

Records Retention and Storage

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KSHS Mission

KSHS, founded in 1875 by newspaper editors, has this mission: to identify, collect, preserve, interpret, and disseminate materials and information pertaining to Kansas history in order to assist the public in understanding, appreciating, and caring for the heritage of Kansas.

We certainly can accomplish this through records management.



KSHS Records Management Section of the Library/Archives Division seeks to provide the knowledge and skills training that will enable public officers to effectively manage and preserve records and comply with state and/or federal regulations.

This is facilitated through the publication of the State and Local Government Management Manuals in 1997; participation in quarterly State Records Board meetings to review and/or modify state and local records retention schedules; presentations across Kansas; the KSHS website; and correspondence by email, post, fax or telephone.



The Life Cycle of Records

<i>Creation</i> Receiving or generating information for the first time	<i>Active/Current</i> Using or referring to it regularly in the course of business
<i>Inactive/Noncurrent</i> Infrequent need, but kept for fiscal, administrative, legal, or historical purposes	<i>Disposition</i> The final fate of a record: how long will it be kept, by whom, and under what conditions



What is a Records Retention and Disposition Schedule?

The key to proper records retention and storage is a records retention schedule. That is:

A timetable that identifies a record grouped into series, listing its description, appropriate length of time to be retained, its disposition, and even authority or restrictions throughout its life cycle.

This has already been done for you . . .



County Offices Retention Schedules

- ALL COUNTY OFFICES AND STATE AGENCIES must adhere to retention schedules established by the State Records Board. There are few exceptions.
- Anyone can suggest amendments, additions, or deletions to KSHS records management staff to go to the SRB.
- Professional staff must coordinate the local program—designate a records officer (person who implements and manages the records). This usually is the County Clerk, with records custodians/officers in each county office.
- Need guidance? Contact the KSHS records management section or and/or other government entities; even public or private organizations or companies as appropriate.



What Does Your Records Retention Schedule Do?

- Ensure compliance with records laws
- Identify and protect vital records
- Determine appropriate records media
- Maximize use of appropriate storage
- Eliminate unnecessary handling
- Improve retrieval efficiency
- Provide security for restricted records
- Provide control throughout the records' life cycle, including their final disposition.



A Retention Schedule/Program Immediate Benefit

\$MONEY\$

Remember the *Rule of Thirds*

Implementing a records retention schedule will mean:
1/3 of records can be destroyed, 1/3 will be inactive/could be relocated, 1/3 will remain active.

2/3 of records could be destroyed or relocated to cheaper storage—no longer taking up a large “footprint” of prime office space!



Types of Retention Schedules

- General. Includes records series not found in all offices such as correspondence, or accounts payable, contracts, or subject files, etc.
- Office Specific. Includes records unique to an office, such as deed records, notices of approved intents to drill, emergency dispatch logs.



Sample Retention Schedule Entry



Responsibility and Authority

The records management officer (usually the County Clerk) should be given the responsibility and authority to coordinate:

- Implementation of a records retention schedule
- Legal destruction of obsolete records (usually authorized by the County Commissioners)
- Development of micrographics, electronic and data processing systems
- Training of staff or other persons on techniques



Responsibility and Authority cont.

It can be helpful to form a county records board/advisory committee comprised of:

- County Clerk
- Register of Deeds
- County Treasurer
- One or more County Commissioners
- County Counselor
- President of County Historical/Genealogical Society



The Support of Management

Support from the top down provides for a successful records management program. Management reviewing a records management proposal can be convinced by:

- Statutory and regulatory MANDATE
- Cost savings and cost versus overall benefit
- Consequences of a legally deficient records program (i.e., loss of rights, litigation, loss of time and money)
- Good publicity
- Space savings
- Better utilization of resources (people and money)



KANSAS RECORDS STATUTES

Major statutes that affect your records:

Government Records Preservation Act
(K.S.A. 45-401 through 45-413)

Public Records Act
(K.S.A. 75-3501 through 75-3518)

Kansas Open Records Act
(K.S.A. 45-215 through 45-229)

see these and more at:

<http://www.kshs.org/government/records/localgovt/recordslaw.htm>



Applicable Records Laws

Several state laws impact the management of local government records. Section 45-217 (f)(1) of the Open Records Act defines public records as *Any recorded information, regardless of form or characteristics, which is made, maintained or kept by or is in the possession of any public agency ...* See also K.S.A. 45-402 (d) and K.S.A. 75-3501.



