



# Records Management Bulletin

Records management advice prepared for GNWT employees  
by the Records Management Unit of Public Works and Services

No. 16 – May 2003

## Records Management Personnel: Summer Students

Spring is here and summer is around the corner. Soon the school year will end and the college students will return home. You may be thinking of hiring a student to cover off vacations and clean up the files. Here are some ideas to help you hire students to help you with your records management.

### Hiring Students in the GNWT

Government policy states that all staffing actions must go through the human resources section in your department. So contact your human resources officer to start the hiring process.

The GNWT has established a standard rate of pay for Records Management Assistants. Contact your human resources section to find out more about student rates of pay.

### Typical Duties

There are a number of records management duties that are appropriate for students. The most common include:

- Filing documents that have already been coded with a file number.
- Retrieving and re-filing files that are stored in central filing areas or in the Records Centre.
- Making photocopies and sending faxes.
- Opening new files or volumes on request. You will have to give the student the correct file number and file title.
- Updating the file list.

Many departments hire students to prepare their files for transfer to the Records Centre.\* This involves grouping files by their final disposition and their final disposition date, packing the files into boxes, and then listing the files on Records Centre Box Inventory Forms.

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\* Talk to your records coordinator before assigning this duty to students. Some records coordinators prefer it if regular employees prepare the transfers. They suggest using students to cover for the employees who are preparing the transfers.

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## **Things To Remember**

Records management is not something that most students learn in school. Unless the students are in an office administration, library studies, records management, or information management program, they are unlikely to have had any exposure to records management concepts or practices.

This means that students need to be trained in your department's records management practices. Contact your records coordinator several weeks before the students are due to start work, in order to arrange training.

## **Training Requirements**

Depending on their duties, students will need training in one or more of the following areas:

- How the filing system works.
- How to classify documents using ARCS and ORCS.
- How to file and retrieve documents and files.
- How to open new files and volumes.
- How to update the file list.
- How to identify records that are ready to be transferred to the Records Centre.
- How to interpret retention schedules.
- How to pack boxes for storage at the Records Centre.
- How to fill out the Records Centre Box Inventory Forms.
- Proper lifting techniques.

Even after they have received training, students should not be expected to classify and assign file numbers to documents or files without guidance from other employees. Students generally do not know enough about the classification system or your programs to be able to correctly classify documents. It is better to have employees code their own documents, and then give them to the students for filing.

## **Where to Get Training**

Your department's records coordinator is the first person that you should turn to for help with training students to do records management tasks. The records coordinator will be able to introduce them to the GNWT's records management program. He or she can also explain how your department's filing system works and how to prepare boxes for transfer to the Records Centre.

Contact your records coordinator several weeks before the students are due to start work. Records coordinators are very busy at this time of year, and need advance notice. This is especially true if they have to travel to regional offices.

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For more information, contact your department's records coordinator, or contact the Records Management Unit at 920-3009 or 873-7446

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## **Required Skills**

While previous knowledge of and experience with records management is always an asset, most students will know very little about it. There are a number of other skills that students require in order to be successful in records management. When you are hiring students to perform records management tasks, look for these skills:

- Attention to detail.
- Organizational skills.
- Computer skills, especially familiarity with MS Word, MS Excel, and e-mail. Data entry skills and familiarity with databases are also needed if your department uses a database to manage its files or transfer boxes to the Records Centre.
- Typing skills.
- An ability to read, understand, and follow written and verbal instructions.

If the students are going to be preparing records for transfer to the Records Centre, then they should also be able to lift boxes weighing a maximum of 16 kilograms (35 pounds). They should also have basic arithmetic skills so that they can interpret retention schedules.

## **Final Thoughts**

Students are an important part of the GNWT's summer workforce. With a little planning, they can make a valuable contribution to your department's records management program.

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