

Digital Processing Plan Template

Introduction

This document provides a brief template for creating a digital processing plan, a valuable step to take when planning for the processing of archival records seeking accession into the digital archives. Processing aims to take a set of records in a somewhat unknown state, and turn them into usable record series that conform to all applicable laws and regulations of the state or territory.

Digital processing can take many forms: it can be a cursory, high-level review using bulk processing tools to identify and repair records that are damaged, that have long-term preservation concerns, or are presently unreadable and require action. It can also involve in-depth analysis of content searching for protected information, defining migration pathways for dozens of

file types, or involve significant arrangement (reorganization) and description (metadata) to make records usable. Much of what will be required during processing will depend on the state of the records when transferred, as well as how and in what system they were stored previously.

This template attempts to lay out some basic, universally applicable tasks that can be applied to a small or large set of records, with ample room to outline additional steps that can be taken in the future. Some archives will accept and inventory records, and then return to process them months or years later; processing plans can be especially useful in these scenarios as they can act as both a plan of action and a report of actions that have already been taken.



Support for this publication was provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through a National Leadership Grant to the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) for BACKER: Building Archival Capacity for Keeping Electronic Records, a project of the State Electronic Records Initiative (SERI).

January 2025



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DIGITAL PROCESSING PLAN

We have pre-populated the charts below with examples of accession/collection information and Long-Term Actions, which can be easily overwritten. Users should also feel free to add actions to the Immediate Action checklist to tailor it to their agency's needs.

Accession/Collection Overview

DATA ELEMENT	RESPONSE
Producer Agency	Example: agency that is making the transfer, not necessarily the records' creator
Date(s) of Transfer	Date(s) transfer was received by the archives
Number of Transfers	List if multiple transfers
Records Schedule/Series	Applicable schedule or series
Scope	Short description of the records
Extent (GB, files)	Size and number of files transferred
Processing Priority/Level	High/Medium/Low; Complete/Minimal

Processing Plan

Immediate Actions to be Taken:

- Virus/Malware Scan (as applicable)
- Generate Digital Object Fixity
- Inventory of Records
- Characterization of Digital Objects
- Identification of At-Risk Objects
 - Invalid files (file not identified or readable)
 - Degraded file formats (currently readable but long-term readability in question – e.g. proprietary/uncommon software formats)
 - Encumbered files (encryption, signature, DRM)
- Migrations
 - Conversion of files to stable, preservation formats
 - Generation of derivatives (redactions, downscale)
- Arrangement
 - New series/sub-series creation
 - Restricted records
 - Capture of digital references (hyperlinks, embedded content, etc.)
- Description
 - Top-level series description including organizational history, biographical notes, etc.
 - Folder-level description
 - Item-level description (where applicable)
 - Extraction of digital object metadata