Applicable Records Laws cont.

Section 45-217 (e)(1) defines a public agency as *The state or any political or taxing subdivision of the state, or any office, officer, agency instrumentally thereof, or any other entity receiving or expending and supported in whole or in part by public funds appropriated by the state or by public funds of any political subdivision of the state.* The term political subdivision is synonymous with local government. See also K.S.A. 45-402 (b).



Know What You Have

- Obtain management support
- Make sure personnel know about appropriate retention schedules
- Interview records custodians
- Inventory/survey all records (can delegate to records custodians and staff)
- Conduct legal research
- Appraise the records
- Properly apply retentions and dispositions



Surveying Steps

(if necessary)

- Select and train personnel required for the project
- Interview records custodians
- Examine records
- Complete survey form for each records series
- Review records statutes/regulations on a local, state, and federal level



Records Schedule Survey Sample



Completing the Inventory Form

- 1-3. Describe the records' organizational unit.
4. Indicate the most exact location of the record series.
5. Identify the records custodian and his/her title.
6. Enter the contact info for the records custodian.
7. Provide a title that most accurately describes the records series. Avoid pseudonyms or nicknames.



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

Ask yourself:

- Are the records interfiled?
- Do the records have a common function?
- Do the records have the same retention and disposition requirements?



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

8. Summarize the nature and purpose of the record series. Explain why a series was created and its function. Make a complete list of types of documents in a series. Avoid repeating the series title.
9. Be as inclusive with the dates as possible.
10. Provide information on the types of record formats.
11. How are the records arranged?



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

12. What are the records stored in? The volume of any container can be found by multiplying the length x width x depth and dividing the total by the number 1728.
13. Is the record still created, and at what rate of accumulation?
14. What is the record usage and how does it change? Low record usage could mean a change in record storage.



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

15. Is this the record copy or a convenience copy? Technology plays a large part in this.
16. Decide if restrictions exist, and cite exact reason.
17. Note any statutes or regulations that affect management of the record series.
18. Provide the recommendation for retention.
19. Provide the recommendation for final disposition.



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

20. Is it a vital record?

Vital records are essential to the continuity of services during a disaster or the restoration of daily business when it has been interrupted.

- Identify and select for protection records vital to the continuation of business
- Vital records can be accessed or reconstructed quickly to resume operations
- Part of agency disaster prevention plan



Completing the Inventory Form (continued)

21. Provide any significant information or additional comments about the records.

22. List the name of the person(s) who completed the inventory form. Be specific. Avoid initials.

23. Give the contact information of the person(s) who completed the form.

24. Record the date the inventory was completed.



Appraising Means Analyzing Records' Values

In order to establish the final retention and disposition of a record, it is necessary to appraise it through four key values:

- **Administrative**
–Used in performing current and future work. Includes policy and operational.
- **Fiscal**
–Financial transactions and accounting. Includes attention to audit requirements.



Appraising (continued)

- **Legal**
–Evidence of legally enforceable rights or actions. Includes legal decisions, opinions, agreements such as contracts, records of actions taken such as claims.
- **Historical**
–Even after possibly losing Administrative, Fiscal, or Legal value, these records provide authentic essential evidence of enduring value. Includes organizational origin and structure, policies or actions, and events.



How to Implement a Schedule

You have a schedule, what do you do with it?

