

Pennsylvania Association of
Conservation Districts

**Records Management
and
Electronic Records Best Practices**



Pennsylvania State Archives

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

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Records Management – What is it for?

1. Ensure that Information is Available from Creation to Disposition to Enable the Process of Governance, and
2. Protect the Interests of Government and the People it Serves,
3. At the Lowest Possible Cost

Records Management- What does it mean for me?

1. Ensure that information is available to support office functions/state business
2. Reduce the cost of doing business
3. Keep records **as long as necessary** then dispose

MUST WEAR

Recorder of Deeds
Daily Receipts
1995-1994-1993

Please
return to
Controller's
office

BANKERS BOX

Universal

705



First Rule of Records Management

Keep records **only as long as necessary** and then get rid of them

The longer records are kept, the greater cost and liability they pose to the office



What is a Record?



What is an Official Record?

- “Information, regardless of physical form or characteristic, that documents a transaction or activity of an agency and that is created, received or retained pursuant to law or in connection with a transaction, business or activity of the agency.” (General Records Schedule)
- “A written or printed work of a legal or official nature that may be used as evidence or proof; a document.” (Society of American Archivists)
- Records are evidence of your agency’s activities and relationships

What is not an *Official* Record?

- Unofficial published material used for reference
- Extra copies of documents used for reference
- Records created by other agencies
- Drafts
- Work copies
- Notes
- Blank forms

Record Types

- **Transitory Records**

- Little/no documentary value. Should be kept until the project/task is completed

- **Short-Term Records**

- Retained for less than 5 years. Usually related to current business and contracts.

- **Long-Term Records**

- Retained for 10+ years but not permanently. Usually related to personnel, long-term contracts or projects, special events, etc.

- **Permanent (Archival) Records**

- Has enduring historical, administrative, fiscal, or legal value and must be retained permanently.

<h1 style="margin: 0;">MANUAL</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor's Office</p>	
Subject: The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule	Number: Manual 210.9 Amended
By Direction of:  Michael Newsome, Secretary of Administration	Date: May 15, 2019
Contact Agency: Office of Administration, Office of Continuity and Records Information Management, Telephone 717.783.5055	

This manual provides Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agencies with retention period requirements and disposal authorization for records common to most agencies.

The authority for this manual is derived from *Management Directive 210.5, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Records Management Program*.

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This manual replaces, in its entirety, *Manual 210.9*, dated March 26, 2019.



Pennsylvania Records Retention and Disposition Schedule

- Where is the schedule?
 - Available on the State Archives website:
<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Records-Management/Pages/Policies-Laws.aspx>
- Authority?
 - Authorized by Management Directive 210.9 (2019), schedule maintained by the Pennsylvania Office of Administration
- What is this useful for?
 - Retention and disposal rules for all official state government records
 - Authorization to keep records in electronic format
 - Non-admissibility of officials following the manual

PA Department of Environmental Protection Records Retention Schedule

- Where is the schedule?
 - Contact the Department of Environmental Protection
- Authority?
 - Authorized by Management Directive 210.9 (2019), schedule maintained by DEP
- What is this useful for?
 - Retention and disposal rules for all DEP records
 - Non-admissibility of officials following the manual

DEP Records Schedule

1. Record Number

2. Title

3. Description

4. Retention

Agency: 035		Environmental Protection				
Bureau: 3533910000		Bureau of Safe Drinking Water-Technical & Financial Services Division				
Item Number	Description	Media Code	Vital Record	Agency Retn	SRC Retn	Disp Code
00001042	Teamsheets Consists of teamsheets from each Conservation District listing their contact and personnel information; e.g., directors, associate directors, staff, etc. NOTE: This information is to be shredded due to home addresses and phone numbers. Originals held in Central Office.	1	No	9Y	0Y	3
00001043	Dirt and Gravel Roads Consists of 5-year contracts, annual allocations, working capital advances, and requests for replenishment. Dirt and Gravel Road Program reduces pollution while promoting sustainable unpaved roads. NOTE: These records are public information and can be viewed at any time. Originals held in Central Office. * AGY - Keep until superseded or obsolete.	1	No	0Y	0Y	1

Records Disposal

- Non-permanent records may be disposed of if...
- Permanent records may be disposed of if...
- Non-liability of officers

Non-Liability of Records Officers

District staff cannot be held liable for the destruction of records in accordance with the General and DEP Record Schedules.

Section 507 of the Right to Know Law: Retention of records

“Nothing in this act shall be construed to modify, rescind or supersede any record retention policy or disposition schedule of an agency established pursuant to law, regulation, policy or other directive.”

Electronic Records

Electronic Records

- Same definition of “records” applies here
- All records regardless of format **must be** retrievable and accessible for the entire length of their retention period
- Email that meets the definition of a record is subject to the same rules as a record in any other format



Risks to Electronic Records

- Material instability
- Improper storage environment (temperature, humidity, light, dust)
- Overuse (physical contact media)
- Natural disaster (fire, flood, earthquake)
- Infrastructure failure (plumbing, electrical, climate control)
- Inadequate hardware maintenance
- Hardware malfunction
- Human error (including improper handling)
- Sabotage (theft, malware)

Migrating/Backing Up Files

It's much easier to restore a backed up file than to recreate a file from scratch

Be consistent with backups

Keep backups physically separate from other copies

Migrate before hardware/software is hard to maintain or replace

Make sure no information is lost or altered during migration



Permanent Electronic Records “The PDF/A Policy”

In order to keep permanent records in electronic form, offices must:

- Use PDF/A
- Keep at least three copies of records
- Store records in a live server environment
- Notify PHMC
- Agree to follow policy



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