FNS

First Nations Summit

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

INFORMATION FOR FIRST NATIONS GOVERNMENT IN BC

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Appendix 1 – Records Classification and Retention Schedule

1. Introduction to the Records Classification System and Retention Schedule
2. Structure and Logic of the Classification System and Retention Schedule
2.1 Sections
2.2 Primary and Secondary Subjects
2.3 Retention Periods
3. Records Classification and Retention Schedule

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1. Introduction

The information in this volume of the Information Management Toolkit is provided for the designated records management staff member, who will have daily responsibility for the records of the First Nations government.

The contents of this volume were originally created by the First Nations Public Service (FNPS) of BC in 2011. The FNPS ceased operations in 2012, and the First Nations Summit has since assumed responsibility for the content and updating of this volume.

This section includes information on:

- Conducting an information survey, to determine what information exits in the office and related organizations.
- What is a record
- How to file records using the model records classification and records retention system (included as Appendix 1)
- How to manage records for daily work
- The type of filing equipment and supplies to select
- Closing files when they are no longer referenced
- Storing records until their useful life is over, and
- Destroying or saving records for future reference, including obtaining the appropriate approvals

A model records retention schedule is included with the classification system. First Nations should confirm that the recommendations for retention are suitable for their requirements.

In addition, research was undertaken in 2011 to locate any regulations for retention of records. With the passage of time, organizations should undertake their own research to ensure current retention requirements.

There is also a section about electronic records that includes information on:

- Organizing electronic records in directories
- A model electronic document naming convention.

Finally, this tool kit as a whole is intended to be the "Records Management Manual" that is referenced in the Information Management Resolution and Policies, and also in the Canadian standards for maintaining records as evidence. As such, the procedures manual serves as the eyewitness to the credibility of the First Nations records keeping processes, and will support the use of records as evidence.

a. What are records?

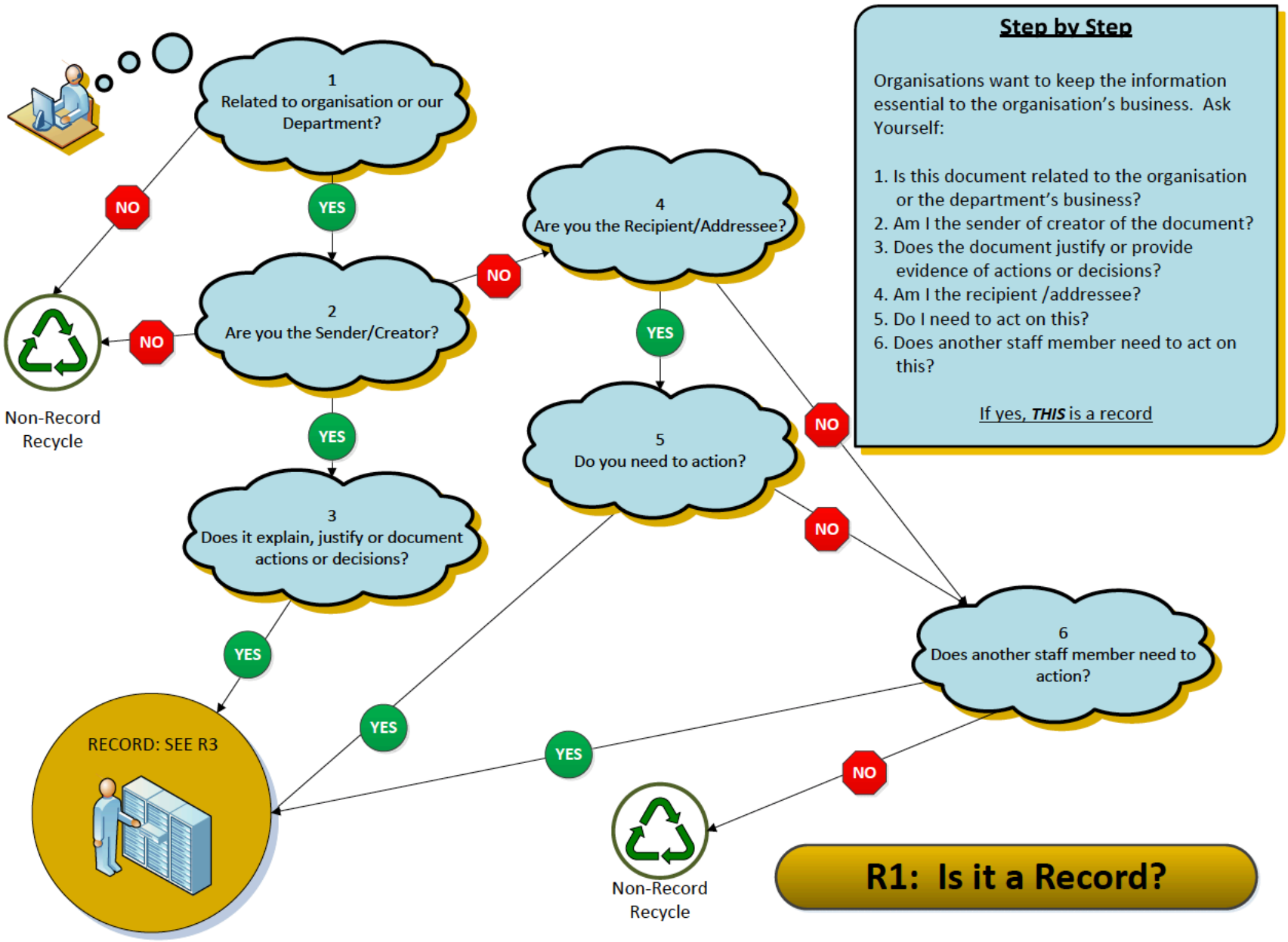
Records= emails, BCRs, mail, letters, maps, documents, reports, etc.

