Suggestions you could consider as you embark on a Shared Drive Clean-up Project

Step 1: Inventory Folders and Sub-Folders

Creating an inventory of folders is an essential step in reorganizing and cleaning up a shared drive. Once completed it will show which folders and sub-folders can be deleted. It also allows for the renaming of folders according to agreed upon naming conventions while preserving earlier names of folders for easy reference. The inventory should list only the top one or two levels (depending on the number of sub-folders). Make sure to record in the inventory any orphan files (saved outside of folders) in the top two levels of the shared drive. These must be either deleted or moved into an appropriate folder during the reorganization.

In a spreadsheet, table or database, set up the following categories:

- Current Folder/Sub-folder name
- File Class (from the CRS)
- New Folder/Sub-folder name (if necessary)
- Brief Description/Comments
- Date Last Modified
- Office of Primary Responsibility (yes/no)
- Official Copy (yes/no)
- Ongoing Operational Need (yes/no)
- Status (retain/delete)

Step 2: Map Folders and Sub-Folders to the C-RIMS

Record new folder titles (if needed) as determined by the division’s file naming conventions in the spreadsheet. Assign the appropriate file class from the C-RIMS to each folder and sub-folder. File classes should match those of the division’s paper file plan as closely as possible.

Sub-folders should fall within the same file class as the folder, so that related groups of records will have the same retention and disposition under the C-RIMS. Once proper file classes have been decided on, some sub-folders may need to be moved into more appropriate top-level folders should their retention and disposition conflict. Identify any folders that should be moved to other areas of the directory structure (e.g., home drives), if necessary. Consult the C-RIMS to determine if the division is the Office of Primary Responsibility for the records, and note the official status in the inventory.

Step 3: Determine Retention and Disposition for Folders and Files

Indicate folders or records within folders to be deleted.

- Distinguish transitory records from official records that can be destroyed because they have outlived their retention period according to the C-RIMS. Transitory records include drafts, duplicates, superseded records, other copies (as identified in the C-RIMS), and outdated reference materials.
- To determine whether official records can be destroyed or are to be transferred to the Archives, consult the C-RIMS.
- Do not delete or move any records yet—just indicate the proposed action on the inventory.

All files should reside within a folder. Take note of orphan files at each level of the hierarchy that have not been assigned to any folder. Be sure to note records created in programs that are outdated and no longer readable. From the completed inventory, create a Folder Classification Plan. This should list the titles and file classes of the top-level folders on the shared drive (or top two levels of folders if needed) and will form a useful reference for staff to locate folders once they have been renamed. Remember that the classification plan should be consistent with the file plan for the division's paper files.

Step 4: Move/Rename Folders

Throughout the process, consult with relevant staff to get their input. Circulate the final proposed Folder Classification Plan among staff and get formal approval from the office Director. Up to this point, all the planning for the shared drive has been done on paper. When actually moving and/or renaming folders and files, keep the time required as compressed as possible. Set aside a non-busy time for the changeover and notify all those with access to the shared drive to refrain from using it during this specific period. It is recommended that this process take no longer than one day. If necessary, staff can use their home drives (P: // Drive) during the clean-up period provided they re-file their work on the shared drive later. Once a designated time has been agreed upon and set aside, delete any records that are past their retention period or that are transitory and move the remaining folders and files to the new structure.

Step 5: Implement Disposition

- Delete transitory records immediately.
- For official records, apply the retention and disposition rules as per the C-RIMS. For records which are to be deleted, use the Records Destruction Approval Form and get sign-off from a designated division director before deleting any records;

- For records which are to be transferred to the Archives, fill out a Transfer to Archives Approval form and get sign-off from a designated division director before transferring any records. For records that are subject to Archives Review, contact the Archives for further instruction. After Archives Review, records found to have long-term value can be transferred to the Archives. Records that are found to have no archival value can be deleted using the same destruction process listed above.

Step 6: Creating a New Shared Drive Structure

In some cases, a shared drive may have become too unwieldy and complicated to rename/move folders or files within the existing shared drive to make them compliant with the C-RIMS. This may be especially true if a shared drive is used by a large number of people. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to set up a **new shared drive structure** on the same system and copy folders and files from the current structure over to the new one. In this case it is essential that IT or the unit's computer technical support group be involved from the outset and at all steps in the process.

1. Have technical support staff set up space for the new structure and ensure that enough storage space is allocated to hold the records to be moved.
2. Follow the steps in Step 3.0 including folder inventory and mapping to the C-RIMS, folder retention and disposition, and approval of a Folder Classification Plan.
3. Create empty folders and sub-folders in the new structure that mirror the classification plan. Once the new structure has been created, ensure that no new folders or sub-folders are added by users until after the changeover has been completed.
4. Make sure that a designated time is set aside for the changeover. Arrange for technical support to restrict access to the shared drive during this time to the person responsible for moving folders and files to the new structure. During the designated move time, copy all records that are to be maintained from the existing shared drive and place them into the appropriate folders or sub-folders in the new structure.
5. Once the changeover is complete, have technical support implement access for all users to the new shared drive structure. Decide on a set period of time, such as six months or one year, to leave the previous shared drive in place in a 'read-only' format. Users will be able to retrieve needed records that may have been left behind in the changeover and save them in the appropriate folder in the new structure. When the designated time period has expired, give final notification to all users, and have technical support delete the previous shared drive.

Step 7: Staff Training

Hold an overview or training session with staff after the changeover to make sure all users of the shared drive understand how to file within the new structure, and know who has responsibility for creating new folders and updating the Folder Classification

Plan. Remember to train new staff in the proper use of the shared drive, including naming conventions, and records transfer and destruction.

<u>Step 8: Maintenance</u>

Once the folder classification plan is in place and the appropriate folders and files renamed and /or moved to the new structure, records should be maintained in a manner consistent with the C-RIMS and the division's file plan. If it is necessary to add a new top-level folder, make sure to update the Folder Classification Plan to accommodate the new file class.