- Maintain upper management support to enforce it (this could be you)
- Disseminate it via the appropriate media or mode (they are available on KSHS website)
- Train agency personnel to follow it
- Conduct an annual purge
- Establish or modify the filing system, for paper and electronic formats
- Don't be afraid to properly and timely destroy records



Creation of New Records Series

- **Reevaluation.** This could mean a regular committee meeting, meeting of the records officer with management, or other procedure where any additions or modifications are addressed.
- **Consistent training of agency personnel,** either annually or at intervals. It could be all encompassing or thematic based on need.
- **Reminders – calendar and fiscal years**



So What Do You Do with All These Records?—Disposition: Storage

Storage can mean:

- Physical/Hard Copy
- Ethereal/Digital

Storage can occur both onsite and offsite, using your own facilities and resources or by outsourcing, or by donating to another institution.



Disposition Types

- Stored on site
- Professional records centers
- Libraries/Historical Societies
- State Archives*
- Appropriate destruction by recycling, throwing, burning, shredding

*The State Archives' policy on local government records places priority on keeping originals local in most cases.



Disposition Permission

K.S.A. 45-404(d) allows for records that are not restricted to be given to a county historical society, a genealogical society, a public library, a college or university library or another local or regional repository in Kansas, determined by the state archivist to be suitable.

Counties can even designate official repositories, and utilize a levy to provide for historical records collections (K.S.A. 19-2647 through 19-2651).



Offsite Storage

Going offsite? Remember:

- Retention period (short, long, permanent)
- Climate conditions (if you're uncomfortable there, so are your records—fluctuations in temperature and humidity damage records)
- Fire/disaster suppression
- Security/bonded/insured
- Integrity of company/staff
- Cost: set-up fees, transporting records, storage, retrievals (standard, urgent, web-based), destructions, terminating the contract



Retention: Long v. Short

- Short=under 10 years
- Long=over 10 years
- Permanent=never dispose of
- Extremely Long/Permanent Records should be in a climate controlled environment, usually offsite. For security and accessibility, the best practice is to keep important originals or security negatives of micrographics offsite, and have a micrographic, photo or digital copy onsite for use.



Storage Standards

- The current standard for paper documents is 68 degrees and below 50% humidity.
- The current standard for non-color photos is 68 degrees F and 35% humidity; color photos is 40 degrees or below.
- The current ANSI standard for maintaining unused data-bearing digital media is 40 degrees F and 20% RH (ANSI).



Storage Containers

Store records of enduring value in acid-free folders/containers. Others may be stored in regular (cheaper) folders/containers.

There is currently a storage movement espousing the increased capacity and subsequent efficiency of folders on open shelving. That is correct, but it complicates transportation and exposes records.



Storage Inventory

Some organizations utilize magnetic tags in folders/boxes which eases inventory, but increases cost.

Barcoding and hand-held scanners that store and download information to inventory software certainly exist.

If you have the time, your staff can save money by creating databases tailored to your inventory needs. This is what KSHS does. It utilizes a series of databases for transfers, holdings, destructions, archives, etc.

Or, you can purchase inventory software. This may be tied to a RMA that keeps track of retentions or ECM that does it all.



Digital Storage Considerations

ELECTRONIC=ACCESSIBLE
MICROGRAPHIC=ARCHIVABLE

More and more, people rely on digital storage of information. Some records never even see hardcopy status. Some couldn't.

Governor Sebelius' Executive Order 03-02 mandates that the state employees' directory will be on the web only to save the state \$45,000.

A group of state employee professionals is currently working on a digital storage pilot project that in the very near future will be the home of digital format state publications.



Digital Storage Considerations

- KSA 75-3501 through 75-3518 allows optical disks as per SRB standards
- Check our many guidelines for electronic records on our web site at: <http://www.kshs.org>; contact Scott Leonard, Electronic Records Specialist, sleonard@kshs.org, 785-272-8681 ext. 280
- Indexing control is vital
- Compatibility/migration issues with changing technology
- Quality control
- Security



Summary

Records retention schedules are essential to a good records management program.

Governments, organizations, and companies all benefit in numerous ways from a timetable that identifies a record grouped into series, listing its description, appropriate length of time to be retained, its disposition, and even authority or restrictions throughout its life cycle.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS . . .

