

Records Management 101

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Center

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Objectives

After this training you should be able to:

- Apply the basic principles of records management to your job.
- Differentiate records from non-records.
- Locate the records retention schedule and categorize your documents into the correct records series.
- Design a file structure for your office records.
- Employ techniques to manage your e-mail records.
- Locate information and resources for responding to records requests.

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Records Basics

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What is Records Management? 1

Any management technique involved in **creating**, **maintaining**, **preserving**, and **disposing** of records in order to reduce costs and increase organizational efficiency.

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What is Records Management? 2

Knowing what you have,
where you have it,
and
how long you must keep it.

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Why Do We Manage Records?

Quick response to requests

Efficiency

Protection of important records

Reduction in storage costs

Legal protection

Legal requirement

Laws

- Public Information Act
- Open Meetings Act
- Local Government Records Act

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Who Manages Your County's Records? 1

Everyone! Depends on the county, but could include:

- **Records Management Officer**
 - This could be the elected constable but is usually someone else.
 - Administers records management for entire county or a particular office.
- **Department Heads and Custodians**
 - Sign off on records destruction
 - Create internal policy
- **Records Management Committee**
 - Advises records management program
- **Records Liaison Officers**
 - Communicate with Records Management department about policy/procedure

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Who Manages Your County's Records? 2

Your responsibilities:

- Depending on the county and your role, possibly making records policies.
- Following records policies and procedures.
- Properly storing and preserving records.
- Evaluating and following retention series for your records.
- Disposing of records when they have met retention.

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Policies and Documents for Your Office's Records Management Plan

- Every constable office must make sure all required record management plan policies and documents are in place/have been filed.
 - See Chapter 1, Section C of TJCTC's Recordkeeping and Reporting Deskbook for more information. (*Note that this is written about justices of the peace, but also applies to constables*).
- Make sure there is a plan for who manages and maintains the records, how to find a particular record, and for destroying records when it is time to destroy them.

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What is a Record?

Anything that:

- documents County or city business.
- is created or received by your County or Municipality.
- is either open **or** closed.
- on any medium or device.

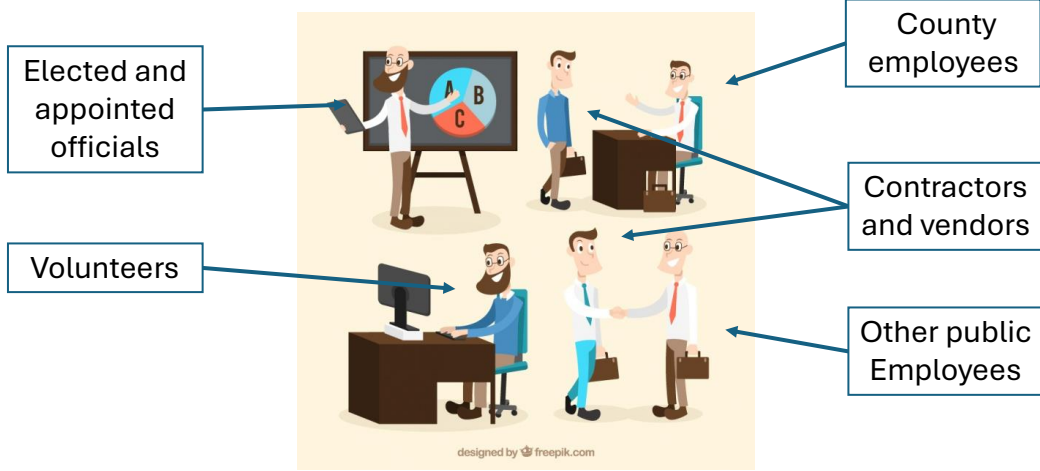
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What's *Not* a Record?

- Convenience copies: “Extra identical copies of documents created only for convenience or reference of research.”
- Copies of documents furnished to the public as part of a Public Information Act Request
 - The request itself is still a record
- Blank forms
- Library or museum materials
- Alternative dispute resolution working files

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A Record Is A Record Regardless of *Who* Creates, Receives, or Uses It.



