INTRODUCTION TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY AUDITORS FALL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 22ND 2020

https://www tsl.texas.gov/slrn
Records Management

Agenda

• Apply fundamental records retention principles to the management of electronic records.
• Meet the requirements of the Local Government Records Act and electronic records standards.
• Understand challenges of long term preservation of electronic records and determine appropriate methods for ensuring access.
• Learn how to identify essential records within your office.
• Discuss and understand mitigation strategies to protect records.
• Familiarize with steps to take following a disaster or when damage occurs.
The Records Life-Cycle

Benefits of Records Management

- Legal requirement and protection
- Workflow efficiency
- Timely disposition
- Cost reduction
- Protection of essential records

Some Consequences of Not Managing Records

- Legal risk
- Longer retrieval times
- Higher costs
- Ongoing obligation to protect records
- Potential criminal penalties
- Negative perception
A Local Government Record:

- Documents the transaction of public business
- Is created or received by a local government
- Is a record whether it is open or closed
- May exist in any medium

Non-Records

- Convenience Copies
- Blank Forms and Stocks of Publications
- Library or Museum Materials
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Working Files

An Electronic Record:

- Meets the definition of a local government record
- Any information that is recorded in a form for computer processing; machine-readable
Two Types of E-Records

BORN DIGITAL
- Original record is electronic
  - Word doc, MP3, webpage

DIGITIZED
- Original record was analog
  - Paper, receipt, audiotape, etc.

Metadata
- Data about data
- Part of the electronic record
  - Information about the e-record
  - Stays with record
  - Created by systems or people
A Record Series Is:

- A grouping of records that all serve the same function and are all kept the same length of time.

A Retention Period Is:

- The minimum length of time you must keep a record.

Elements of a Retention Schedule
TSLAC Local Retention Schedules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Records of County Clerks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Records of District Clerks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Records of Elections and Voter Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR</td>
<td>Records Common to All Local Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Records of Public Health Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Records of Public Junior Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Records of Justice and Municipal Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Records of Public Safety Agencies (Police, Fire, EMS, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW</td>
<td>Records of Public Works and Other Government Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Records of Public School Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TK</td>
<td>Records of Property Taxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>Records of Utility Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Schedule GR (General)

- 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

https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/localretention

MANAGING EMAIL
Managing Email Records

- Email is a format, not a type of record.
- Determine retention by the content of the email.
- Same criteria as paper records.
- Includes email sent on personal devices or in personal accounts if they document the transaction of government business.

3-Step Drill

1. Is this a record?
2. Is this related to my job?
3. Am I the custodian?

Step 1: Is the email a record?

Emails that are not records:
- Personal email
- CCs – Copies
- Unsolicited email
- Spam
Step 2: Is it related to your job?

Is the content of the email directly related to your responsibilities as a government employee?

**NO**
Forward and delete your copy, as applicable.

**YES**
Proceed to next step

---

Step 3: Are you the custodian?

Are you the person in your organization responsible for maintaining records related to this subject?

**NO**
Forward and delete your copy, as applicable.

**YES**
Proceed to next step

---

Who has the record copy?

- **Custodian**: The person who has the record copy, which needs to be kept for the full retention period.
- **Sender** is typically custodian of the record copy.
- **Recipient** may also need to retain a copy if email directs them to take an action or documents an action taken from the sender.
Identifying email records

- Identify only the records that apply to you
  - What types of emails do you send or receive?
- Avg. fewer than 10 applicable records series
- Think about your job functions
  - "Is this email related to any of my job functions?"

Retention Conscious Email Folders

Retention Conscious Email File Plan Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence 2020 - 3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General: 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine: 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Records: 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State: 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule Reviews: 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Projects: All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training: FE+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Information Requests: 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transitory Information

- Temporary usefulness - Not essential to documenting business, fulfilling statutory obligations, and not regularly filed within your office’s recordkeeping system
- Examples:
  - Outlook meeting reminder
  - Telephone message
  - “Where are you?” text

Legal Obligations for Long-term Maintenance of E-Records

Statutes
Local Government Code Chapter 205

Rules
13 TAC §§ 7.71-7.79

https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/pubs/bulletinb

Bulletin B Applicability

“The commission shall adopt rules establishing standards and procedures... necessary to ensure the availability, readability, or integrity of the local government record data.”

[Diagram of Bulletin B Applicability]
Access Strategies

“The migration strategy for upgrading equipment as technology evolves must be documented and include…” – TAC § 7.76(a)

Backward Compatibility

Same document can be opened, viewed, and edited in newest version

Document was created in Word 97

Strategy: Backward Compatibility

The ideal method of providing long-term access to electronic records.
Strategy: Computer Museum

Preserve the computing environment that is required to retrieve and read the electronic records.

