
Introduction to Records Management



**Brought to you by the Maryland State Archives and the
Department of General Services (DGS) Records
Management Division**



Setting up a good records management program may seem daunting, but your responsibilities are manageable. A little effort in the short term will save your office trouble in the long run by improving the efficiency of records access.

Regardless of your breadth of experience in government, we trust you will find something useful in the following information.

Overview

In this presentation, we will cover the following topics:

- Who we are
- Your role as a public official
- What records are
- What records management is
- Relevant laws and regulations
- Records management documentation
- Disposal of records
- Storage and transfer of records

Who Are We?

Maryland State Archives & DGS Records Management Division



Maryland State Archives

The State Archives is the repository for all permanent government records. The Archives collects, preserves, and creates finding aids for public and private records related to Maryland government and history.

(Annotated Code of Maryland State Government Article, Title 9, Subtitle 10)



Records Management Division

The Records Management Division inspects the records and studies the records management practices of government units to further the records management programs of each agency. They also manage non-permanent records at the State Record Center.

(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article Title 10, Subtitle 6)



Other Responsibilities

The State Archivist and the Records Management Division jointly adopt regulations to

- Define the character of archival records
- Determine the quantity of those records
- Set standards for the development of record retention and disposal schedules
- Provide for transfer to the State Archives or disposal of records

(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article §10-609)

Who Are You?

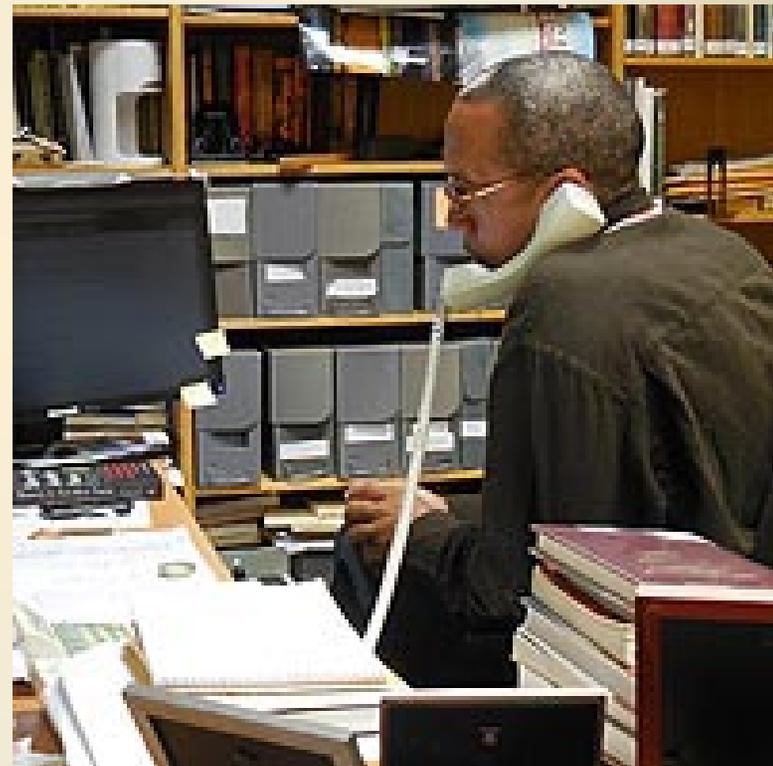
A Public Official!

Public Officials

Believe it or not, you are a public official!

The term "public official" is broadly defined and "includes an official of the State or of a county, city or town in the State." And so, whether you were voted into office, appointed, or hired by a government agency, you are a public official.

(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article §10-614)



Your Role as a Public Official

As a public official, you are responsible for promoting the continual, economic and efficient management of records.

Put simply: when you need a record, you need to know that it exists, where to find it, and how long you need to keep it.



Records

According to the Maryland Public Information Act, a record is any documentary material created or received by an agency in connection with the transaction of public business.

A common misconception is that all records are on paper. However, electronic forms of documentation, such as email, databases, spreadsheets, and websites, also are records. Less typical forms of media, like photographs or audio tapes, also may be records. Public officials are responsible for managing all of their records, regardless of type.



Non-Records

If a record is defined as documentary material connected with the transaction of public business, then anything that does not fit the definition might be classified as a non-record.