A Record is a Record Regardless of the Format.

Where Are Records Being Created?

1. Papers
2. Phone
3. Tablet
4. Laptop
5. Sticky notes
6. Flash drive



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Where Are Records Being Stored?

1. Papers
2. Notebook
3. Computer
4. Camera
5. Photograph
6. Optical discs
7. Tablet
8. Phone
9. Flash drive
10. Sticky notes

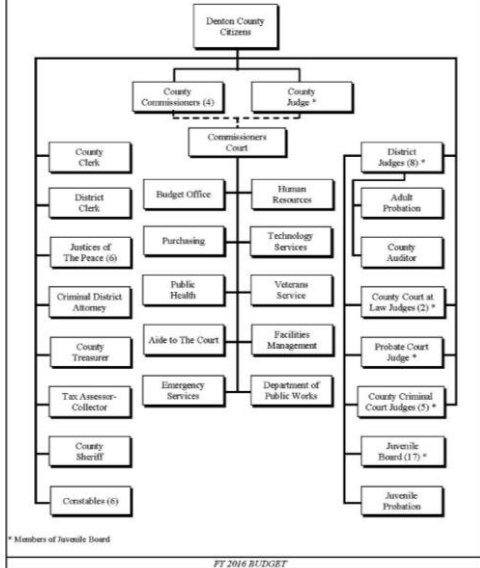


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Let's Play!

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DENTON COUNTY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Is this a record?

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From: Rebecca Casavant
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2016 9:17 AM
To: Records Management <RecordsManagement@dentoncounty.com>
Subject: Office Party

Is this a record?

We'll be having a party on Friday to celebrate all of our August birthdays. Lunch will be provided, but feel free to bring a dessert to share.

Rebecca Casavant
Denton County
Records Management
Phone 940-349-2370

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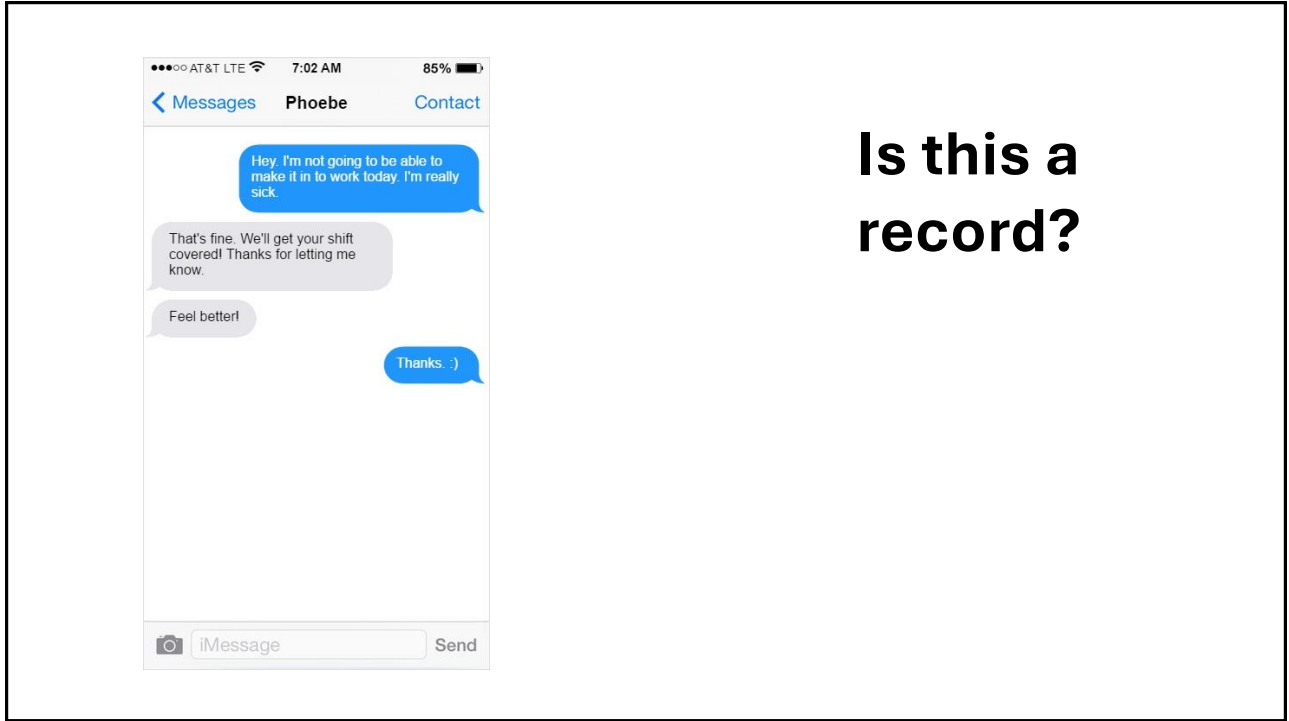
July 2016 Washington, D.C. Today 36°F/25°F Tomorrow 27°F/22°F Sunday 26°F/21°F