- Hardware
- Software
- Operating systems
- Disk drives
- Documentation

**BENEFITS:**

- Source document unchanged = lower risk of data loss
- No up-front costs
- For obsolete, proprietary, homegrown software: might be best (only) option

**CHALLENGES:**

- Technical expertise needed
- Potentially costly to service old equipment / pay programmer

Strategy: Recopying

- Copy the data to new media periodically; also called ‘refreshing’
  - Same medium, from (e.g.) an old CD to a new CD
Rules for Recopying

Optical (CDs/DVDs): At least every 10 years

Magnetic: At least every 3 years

Floppy: Not allowable for records w/ 10+ years retention

13 TAC § 7.76(a)-(d)

Strategy: Recopying

BENEFITS:
• Source document unchanged: lower risk of data loss
• Relatively low-cost
• Relatively easy

CHALLENGES:
• Not as safe as regularly backed-up network storage
• Small risk of data loss in recopying process
• Doesn’t protect against storage media obsolescence
• Doesn’t protect against file format obsolescence

Strategy: Media Conversion

• Move data off of obsolete storage media

13 TAC § 7.76(a)-(b)
Strategy: Media Conversion

**BENEFITS:**
- Source document unchanged: lower risk of data loss
- Relatively low-cost
- Relatively easy
- Protects against storage media obsolescence

**CHALLENGES:**
- Not as safe as regularly backed-up network storage
- Small risk of data loss in recopying process
- Doesn’t protect against file format obsolescence

PDF/A: PDF Archival (.pdf)
OpenDocument Text File (.odt)

Strategy: Format Migration

- File formats matter!
  - The file format you choose will affect your long-term records management abilities
  - Choose a preservation format for records with 10+ years retention

- Sustainability of Digital Formats – Library of Congress
  - [https://www.loc.gov/preservation/digital/formats/](https://www.loc.gov/preservation/digital/formats/)
  - File formats in the Texas Digital Archive
    - [https://tla.access.preservica.com/tla/about-file-formats/](https://tla.access.preservica.com/tla/about-file-formats/)
Strategy: Microfilming

- Create a microfilm copy
  - Life expectancy of 500 years when stored properly
- Digital Archiving services at TSLAC:
  - [https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/imaging-micro](https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/imaging-micro)

Strategy: Microfilming

**BENEFITS:**
- Life expectancy of 500 years in proper storage conditions
- Creates unalterable, authoritative copy
- Protects against technology change
- Can be scanned back into digital format
- Space-saver

**CHALLENGES:**
- Slow retrieval time: not for frequently-used documents
- Can degrade if not stored properly
- Loss of functionality

Strategy: Print to paper

- Alkaline paper recommended
- Must follow storage standards for permanent records – Bulletin F
**Strategy: Print to paper**

**BENEFITS:**
- Life expectancy of 1,000+ years in proper storage conditions.
- Protects against technology change.
- Printing rarely requires technological expertise.
- Can be scanned back into digital format.

**CHALLENGES:**
- Takes up physical space.
- Not as searchable as electronic documents.
- Potential loss of metadata.
- Potential loss of functionality.
- Must adhere to Bulletin F

---

**Recap: Access Strategies**

**DIGITAL**
- Backward Compatibility
- Computer Museum
- Recopying
- Media Conversion
- Format Migration

**ANALOG**
- Microfilm
- Print to Paper

---

**Emergency Preparedness and Recovery**

- Identify essential records.
- Discuss mitigation strategies in order to protect records.
- Be familiar with steps to take after a disaster and damage occurs.
“...identify and take adequate steps to protect the essential records of the office;”
Bulletin D; § 203.002. Duties and Responsibilities of Elected County Officers

“...facilitate the identification and protection of essential local government records;”
Bulletin D; § 203.021. Duties and Responsibilities of Governing Body

BULLETIN F:
“...preserve valuable historic records by establishing minimum and enhanced storage standards for pre-1951 court records and permanent records held by local governments.”

- Records in storage
- Paper records

https://www.tsl.texas.gov/srm/pubs/bulletinf

Required Minimum Storage Conditions

- Environmental hazards and unauthorized access
- Direct exposure to sunlight
- Contact with the floor
- Fire *
- Flood water *

* Required only for structures built after April 7, 2015.
Optional Enhanced Storage Conditions

- Operational fire suppressant system
- Pest management program
- Use appropriate shelving
- Install UV filters and limit fluorescent light
- Store records in archival quality boxes
- Environmental controls for temperature and humidity

Environmental Controls

- Monitor the storage area daily for consistent temperatures and humidity levels.
  - Maximum temperature of 70°
  - Constant relative humidity of 45%.
- High temps speed up deterioration.
- Fading – light weakens paper and damage cannot be reversed.
- Humidity – too high or too low is bad.