A few examples of non-records:

- Reference material, such as directories
- Photocopies of records made for convenience
- Blank forms
- Personal emails that aren't related to public business



Record Series

Records are organized into record series. These are groupings of similar record types that have the same function and are retained for the same length of time.

Record series can be general (such as fiscal records) or specific (such as time cards), depending on the preference of the agency.

A few examples of record series include:

- building permits
- original legislation
- meeting minutes



Restricted Records

Some records are restricted from public access by privacy regulations or laws such as the required denials in Maryland's Public Information Act. However, keep in mind that even restricted records are records and are therefore subject to the same records management requirements as unrestricted records.



Learning Check

Which of the following is a record?

- A. Photocopies of a work plan
- B. Blank forms
- C. Project spreadsheet *
- D. City telephone directory

Permanent vs. Non-Permanent

All records fall into one of two categories:

- Permanent – these document agency activities and decision making, ensure continuity of operations in the event of disaster, and protect citizen rights, and should never be discarded
- Non-permanent – at some point these will have no further value and can be destroyed



Permanent Records

A small percentage of records created or received by an agency have ongoing administrative, financial, legal, or historical importance that warrants keeping them beyond the time when they are needed for current agency business. Such records should never be destroyed. When these records no longer are needed for current operations, they should be transferred to the Maryland State Archives for permanent retention.

A few examples of permanent records include:

- o Birth Certificates
- o Executive Directives
- o Board Meeting Minutes



Non-Permanent Records

Most records are non-permanent. At some point, such materials outlive their usefulness and should be destroyed. Non-permanent records are stored by the creating agency or may be stored off-site in locations such as the State Record Center.

Proper records management ensures the documented destruction of non-permanent records that are no longer needed, as documented in an approved retention schedule.

A few examples of non-permanent records include:

- o Purchase requisitions
- o Personnel records
- o Parking tickets

Transitory Records

One type of non-permanent record is a transitory record. All government agencies create and receive a great deal of record material that is very temporary in nature.

Examples include:

- o personal notes from meetings,
- o correspondence that is not government related (e.g. email inviting you to lunch)
- o extra copies of reports, drafts, etc.



Learning Check

You are deciding whether a record series should be permanent. Which of the following determines permanent value?

- A. It was written before 1950.
- B. It was written before 2000.
- C. It documents the foundation of your agency.*
- D. Both B & C.

What is Records Management?



Records Management

- Records management is standardized administrative control of records to safeguard their existence from creation, to use, and during final disposition.
- Disposition is the final step in the records life cycle. Records will be transferred to archives or destroyed, depending on regulatory approval.



What are the Benefits of Records Management?



Benefits of Records Management



Proper records management promotes transparency and facilitates public access to the workings of your agency because it allows you to know what records you have, where they are located, and how they may be accessed.

More Benefits of Records Management

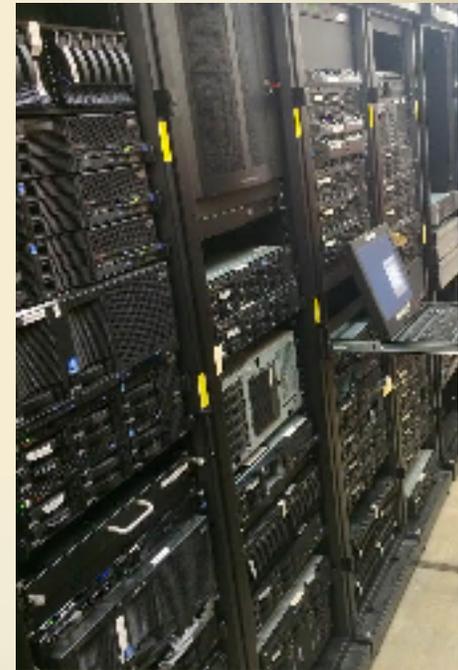
Proper records management also ensures that your agency is not wasting money by storing records which are of no use to the agency. It also makes records access easier and more efficient, because your agency will only have the records that it still needs.