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jun 26	27 American Library Association Conference: Orlando, FL 9:30am * Employee Timecard Approval Due; Technology Services	28	29 All DTS	30 All DTS	Jul 1 All DTS	2
3	4 County Holiday - Independence Day; County Holiday; Technology Services	5 All Records Management	6 All DTS	7 All DTS 8:30am Supervisor Workshop; HR Training Room (HR Room); 401 ... 2:00pm Technology Services Staff Meeting...	8 All DTS	9
10	11 All DTS 9:30am * Employee Timecard Approval Due; Technology Services	12 All Records Management Leave for NAGARA	13	14 NAGARA Conference: Lansing, MI 3:30pm Canceled: Leadership Team Meeting - canceled on July 14 due to schedule conflicts; ETS DTS Conference Room Mat...	15	16
17	18 All Records Management Leave for TSAC Sessions	19 TSAC Courses / Austin, TX	20	21 All Records Management 10:00am AISM Membership Meetinsh... 11:00am 1:00pm Ice Cream Social and Games / DTS Break...	22 12:00pm Holly D. - Time Off; Holly Dolan	23
24	25 9:30am * Employee Timecard Approval Due; Technology Services ... 1:30pm Holly D. - Medical; Holly Dolan	26 9:00am Holly D. - Commissioner's Court Courtroom on the Square; Holly Dolan	27 11:00pm AISM Webinar - Automating one Back Office; The Fast Step in Creating True Digital Experiences ... Digital Transformation; Holly Dolan	28 2:00pm Records Management Module; Time 1:00pm; Time 1:00pm 3:00pm Canceled: Leadership Team Meeting; ETS DTS Conference Room Mat...	29	30