Storage Security

- Keep sensitive records secure in a locked, limited-access area.
- Establish rules or procedures for allowing access to storage areas.
- Lost or damaged records may be unrecoverable.
Storage Site Inspections

- Make it routine.
  - Quarterly, semi-annual, annual
- Identify potential hazards and be pro-active!
  - Pests
  - Water/mold
  - Proper shelving
  - Fire-protection and suppression
- Create or update a disaster plan.

Essential Records Are Necessary To:

- Resume or Continue Operations
  - Delegations of authority
  - Rules, Policies, and procedures
  - Prison, Jail, Parole Records
- Recreate Legal and Financial Status
  - Contracts and Leases
  - Accounts Receivable / Payable
  - Insurance Records
- Fulfill Obligations
  - Deeds, Mortgages, Land Records
  - Birth and Marriage Records
  - Active Court Proceedings

Types of Essential Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DYNAMIC</th>
<th>STATIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Updated often, protect most current versions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - Phone tree
  - Payroll
  - Disaster plans |
| Rarely, if ever, updated. |
  - Board meeting minutes
  - Policies and directives
  - Birth records |
FACTORS FOR IDENTIFYING ESSENTIAL RECORDS

- Essential functions
- Stakeholders
- Records custodianship
- Relevant statutes, regulations, and standards

Identify Essential Functions

Know the Needs of Stakeholders

- Who depends on you?
- Who provides mission-critical support?
- What do they need to access?
- When do they need it?
Know Your Records

- Record Inventory
- Retention Schedule

Due Diligence

- Applicable Statutes and Ordinances
- State/Local/Federal Regulations
- Standards [ANSI/ARMA 2010]

Prioritize Access

- Priority 1: First 0-12 hours
  - What do we need for emergency operations?
- Priority 2: First 12-72 hours
  - What do we need to resume and continue business functions?
- Priority 3: After first 72 hours
  - What do we need to fulfill legal, audit, public responsibilities?
DISASTERS AS BIG AS TEXAS

Tornados

Wind and Dust Storms
Intentional Destruction

TECHNOLOGY THREATS
• Unsecured networks, viruses, denial-of-service attacks
• Ransomware – a cyberthreat to publish records or block access to them by demanding a sum of money as ransom.

Ransomware Prevention
• Records-related tips from DIR:
  o Modernize legacy systems and ensure software is as current as possible.
  o Limit the granting of administrative access.
  o Perform regular, automated backups and keep the backups segregated.
  o Want more guidance? Contact the Office of the Chief Information Security Officer at DIRSecurity@dir.texas.gov.
RECOVERY

• How to deal with damages if they occur

Recovery Options

DO-IT-YOURSELF  
• Low expense  
• Endangerment of staff  
• Endangerment of records  
• Low item volume

HIRE A VENDOR  
• High item volume  
• Preservation of records  
• Safety of staff  
• High expense

Worst Case Scenarios

For records that cannot be salvaged:
• Document the accidental damage/destruction of records that have not met retention.  
• Call your analyst for further guidance.
Update Documentation Regularly

- Procedures and plans
  - Personnel, delegation of authority
  - Lists of hardware and software vendors
  - Equipment and records inventories

More Emergency Planning Resources

- Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM)
  - http://www.dps.texas.gov/dem/
  - Training and assistance to local governments in emergency planning
- Texas Historical Records Advisory Board (THRAB)
  - https://www.tsl.texas.gov/thrab
  - Promotes awareness and support for records management and preservation efforts. Assists in procuring funding from National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - COOP templates for non-federal entities

E-Records Conference

- Co-sponsored by TSLAC and DIR since 2000
- For government records managers and IRMs
  - https://www.tsl.texas.gov/irm/training/erecords
- Recaps of conference sessions on The Texas Record blog
RIM Industry Associations:
- ARMA International: www arma.org
- AIIM (Association for Intelligent Information Management),
  http://www.aiim.org/
- NAGARA (National Association of Government Archives and Records
  Administrators) https://www.nagara.org/

The Texas Record Blog
https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/blog/

Subscribe for:
- Announcements
- Upcoming training
- New services
- Featured questions

QUESTIONS?
Find the analyst assigned to your county:
https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/contact

Call:
(512) 463-7610

Email:
slrminfo@tsl.texas.gov