Further Benefits

Records management ensures that you have the records you need in order to:

- Efficiently execute essential agency functions
- Fulfill financial and legal requirements
- Respond to record requests
- Meet legal requirements
- Ensure continuity in the event of disaster
- Maintain institutional memory



Learning Check

What would be an example of why records management is helpful to your agency?

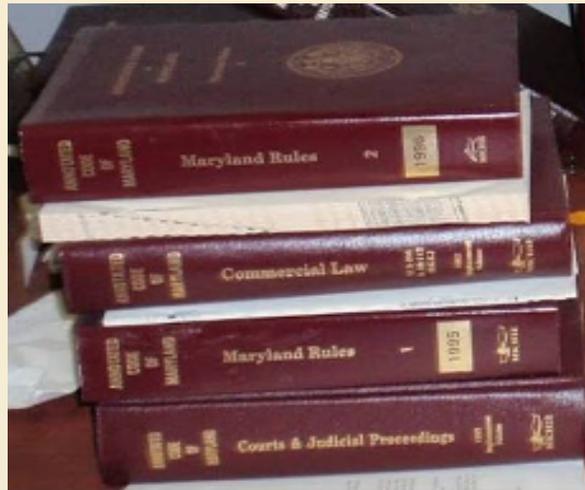
- A. It allows you to have control of your informational assets*
- B. It requires you to organize your records alphabetically
- C. It forces you to draw a map of all records in your building
- D. It presents the opportunity to send all of your records to the Archives

In addition to being a good idea, records management is required by law...



Annotated Code of Maryland

Several portions of the Annotated Code of Maryland ensure the proper maintenance of records.



Records Management Programs

By law, each unit of State Government must have a program that:

- o Ensures the security of its records
- o Establishes and revises retention schedules to ensure the prompt and orderly disposition of records no longer needed for operations
- o Follows regulations for the disposition of records



(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article §10-610)

Record Destruction

The Annotated Code defines the process and circumstances under which an agency's records may be destroyed. The law states that prior to destruction your agency must have the written permission of the State Archivist; your agency's approved, up-to-date retention schedule constitutes written permission of the State Archivist. After destruction, your agency must report to the State Archives that the destruction took place.

(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article §10- 614 through §10- 619)



Penalties

Apart from the disposal procedures laid out in the State Government Article, the law states that any person willfully altering, defacing, removing, destroying or concealing a public record, except under proper authority, is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years and/or a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

(Annotated Code of Maryland, State Criminal Law Article § 8-606)



Learning Check

As you are preparing to shred some documents, you stop to consider whether Maryland law allows it. Which of these requirements are found in the records management portion of Maryland's Annotated Code?

- A. Maryland only permits incineration of paper records
- B. Because the documents contain Social Security numbers, they must be kept permanently
- C. Your agency must have an approved retention schedule in place to shred any documents*
- D. The records are printed emails, so they must be transferred to the Maryland State Archives

COMAR 14.18.02

COMAR 14.18.02 describes the process for creating a retention schedule. The purpose of COMAR 14.18.02 is to:

- o protect essential records
- o preserve permanent records
- o secure the rights and privileges of citizens
- o ensure the legal admissibility of records
- o assure public access to records
- o promote agency accountability
- o document agency administrative history

Learning Check

You are asked to determine if a records management program should be started at your agency. What should guide your decision?

- A. A records management program is required by law
- B. Records cannot be destroyed legally without a retention schedule
- C. Both A & B*
- D. Neither A nor B

Records Management Documentation

There are two documents that are key to records management:

- Retention Schedules (complete with Record Inventory Forms)
- Disposal Certificates

Inventory Forms

The first step of records management is determining what records you have. You find this out by completing the retention schedule inventory forms. Inventory forms document information about each records series, such as its purpose, volume, format, organization, and legal restrictions.

<u>Instructions</u> –Type or Print a separate form for each new or revised record series. Forward with Records Retention Schedule (DGS 550-1)		DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION 7275 Waterloo Road, P.O. Box 275 Jessup, Maryland 20794 410-799-1930		AGENCY RECORDS INVENTORY PAGE _____ OF _____	
1. Department/Agency		2. Division		3. Unit	
DEFINITION - RECORD SERIES: A group of related records normally filed and used as a unit for reference as well as retention and disposition purposes.					
4. Record Series Title			5. Earliest Year/Latest Year _____ to _____		
6. Record Series Description (Briefly describe the types of information/documents/forms found in the series. Include the purpose or function of the series.)					