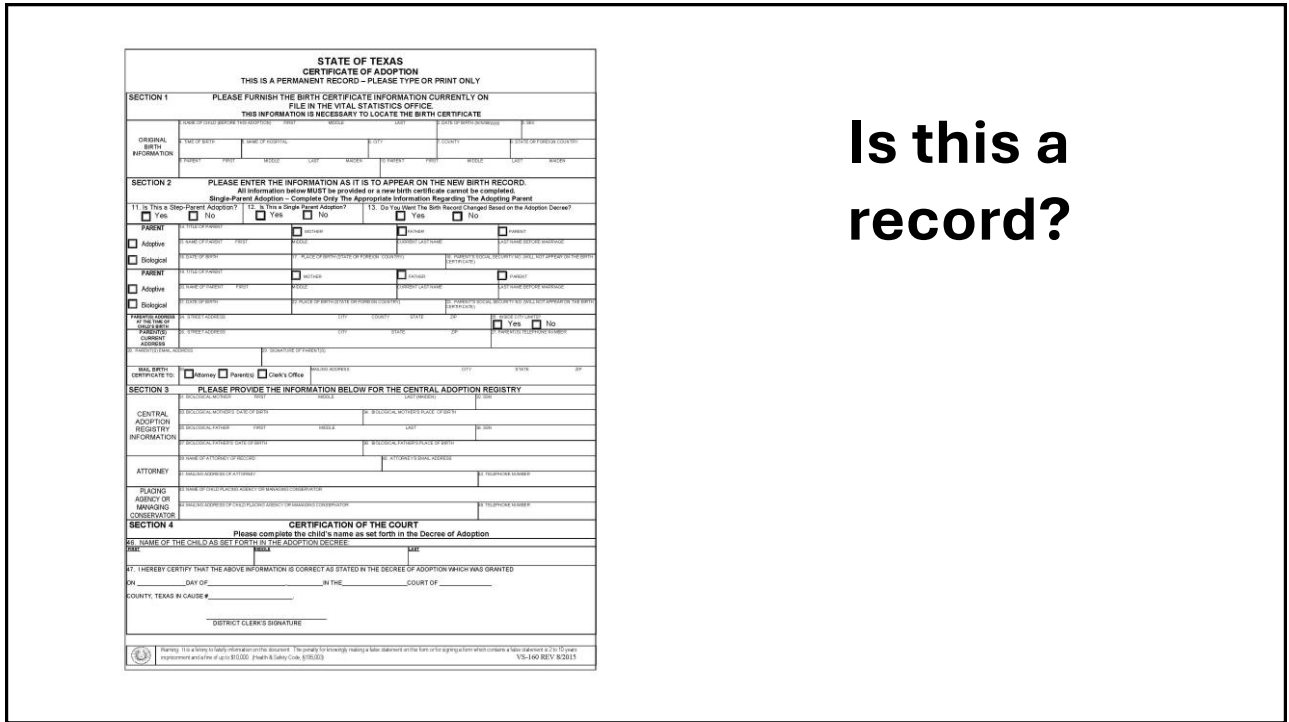


Yes

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Who is the Record Holder?

I send an e-mail to my entire department letting them know the status of a project that we've been working on.

Me

I submit a form to HR to update my direct deposit information.

HR

I receive an e-mail from my department head with the agenda for our upcoming meeting.

Dept.
Head

I send some boxes of records to the Records Management department for storage.

Me

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Professionalism and Records


- Make sure you are careful with what you say and put in writing.
- Example: Constable Wylie from Johnson County used his cell phone to discuss a Writ of Execution with the plaintiff. The defendant requested his text messages. Constable Wylie's text messages were all professional and appropriate. However, this is a good thing to keep in mind!
- Keep your communication professional so it does not come back to bite you later on!

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Retention

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What is a Retention Schedule?



A retention schedule is a policy document that lists each **records series** for an organization along with the **retention period** which dictates how long a records series must be kept.

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Who Makes the Rules?

- **The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC)** shall issue records retention schedules for each type of local government.
- Each schedule must state the retention period prescribed by federal or state law, rule of court, or regulation for a record for which a period is prescribed.

Government Code, 441.158

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Who Makes the Rules? 2

- A county can impose stricter requirements than what is in the TSLAC schedules, but not less strict requirements
- Destruction of local government records before the retention schedule is a Class A misdemeanor & possibly a third-degree felony (Penal Code, Section 37.10)
- Anyone destroying local government records without legal authorization may also be subject to criminal penalties and fines under the Public Information Act (Government Code, Chapter 552).

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Schedules Relevant to *Constables*

- Local Schedule GR – for records common to all local governments
 - <https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/slr/recordspubs/localretention.html#GR>
- Local Schedule PS – for records of Public Safety Agencies
 - <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slr/recordspubs/ps.html>

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Local Schedule GR

Retention Schedule for Records Common to All Local Governments

- Part 1: Administrative Records
- Part 2: Financial Records
- Part 3: Personnel and Payroll Records
- Part 4: Support Services Records
- Part 5: Information Technology Records

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Local Schedule PS

Retention Schedule for Records of Public Safety Agencies

- Part 1: Records Common to Public Safety Agencies
- Part 2: Law Enforcement Records

These are the two that apply.

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Reading the Retention Schedule

Record Number	Record Title	Record Description	Retention Period	Remarks
GR.000-01b	AGENDAS	Certified agendas of closed meetings.	2 year	By law - Government Code, Section 551.104(a).

