

# **RECORDS RETENTION FOR PUBLIC PORTS: COMPLIANCE, BEST PRACTICES, AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

## **WPPA 2025 FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION SEMINAR**



# PRESENTER INFORMATION

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# BENEFITS OF MANAGING RECORDS

- ❑ Enables the agency to fulfill its mission
- ❑ Promotes cost-effective use of agency resources
- ❑ Strengthens transparent and accountable government
- ❑ Reduces agency risk

# WHAT IS A PUBLIC RECORD? (RCW 40.14.010)

## A **public record** is:

- ☐ ANYTHING made or received in the transaction of public business
- ☐ Regardless of format

Invoice? **Public record.**

Database entry? **Public record.**

E-mail? **Public record.**

Voicemail? **Public record.**

# How Do I KNOW WHAT TO KEEP?

Agencies have the ongoing legal authority to disposition public records using...

## RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES

***The Local Records Committee reviews and approves the retention schedules for local government agencies.***

(RCW 40.14.070; chapters 434-630 and 434-635 WAC)

# WHICH SCHEDULE(S) DO PUBLIC PORTS USE?

[www.sos.wa.gov/archives](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives)

Click *Help for Government Agencies* tab;  
then click *Other Government Agencies*

Port Districts

*Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE)*  
*+ Economic Development and Transport Records Retention Schedule*

# CORE (COMMON RECORDS) RETENTION SCHEDULE – SECTIONS

**This general  
schedule is  
divided into  
six functions:**

- 1. Agency Management**
- 2. Asset Management**
- 3. Financial Management**
- 4. Human Resource Management**
- 5. Information Management**
- 6. Records with Minimal Retention Value (Transitory Records)**

# RECORDS RETENTION SERIES/SCHEDULE

DISPOSITION AUTHORITY NUMBER (DAN)	DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS	RETENTION AND DISPOSITION ACTION	DESIGNATION
ED55-04-03 Rev.0	<b><i>Cargo Handling and Storage Documentation</i></b> Inventories, delivery and receiving records, orders, tonnage reports, stock transfers, warehouse receipts.	<b>Retain</b> for 6 years after end of fiscal year <i>then</i> <b>Destroy.</b>	NON-ARCHIVAL NON-ESSENTIAL OPR

**\* You cannot destroy or transfer records without a DAN**



Keep **PUBLIC RECORDS** for  
**MINIMUM RETENTION**

**Destroy**

or

**Transfer**

# HOLD IT!



Records responsive to

☐ **Litigation Holds** or

☐ **Public Records Requests**

must be retained by the agency until  
the matter is resolved.

# FIND THE RIGHT DAN

## How to find the right DAN

### 1. Ask clarifying questions.

- ☐ Is the record unique to your agency?
- ☐ **Who** is doing what to whom?
- ☐ **Why** was the record created/received?
- ☐ **What** is the record about?

### 2. Review your approved schedules.

- ☐ Browse the schedules by **table of contents, subject index, and/or keyword search.**

### 3. Reach out.

# DESTROYING NON-ARCHIVAL RECORDS - FAQs



Enrollees making corner joints in the logs for caretaker's house, State Parks and Recreation Commission, Photographs of Park Development, 1933-1938, SP4A, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives.

- ☐ Can our agency continue to keep Non-Archival records after they meet retention?
- ☐ Are agencies required to document their records destruction?
- ☐ What info should a records destruction log contain?

Find answers on our  
[How to Destroy Non-Archival Records](#) page.

# APPRAISAL/TRANSFER OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS - FAQs



- ☐ Can our agency continue to keep Archival records after they meet retention?
- ☐ Who do I contact to start the appraisal/transfer process?
- ☐ What info do I need to provide about the records?

Find answers on our [How to Transfer Archival Paper Records](#) and [Electronic Records](#) pages.

# BORN-DIGITAL RECORDS: THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENT

## Benefits of electronic records:

- ☐ Easier to duplicate/share – remote access, public access, security backup
- ☐ Less physical space required for storage

## Challenges with electronic records:

- ☐ Not human readable without the right tools
- ☐ Long-term preservation is ongoing, requires planning and expertise
- ☐ Tendency toward magical thinking

## Things that don't change between paper and digital records:

- ☐ Retention periods
- ☐ Importance of proper management (incl. policies, procedures, training)



# ELECTRONIC RECORDS RETENTION

- ❑ Electronic records must be retained in electronic format (WAC 434-662-040)
- ❑ Electronic records need to stay electronic to ensure:
  - ❑ Metadata about the record's authenticity is preserved
  - ❑ The record's usability (keyword searching, discovery, etc.) is preserved
- ❑ Records retention depends on the *function* and *purpose* of the record, not its format
- ❑ Check out our [Managing Electronic Records](#) page.

# WHAT ABOUT DIGITIZING PAPER RECORDS?

Requirements exist if your agency is:

- **Scanning** original paper records,
- **Retaining** the digital copies, **AND**
- **Destroying** paper originals.





# WHICH RECORDS CAN BE DIGITIZED?

- **Any** paper records can be digitized and destroyed (or appraised/transferred) early, as long as the agency's policies and procedures for scanning, indexing, and storing the records meet the [“Plan to Scan” requirements](#) found on our [How to Scan/Image Records and Go Paperless](#) page.



Secretary of State's office, 1913, General Subjects Photograph Collection, 1845-2005, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives.

# WHICH RECORDS SHOULD BE DIGITIZED?

## Ideal candidates:

- Records with Essential designation
- Non-Archival records with:
  - 6+ year retention periods  
*and/or*
  - Need for frequent access

Scanning is a **TOOL**,  
not a **SOLUTION**

Woman scanning paper records with a Kodak scanner, ca. 1982, General Subjects Photograph Collection, 1845-2005, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives.



# RETENTION SCHEDULE UPDATES

**We want to  
hear from you**  
😊

If there have been changes in...

- ☐ Language and terminology
- ☐ Business value
- ☐ Legal & regulatory requirements
- ☐ Agency functions

# WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU!



**WASHINGTON**  
Secretary of State

Washington State Archives

THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT TEAM IS  
HERE FOR YOU WITH  
**FREE CONSULTATION, TRAINING,  
& ADVICE.**

[www.sos.wa.gov/archives](http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives)  
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