

Using the Guide

The records of the archives are arranged according to archival practice of record group and series, which is also used at the National Archives and most state and local public archival repositories. A record group is a body of records produced by a single agency (and sometimes by predecessor agencies as well) or a body of records that relate to a specific aspect or function of the municipal government. Each record group is composed of one or more series. A series is a group of documents arranged in accordance with a filing system or maintained as a unit because they relate to a particular function, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use.³

The Guide discusses each record group separately. Included is the record group number, title, and date span; a brief administrative history of the agency or function that created the records; a summary of the record's content and coverage; and a description of the individual record series. Each series description consists of series number and title, date span, volume, and arrangement; reference is also made to the presence of an index or other finding aid, if appropriate. Fuller and more detailed descriptions of record groups and series are available at the archives, along with a number of other finding aids.

Several terms and expressions used to describe records require some explanation. There are four abbreviated terms: cu. ft. (cubic feet); lin. in. (linear inches); HRS (Historical Records Survey); and RG (record group). Dates given after the record group and series titles represent the chronological range within each batch of material. Records with date ranges listed as to "present" are split between the archives, which usually has records up to the last several years, and the office of origin, which has the more recent accretions. The term "box" may refer to an archival storage container (.45 cu. ft.), a records carton (1 cu. ft.), or any of three types of flat storage boxes. Microfilm is usually in a roll format. Indicated indexes or other finding aids are available for use at the archives.

³Frank B. Evans, et al, "A Basic Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers," American Archivist 37 (July 1974): 430.