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Retention Schedule Abbreviations

AV - As long as
administratively
valuable

CE – Calendar year end

CFR – Code of Federal
Regulations

FE – Fiscal year end

LA – Life of asset

TAC – Texas
Administrative Code

US – Until superseded

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Why Not Just Keep Everything?

Consequences:

- Physical and electronic storage costs
- Time spent on retrieval
- Responsibility for protecting records
- Legal risk

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Let's Try Finding the Retention Period for a Document!

Retention Period Hunt

How to find the correct record series:

- Review the document closely.
- Look at the title and other key information.
- Determine the purpose of the document.
- Use subheadings in the retention schedule to guide you.

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Find the retention period for both the copy and the original of this document.

- Hidalgo County Budget for last year?

Copy: No retention period.

Original: Permanent

GR1025-04a
BUDGETS AND
BUDGET
DOCUMENTATION

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Destruction

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How To Dispose of Records

Paper records

Non-confidential

- Recycling
- Landfill

Confidential

- Burning
- Shredding
- Pulping

Electronic records

Non-confidential

- Deleting

Confidential

- Overwriting
- Degaussing (magnetic media)
- Physical destruction

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Check with Your Records Management About Destroying Your Bulk Paper Records!



Can help to:

- Provide boxes
- Pick up your records
- Assist you with the retention schedule
- Provide fully-confidential destruction
- Document the process

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When To *Not* Destroy a Record:

Before the retention period

- Intentional destruction is unlawful except by a court order

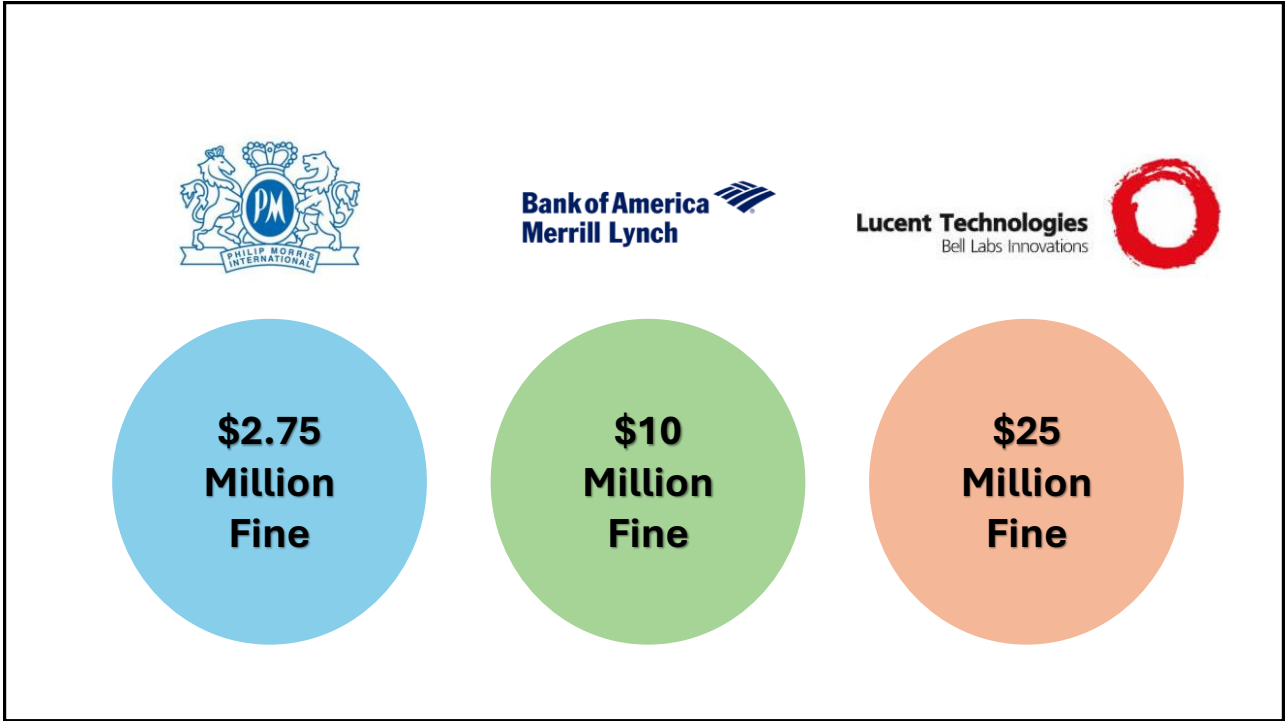
If there is a *legal hold* on the record because of:

