



OFFICE DE-CLUTTER: ADMIN'S GUIDE

Overview: When your office or cubicle is too cluttered for your own comfort, or when your boss asks you to “clean out the filing cabinets” in the department’s workroom, here are basic decisions and actions in **3 EASY STEPS** to guide you through the process. For assistance, contact Records and Information Management, x6289 or email records@kennesaw.edu.

STEP 1. PLANNING

LABOR

Ask for help before moving heavy boxes or furniture. Ask for input and advice on what to toss, what to keep, what to give away.

TIME

Estimate how much time the project will take. Allot block(s) of two hours. Don't get overwhelmed or neglect other duties.

STAGING

Get permission to use a room (or part of a room) to store items that need to be reviewed, moved, or disposed of later.

SUPPLIES

Acquire or borrow boxes and carts, order large shred bins, trash bins, and recycle bins.

STEP 2: SORTING & APPRAISAL – The 2-year or 2-minute rule of thumb



PERSONAL ITEMS

 Mugs, cups, books, knick-knacks, plaques, trophies, travel souvenirs, etc.
 What improves your work life?
 What haven't you looked at in the **past 2 years**?
 Are you buried in clutter?

OFFICE SUPPLIES

 Pens, pencils, markers, scissors, post-it notes, notepads, thumb tacks, binder clips, paper clips, staplers, etc.
 Have too many?
 Still useful? What haven't you used or needed in the **past 2 years**?

YOUR FILES

 Convenience copies for reference only, notes to self, drafts, subject matter files of interest to you, printouts of digital files, etc.
 Can you find what you need in **2 minutes**?

TEAM FILES

 Convenience copies, subject matter files of interest to others, record copies of documents under retention, etc.
 Is offsite storage warranted? Can you find what your team needs in **2 minutes**?

STEP 3. DECIDING ON DISPOSITION

OFFICE ITEMS

TAKE HOME or GIVE AWAY: Personal items you haven't used in 2 years that take up valuable work space.
RETURN TO SUPPLY ROOM: Any good, useable office and desk supplies that you don't need but someone in your team could use.
SEND TO SURPLUS: Any good, useable supplies that you and your team don't use.
BROKEN, OBSOLETE or DAMAGED ITEMS: Trash.

YOUR FILES

TAKE HOME or GIVE AWAY: Old magazines, newsletters, and other publications of interest to you.
DISPOSE OF IN SHRED BIN: Any old or superseded files that contain an individual's personally identifiable information (e.g., Social Security Number, home phone or address).
RECYCLE: Duplicate copies of records or data stored in another location. Convenience copies you don't use. Also, your predecessor's workpapers, notes, and correspondence, if they have no relevance to your job.

TEAM FILES

RETAIN IN OFFICE: Authoritative copies of records for which your team is the official custodian IF:

- The records are currently active .
- The information is not kept anywhere else.
- 2 years or less of retention left before destruction.

SEND TO OFFSITE STORAGE: Authoritative copies as describe above that have more than 2 years of retention left before destruction. Examples include:

- **5 YEARS:** Invoices, purchases (Fiscal Services)
- **7 YEARS:** Faculty evaluations (College, Dean's Office)
- **10 YEARS:** Athletic eligibility records (Athletics)

*Full list of records retention guidelines are posted at https://www.usg.edu/records_management/schedules/