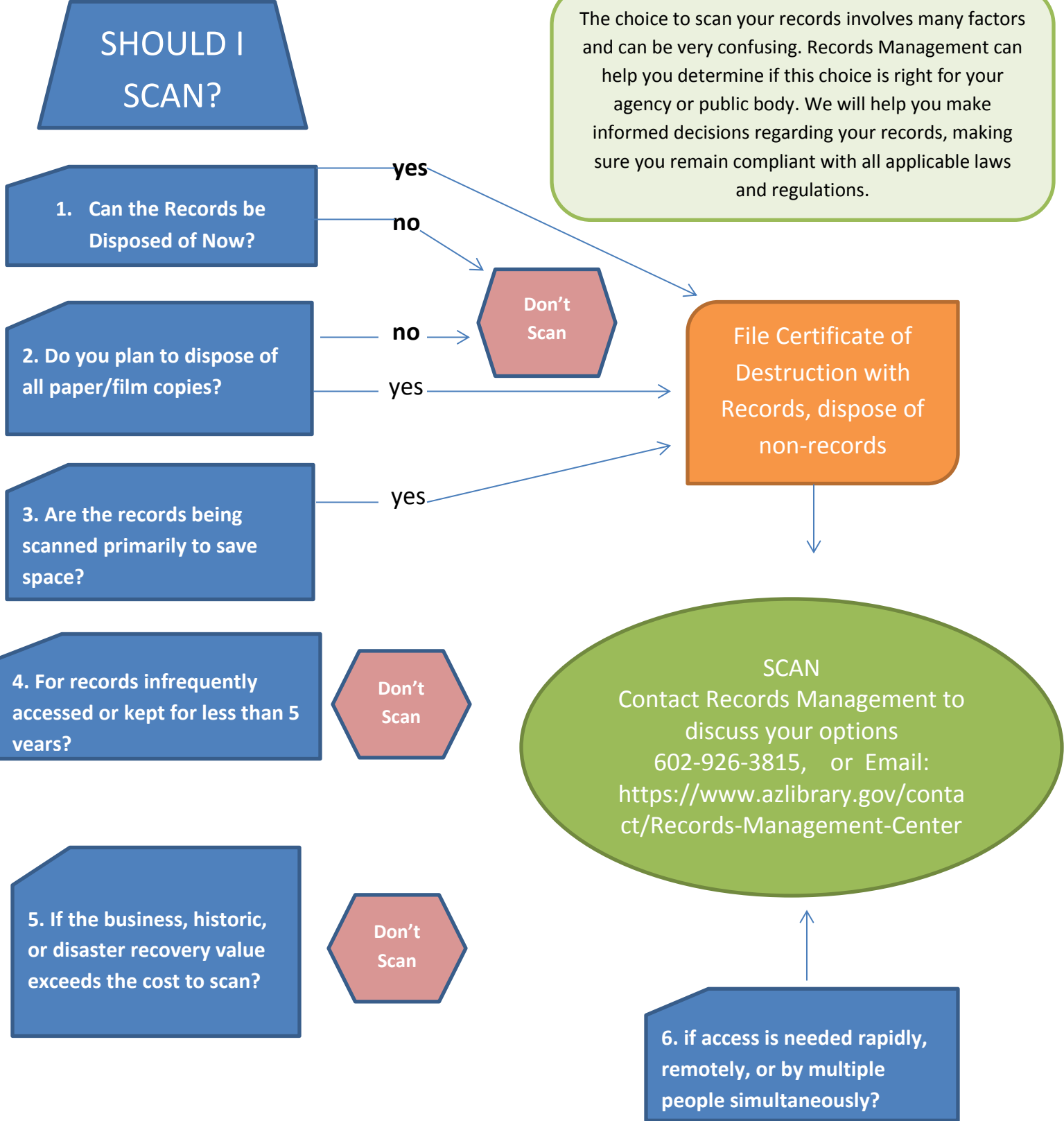


To Scan or not to Scan  
6 common options and solutions

The choice to scan your records involves many factors and can be very confusing. Records Management can help you determine if this choice is right for your agency or public body. We will help you make informed decisions regarding your records, making sure you remain compliant with all applicable laws and regulations.

# SHOULD I SCAN?



## To Scan or not to Scan

6 common options and solutions

1. **Can the records be disposed of now?** If the documents have no further operational value, they may be eligible for disposal and therefore unnecessary to scan. Non-records can be disposed of without State or Local approval. Records that have reached the end of their scheduled retention period may be disposed of after a Certificate of Records Destruction is approved and filed with Records Management. <https://www.azlibrary.gov/sites/azlibrary.gov/files/arm-form-Certificate%20of%20Records%20Destruction%208.2013.pdf>
  
2. **Do you plan to dispose of all paper/film copies?** A Certificate of Records Destruction needs to be filed and approved prior to the destruction of any original records. Contact Records Management to discuss your options. **Records Management 602-926-3815**, or Email: <https://www.azlibrary.gov/contact/Records-Management-Center>
  
3. **Are the records being scanned primarily to save space?** The costs of scanning, combined with the increasing maintenance costs of electronic records will often be far higher than the cost of storage for paper records. If the records in question are not heavily used, microfilming may be a good alternative – and less expensive – than scanning. Microfilm takes up very little space and can reliably deliver over 100 storage years under proper conditions. Contact Records Management to discuss which options may be best suited for you.
  
4. **Will the records be infrequently accessed or kept for less than 5 years?** It is seldom cost effective to embark on extensive scanning projects for records that are used very infrequently or those that are kept for only a short time. Microfilming is a better option for low-access records, and the storage costs for short-term papers records are usually cheaper than scanning.
  
5. **Does the business, historic, or disaster recovery value exceed the cost to scan?** The State and Local Records Acts require that all records be accessible for their full scheduled retention period, but the costs involved with the scanning process may not be justified in all cases. Costs to prepare files for scanning such as removal of staples and paper clips, creation of coversheets and formatting irregularly shaped documents effect the cost of scanning. Weighing the factors of risk-of-loss, the records' value and costs of either scanning or maintaining in paper will help inform your decision.
  
6. **Is access needed rapidly, remotely, or by multiple people simultaneously?** Electronic access is often the best method for heavily used records needing fast retrieval, full text search and cross referencing. However, indexing costs increase as metadata increases.