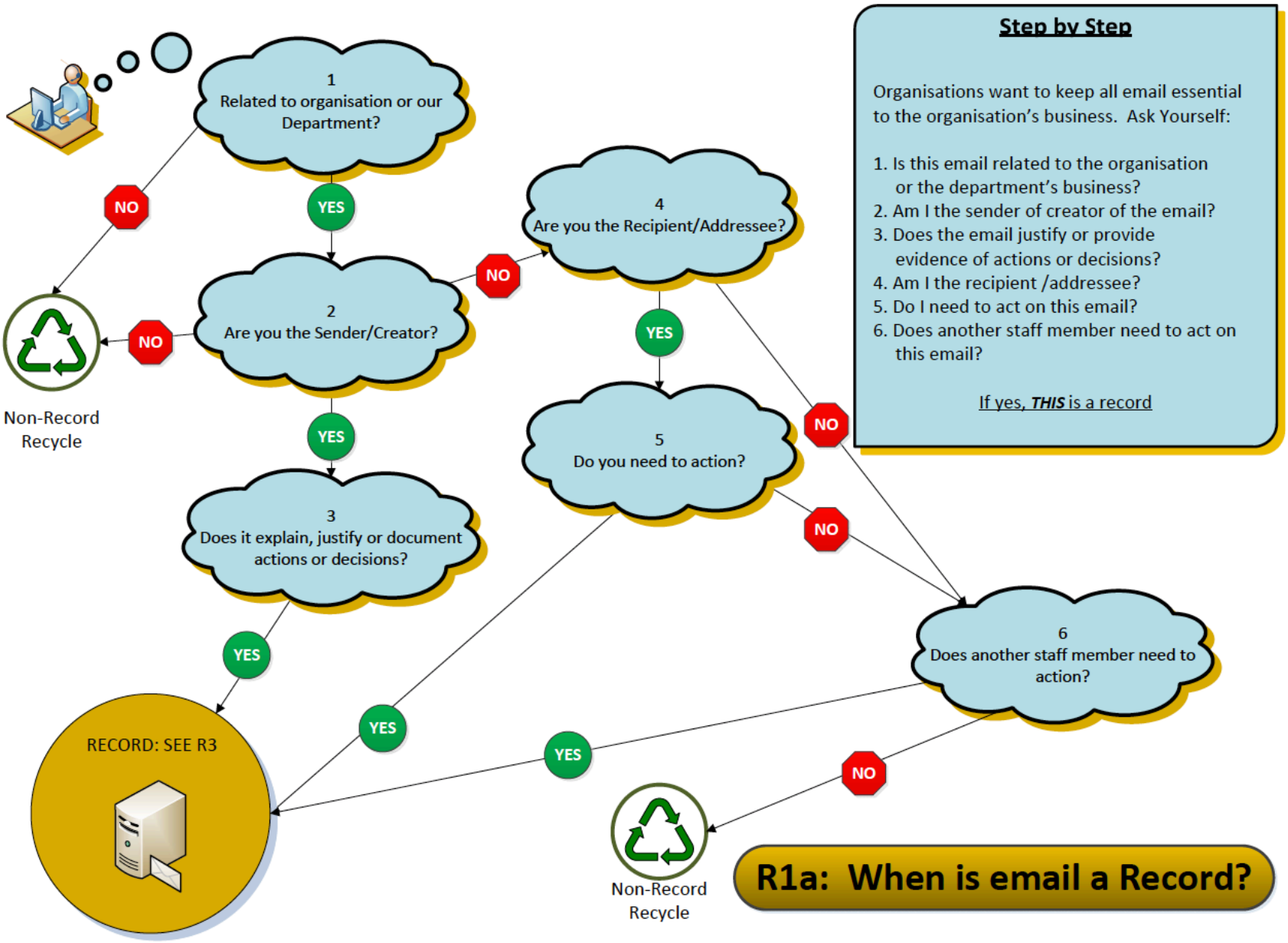
Records are defined as “information created, received or maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business”.