Determining Value

As part of the records inventory, you will determine whether the record series is permanent or non-permanent and how long your agency needs the record on-site to perform its duties.

Your appraisal should consider the record's:

- o Administrative value for carrying on an agency's work
- o Fiscal value for documenting financial transactions
- o Legal value for defining rights or obligations
- o Regulatory and statutory requirements
- o Historical value for illustrating your agency's origin, administrative development, and achievements

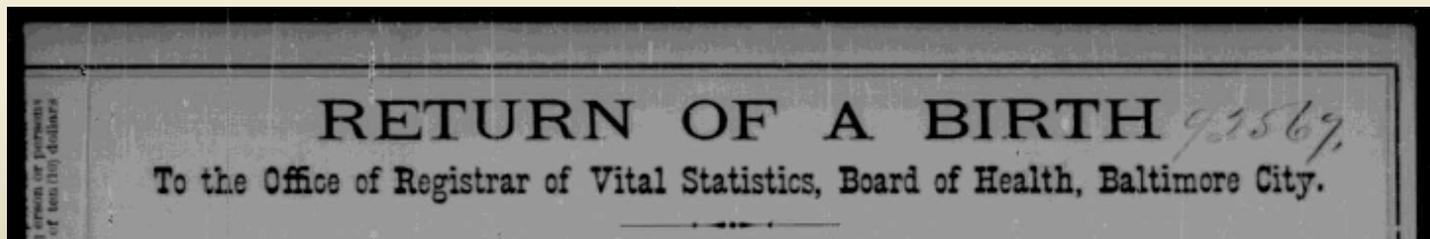
Wouldn't records management
be easier if we destroyed
everything right away?



Consequences of too short a retention

If records aren't kept long enough, your agency won't have the information it needs to perform its daily functions, and patrons wouldn't have the records they need to exert their rights.

Wouldn't it be awful if the State got rid of your birth certificate when you needed a certified copy of it?



Wouldn't records management
be easier if we kept everything
forever?

NO!

Consequences of too long a retention

Keeping records for too long leads to a number of problems:

- Ever increasing storage space and cost
- Growing difficulty of protecting records from deterioration, corruption, or unauthorized access
- Increasing challenge of retrieving records you need



Learning Check

Which of the following is a reason that your agency's records should be preserved permanently?

- A. They are in bound books.
- B. They promote accountability and transparency.*
- C. There are few enough to fit in a standard filing cabinet.
- D. They are electronic.

Retention Schedules

Once you have inventoried your record series you can complete your retention schedule. A retention schedule (formally referred to as a records retention and disposal schedule) lists every type of record that your agency generates and states the amount of time the records will be maintained by your agency before they are destroyed or transferred to the State Archives.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSAL SCHEDULE		Schedule No. 2666
Agency DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES		Page 1 of 3
		Division/Unit <i>OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL</i>
Item No.	Description	Retention
1	<u>Program Fraud Investigative Reports</u> A. Investigations/Overpayments: These files consist of reports and evidence obtained during the course of investigations into the allegations of fraud and abuse of Department of Human Resources (DHR) programs.	A. & B. Retain within Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for six (6) years, and then destroy.

Retention Schedule Approval

When you have completed your retention schedule draft you will submit it to the Department of General Services for review by the Records Management Division and the State Archives. If there are any questions or concerns we will work with you to revise it. Once the State Archivist approves your schedule it is an active schedule which authorizes your agency to transfer or destroy records as laid out in the schedule.

Schedule Approved by Department, Agency, or Division Representative.		Schedule Authorized by State Archivist
Date _____	Date _____	
Signature _____	Signature _____	
Typed Name _____		
Title _____		

DGS 550-1

Learning Check

When cleaning out a former staff member's office, you discover meeting minutes from five years ago. How would you find out if these are permanent?

- A. Consult your retention schedule.*
- B. Review whether an electronic copy exists. If it does, destroy the paper.
- C. Contact the former employee to make sure they took a copy with them.
- D. Check whether the minutes contain anything interesting. If not, destroy them.

