposals that meet the criteria. Select the appropriate selection and view the disposal information.

NOTES