- Litigation/Claim
- Public Information Act request
- Audit
- Negotiation

Historic record

- Dated before 1951
- From any period that, because of its notoriety or significance, might possess enduring value

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“Can I Destroy My Own Records?”

Yes, but it should be done:

The Venn diagram consists of three overlapping circles representing the conditions for record destruction:

- regularly** (orange circle)
- with documentation** (blue circle)
- according to the retention schedule** (green circle)

The intersections of these circles represent the combined requirements for destroying records.

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What if Records Are Accidentally Destroyed Before They Should Be?

- This would not be good! Try to avoid this!
 - Consider electronic backups and emergency protocols in case of unavoidable issues (like flooding, fire, etc.).
 - Have a system for double checking before anything is intentionally destroyed.

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Procedures for Accidentally Destroyed Records

- But if a record is destroyed when it shouldn't be, fill out a Documentation of Premature Loss or Destruction of Records.
 - More info here:
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrn/blog/2020/06/documenting-the-premature-destruction-of-local-government-records/>.
- If only a part of a record is accidentally destroyed before it should be, keep the rest of the record.

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Electronic Records

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Maintaining Electronic Records

- See Bulletin B: Electronic Records Standards and Procedures:
<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/slr/recordspubs/lgbullb.html>
- You must be able to access the electronic version **for the full retention period.**

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Source Document Destruction

- See Bulletin B, §205.008. Destruction of Source Documents
- Before destroying original, test:
 - That electronic version is complete and of good quality
 - That you are able to find and pull up the electronic version when needed
- If using a new software system, keep source documents for at least six months until you are sure the system is working properly

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Understanding Electronic Retention

Remember:

The retention period is based on the **content** rather than the **format** of a record.

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Managing E-mail

Only send it if you need to

Remember it is open to the public

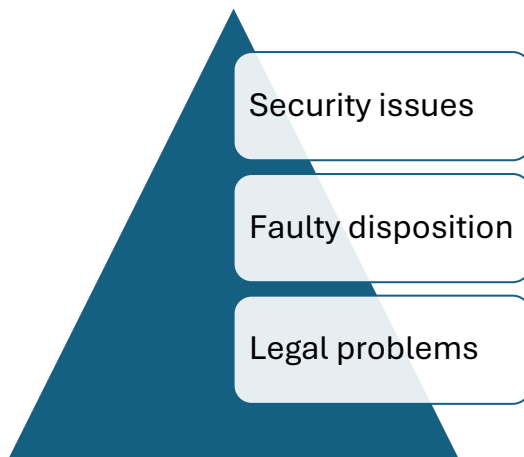
One subject per message

Effective subject line

Stick to the subject when forwarding

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Using Your Personal E-mail?



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Social Media in Public Records Law

Records laws are “future proof” because technology changes

Texas Public Information Act includes “Internet posting”

A citizen complaint is a citizen complaint whether it is sent by letter, e-mail, or tweet

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Applying the Law

Social Media is public record

Third-party content, such as replies and comments, is also record

Agencies are responsible for maintaining social media records according to their retention schedules

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Examples of Social Media Records

Emergency response

Public safety and assistance

Citizen feedback

Public records request

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Records Management Best Practices

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Is this you explaining your record policies?

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Best Practice #1

- **Identify** what records you should be keeping and group like records together.
- **Do a record inventory.** Look through TSLAC's record retention schedule. Do you have records for each item listed that applies to your office?
- Group your records together in **broad categories** – personnel records, financial records, property, etc.