Benefits of a Retention Schedule

Having an up-to-date retention schedule helps an agency by documenting each record series' importance as well as where it is, in what quantity you produce it, and how the records are arranged and accessed. This information is vital for making plans related to developing records management or filing systems, preparing for storage needs, and making disaster recovery plans.



More Benefits of a Retention Schedule

A retention schedule also means you don't have to store records that you no longer need:

- It gives an agency authority to transfer permanent records that you no longer need for current business to the State Archives for permanent retention.
- It gives an agency authority to destroy non-permanent records that have met their retention requirements.



Learning Check

Your agency conducts some “spring cleaning,” and finds a basement room full of boxed records that are not on your current retention schedule. What should you do with these?

- A. Better safe than sorry: leave them where they are
- B. Make a careful inventory, then destroy them
- C. Transfer them to the Maryland State Archives
- D. Amend your retention schedule to include these records and their disposition*

How do you destroy records?

Records Disposal

Records should only be destroyed in accordance with the terms of an approved retention schedule. If your agency does not have an approved retention schedule your agency may not lawfully destroy records.



Disposal Certificates

When records are destroyed in accordance with the terms of an approved retention schedule, the agency submits a certificate of records disposal (also known as a disposal certificate) to the State Archives.

Disposal Certificates document:

- o Type, date, and volume of records destroyed
- o Citation of retention schedule that authorizes disposal
- o Date and method of destruction

Submitted:	4/6/2015	Maryland State Archives	Certificate ID:	1378
Jurisdiction:	Maryland	Edward C Papenfuss State Archives Building	MSA ID:	SE55-3582
Agency:	Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	350 Rowe Boulevard		
Division/Unit:	Queen Anne's County Health Department	Annapolis, MD 21401	Page:	1 of 1

Proposal and Certificate of Records Disposition

Item No.	Description of Records (Same Title as listed on Schedule)	Authorization		Inclusive Dates of Records Destroyed	Volume	Date of Disposal	Method Of Disposal
		Retention Schedule No.	Section and/or Item No.				
1	Immunization Record (Adult Influenza) - Paper	1518	2	2003-2004	2 cu ft.	02/26/2015	Shred

Disposal Certificate Submission

For all offices of the Maryland Judiciary, the State Archivist must approve disposal certificates prior to destruction.

For non-judicial agencies, disposal certificates are submitted after the destruction.



Destruction Approved by Maryland State Archives

_____ Date

_____ State Archivist

Learning Check

If you are reviewing email, which of the following always should be deleted prior to archiving?

- A. Complaints from citizens
- B. Memos from your agency director
- C. Publications
- D. Lunch invitation from your colleague*

When do you transfer records?



Record Storage

Records should not be stored in offices for long periods of time, because without proper humidity and temperature conditions records can rapidly age and deteriorate.

Further, records are much more likely to be damaged by fire, flood, or neglect in an office environment.



Record Transfers

Permanent records must ultimately be transferred to the State Archives. Your agency should transfer any permanent records that are no longer regularly needed for your office's operations.

Non-permanent state records may be transferred to the State Records Center.



Learning Check

Your agency has valuable records that must be permanently preserved.
Where do you send them?

- A. Local historical society
- B. Maryland State Archives *
- C. Maryland Historical Society
- D. National Archives

Learning Check

You are estimating how long your agency's meeting minutes should be kept before being transferred to the Maryland State Archives. Which of the following should guide your decision?

- A. How long the records are needed for current business.*
- B. How many minute books you have.
- C. Whether the minutes were typed or handwritten.
- D. Whether the meeting occurred before 1990.

Conclusion

From elected officials to office clerks, all government employees are responsible for the records with which they work. We all need to do our part to preserve the documentary history of Maryland. Though it may sound challenging, adhering to good records management practices will be beneficial in the long-term. An office with easy and reliable access to its records will operate more efficiently and can attain the transparency of government and continuity of records that is an integral part of public officials' responsibility to their constituents.



Further Help

For more information, visit:

http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/intromsa/html/record_mgmt/welcome.html

Or Contact:

Department of General Services, Records Management Division

Phone: 410-799-4494

Email: michael.swygert@maryland.gov

State Archives

Phone: 410-260-6487

Email: msa.helpdesk@maryland.gov