Depending upon regulations or legal definitions, any document in any format within a First Nations government can be considered a “record”, e.g. paper document, e-mail, map.
Each staff member and elected official must understand this definition, and support the processes that are explained in this volume for collecting, filing and maintaining the records of the organization.

The diagram, **“R1 – Is it a record?”** shows the step-by-step questions that help to define what a record is. See also diagram **“R1a – When is email a Record**”.

Once you have defined what records are, your next step is to see what records you have in your organization


1
Related to organisation or our Department?
NO
YES
2
Are you the Sender/Creator?
NO
YES
Non-Record
Recycle
3
Does it explain, justify or document actions or decisions?
YES
RECORD: SEE R3
4
Are you the Recipient/Addressee?
NO
YES
5
Do you need to action?
NO
NO
6
Does another staff member need to action?
YES
NO
YES
YES
Non-Record
Recycle
Step by Step
Organisations want to keep the information essential to the organisation's business. Ask Yourself:
1. Is this document related to the organisation or the department's business?
2. Am I the sender of creator of the document?
3. Does the document justify or provide evidence of actions or decisions?
4. Am I the recipient /addressee?
5. Do I need to act on this?
6. Does another staff member need to act on this?
If yes, THIS is a record
R1: Is it a Record?


1
Related to organisation or our Department?
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Recycle
3
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YES
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4
Are you the Recipient/Addressee?
NO
YES
5
Do you need to action?
NO
NO
6
Does another staff member need to action?
YES
YES
NO
Non-Record
Recycle
Step by Step
Organisations want to keep all email essential to the organisation's business. Ask Yourself:
1. Is this email related to the organisation or the department's business?
2. Am I the sender of creator of the email?
3. Does the email justify or provide evidence of actions or decisions?
4. Am I the recipient /addressee?
5. Do I need to act on this email?
6. Does another staff member need to act on this email?
If yes, THIS is a record
R1a: When is email a Record?

b. Information Survey or Inventory

Do you know what information you have in your office? If not, a records and information survey, or inventory, is required, for you to get a clear picture of what records and information belong to the organization.

Generally, if you understand what records have been collected in various locations over time, and that there may be mixed collections (e.g. they include a variety of different subjects), then a records survey is a good idea, to get a clearer picture of the amount and subject matter that you will be organizing.

The keys to completing a survey are:

- **Be organized about what you want to find out.** Use a form to collect the same information for every collection that you identify, and make sure to create a listing of all the locations. See Form 1 – Information Survey that is included in this section, to show the kinds of details you want to know about your records.

- **Set a timetable**, and try to complete the survey quickly. This will ensure that you have up to date information, and that you can finish this activity as quickly as possible. If you can, get other staff to help with this survey. Review your form with them and explain that they need to be accurate and clear in describing what they find.

- When you have finished, **create a spreadsheet** with columns to match the various categories of information you collect from the form. Fill in a line of data for each survey form. When you have all the forms compiled into the spreadsheet, you will have a snapshot of how much information you have, where it is located, and what subject matters are included.

- *Now, set your priorities for action!*

ORGANIZATION X
RECORDS AND INFORMATION SURVEY

DEPT. NAME: **DATE:**

COMPLETED BY:

RECORDS SERIES TITLE:

DEPARTMENT OR WORK GROUP (If applicable):

DESCRIPTION: Types of documents, how arranged. Note any personal information.

DATE RANGE: (from yr/mo to yr/mo)

VOLUME: (how many inches of files) **FORMAT: (non-paper)**

RETENTION PERIOD: (if known)

Note: Attach a file list if one is available.

TYPE OF STORAGE EQUIPMENT: (type of cabinet, or storage method, e.g. tote box)

USE OF SECURITY DEVICES: (locks, passwords, restricted access)

LOCATION: (office, storage room, offsite)

The following information will be obtained from the records custodian, or designated caretaker of the records:

USES OF INFORMATION

Who uses these records?

How often are records referenced?

Is information confidential?

Who has access to confidential information?

Is this a vital records series, e.g. what would happen if this information is lost?

Does this information have long term or permanent value to the organization?

Other facts or features of these records?