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Best Practice #2

- **Organize** your records
 - Electronic vs. Hard copy
- ***How do you have your records organized? Can someone else find them?***
- **Index** your records in a systematic manner by subject matter (even if online).

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Best Practice #3

- Formalize records destruction practices and destroy records consistently.
- Clean house!
Figure out:
 - Who will be responsible for disposing of records?
 - How will they be disposed? What about online records?

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To Sum Up in 3 Words:

- Consistency
- Systematic
- Review Periods

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Scenario #1 – Your Office’s Shared Drive

- Your office’s shared drive is.... kind of a mess. Things are saved randomly by many different naming conventions. There are documents that are new and over 10 years old. Things are saved only in a few folders. You have been tasked with creating a better working shared drive.
- In groups, list 5 things you can do to make the records on the shared drive useful and organized.

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Scenario #2 – Clearing up Space

- You've just hired new office staff. Yay! The problem is there is no where to put them. The room you want to be their office is full of filing cabinets with records in no obvious system. You suspect that many of the documents are old or repeated copies. You also think you could scan them and put them online, but honestly it looks like an overwhelming job.
- In groups, list a few strategies for how you would tackle a huge organizing project like this.

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Resources

- Your Records Management Department
- TJCTC Recordkeeping and Reporting Deskbook
- Texas State Library & Archives Commission
 - <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slr>
 - (512)463-7610
 - slrminfo@tsl.texas.gov
- Local Government Code Chapters 201 – 205
 - (Local Government Records Act)
- Bulletin D: Local Government Records Act
 - <http://bit.ly/bulletind>

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Want More Training?

TSLAC's Records Management Training and Resources (including webinars):
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrn/training>

Records Management Training and Resources

Webinars

Our foundational records management training is designed to help agency heads, elected officials, records management officers and other staff establish and administer efficient records management programs. If you would like to be notified when new classes or webinars are scheduled, please subscribe to our blog, [The Texas Record](#).

Webinars

Our webinars are developed with the goal of supporting government records management programs in the State of Texas. We cover a wide range of records management topics and provide supplemental resources as well as pathways to further continuing education.

[View Our Full Collection of Archived Webinars](#)

Guidance Library

Our one page quick reference guides are developed with the goal of supporting government records management programs in the State of Texas.

[View Our Collection of One Page Reference Guides](#)

Online Classes

Records Management Basics for Local Governments
Remote and via Zoom

This course is an abbreviated mashup of our traditional in-person classes for local governments: Introduction to Records Management and Managing Electronic Records. Two days condensed to three hours! Attendees will learn the basic concepts of records.



e-Records Conference



External Resources



Webinars



Guidance Library



Online Classes



In-person Classes



Workshops by Request

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Want To Stay Informed?



The screenshot shows a blog post from 'The Texas Record' dated Jan 24. The title is 'New Webinar: Protection and Storage of Permanent Paper Records'. The post includes a sub-header 'Local Governments' and a main image of a server rack. The text discusses standards for storage of local government paper records. A blue arrow points to the 'SUBSCRIBE' button at the bottom of the post.

Read TSLAC's blog: *The Texas Record*

- Retention rule updates
- New training classes available
- Analyst tips

Subscribe – they'll email you new posts

<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/slrn/blog/>

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Have a Question or Need Advice?

- Ask the analyst assigned to your county
- Search for your analyst here:

<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/slrml/loc al/countylist.html>

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A

Anderson	Anne Poulos
Andrews	Rebecca Hanna
Angelina	Anne Poulos
Aramas	Andrew Glass
Archer	Brianna Cochran
Armstrong	Rebecca Hanna
Atascosa	Erica Siegrist
Austin	Andrew Glass

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Bailey	Rebecca Hanna
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Blanco	Bonnie Zuber
Borden	Rebecca Hanna
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Related:

- [Laws and Rules](#)
- [Local Retention Schedules](#)
- [Training Opportunities](#)
- [Blog: The Texas Record](#)

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STATE AND LOCAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT

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Thank You!

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