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# Records Management and Declassification Programs

## **Department of State Records**

The Department maintains records dealing with:

- The formulation and execution of US Foreign Policy
- The administration and operations of the Department and US missions abroad
- Applications of US citizens for US passports
- Visa applications from non-citizens to enter the US
- Consular assistance given to US citizens abroad
- Current and former employees of the Department

For more information on the organization and responsibilities of the Department of State please visit the [Department Organization](#) page.

## **Records Management Policy & Procedures**

For Department of State Records Management Policy and Procedures please go to our Foreign Affairs Manual, [5 FAM 400](#) and our Foreign Affairs Handbook, [5 FAH 4](#) links.

## **Records Disposition Schedules**

For specific records series and the length of time that the records are maintained please go to our Records Disposition Schedules linked below. A records disposition schedule documents the major records series (including electronic records) related to the activities of each office, identifies temporary and permanent records, provides mandatory instructions for the retention and disposition (retirement or destruction) of each records series based on their temporary or permanent status. All Records Disposition Schedules are approved by the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration.

[Domestic Records Disposition Schedules](#)

[Foreign Records Disposition Schedules](#)

[General Records Schedules \(Schedules Common to All Agencies\)](#)

## **Declassification of Department of State Records**

**Systematic Review Program:** The Systematic Review Program (SRP) reviews the Department's permanent historic records, including electronic records and microfilm, as they reach 25 years of age. Thereafter, records are transferred to the National Archives according to authorized disposition schedules.

Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series: The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series constitutes the official historical documentary record of US foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity. A staff of more than 30 historians and editors at the Office of the Historian in the Department of State compiles and prepares the volumes for publication. Volumes may be purchased through the U.S. Government Printing Office's [U.S. Government Bookstore](#). Recent volumes are also available online at [Volumes Online](#).

Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR): Under the provisions of Executive Order 13526, an individual may request the declassification review of specific classified material that (s)he is able to identify so that the agency may retrieve it with reasonable effort. Please note: if you would like to file a request for mandatory declassification review, you must specifically mention MDR under EO 13526.

Freedom of Information: Many records released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request are available at the [Department's Electronic Reading Room](#). There you will find the Department of State's [FOIA Annual Reports](#), frequently requested documents released under the FOIA, and special document collections of continuing public interest.

### **How to request records not yet transferred to the National Archives**

For records still in the custody of the Department of State please visit our [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) website](#).

### **Transfer of Permanent Records to the National Archives**

Permanent records are transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration after declassification review and in accordance with their records disposition schedules. For information on how to locate Department of State Records at the National Archives go to [State Department Records in the National Archives](#).