

RECORDS MANAGEMENT TERMS

(12/8/2011)

RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Office of the Public Records Administrator (OPRA): The division of the Connecticut State Library responsible for the design and implementation of the Records Management Program for all state agencies within the Executive Branch, and the towns, cities, boroughs, districts, quasi-public agencies, and other political subdivisions of the state. The office oversees the life cycle of records, including developing policies and standards for records creation, maintenance, and storage for records in all formats, including paper and electronic; establishing records retention schedules based on administrative, fiscal, legal, and historical/research values; setting regulations for the construction of municipal records vaults, the creation of permanent land maps filed with the town clerks, and the annual examination of the land record indexes; publishing guidelines and manuals to keep government agencies informed about records management issues and requirements; training government employees on a wide range of records management issues; performing inspections to ensure compliance with public records statutes and regulations; approving public records storage facilities and municipal vaults; operating the State Records Center for the safe storage of state agency records; administering grants to municipalities to enhance or improve the preservation and management of local historic documents through the Historic Documents Preservation Program; and approving the disposition of records, in coordination with the State Archivist. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords.

State Archives: The division of the Connecticut State Library responsible for acquiring and preserving the historical records of the three branches of state government to document the evolution of state public policy and its implementation, the rights and claims of citizens, and the history of Connecticut and its people. The State Archivist assists the Public Records Administrator in reviewing all records retention schedules issued by, and records disposition authorizations submitted to, the Office of the Public Records Administrator. See www.cslib.org/archives.

State Records Center: The State Records Center is a facility administered by the Office of the Public Records Administrator for the centralized storage of inactive state agency records. The facility has a storage capacity of over 75,000 cubic feet. The State Records Center provides storage, interfiling, records retrieval and re-filing, and records destruction services free of charge to state agencies. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords/records.htm.

Records Management Liaison Officer (RMLO): Each state agency must appoint an RMLO to coordinate records management activities on the agency level and to serve as a liaison with the Office of the Public Records Administrator pursuant to CGS §11-8a(f). This person is responsible for creating guidelines for maintaining agency records; preparing and submitting records retention schedules to the Office of the Public Records Administrator; reviewing agency disposition authorizations; transferring inactive records to the State Records Center or other approved off-site public records storage facilities; disseminating records management information to agency personnel; inventorying or supervising agency records inventories; coordinating the implementation of records technology; maintaining control files of records retention schedules, disposition authorizations, and records transfers; and coordinating transfers of historical records to the State Archives. It is highly recommended that this individual be in a position within the agency to have considerable knowledge of agency functions and the records created to fulfill that function.

Assistant RMLO: Assistant RMLOs are responsible for assisting the RMLO with disseminating information within the agency; assisting the RMLO with creation, maintenance and use of records within the agency; and assisting the RMLO with disposition of records, including reviewing *Records Disposition Authorizations* (Form RC-108), transferring records to the State Records Center, and transferring records to the State Archives. Assistant RMLOs have the authority to sign *Records Disposition Authorizations*.

Public Records Policy: A policy issued by the Office of the Public Records Administrator (formerly known as a General Letter). Public Records Policies provide guidance on topics such as microfilming, digital imaging, and off-site records storage. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords/opraforms.htm#guidelines.

Public Records Storage Facility: A facility operated by an agency or commercial vendor that is located away from the agency's primary office or place of business. Types of facilities include a) State Records Center operated by the Connecticut State Library; b) Facilities operated by, or on behalf of, one or more agencies other than the State Library; and c) Commercial records storage facilities operated by private entities.

Certificate of Compliance: A form used by an agency to certify that it adheres to policies or procedures issued by the Office of the Public Records Administrator (usually in the form of a Public Records Policy). Certificates are currently used for Optical / Digital Imaging, Microfilming, Land Record Examinations, and Disposition of Information Systems Records. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords/opraforms.htm#guidelines.

Records Management: "The field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records." [Source: ARMA.]

RECORDS

Public Record: "Any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, received or retained by a public agency, or to which a public agency is entitled to receive a copy by law or contract under section 1-218, whether such data or information be handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, printed, photostated, photographed or recorded by any other method." [Source: CGS §1-200 (5).]

Official Record Copy: "The original or official copy of a record that is retained for legal, operational, or historical purposes." For example, if records are kept in both electronic and hard copy format, the agency must identify the official record copy. [Source: ARMA.]

Records Custodian: "The individual or organization having possession of and responsibility for the care and control of material." [Source: SAA.]

Active Record: "A record needed to perform current operations, subject to frequent use, and usually located near the user." [Source: ARMA.]

Inactive Record: "A record no longer needed to conduct current business but preserved until it meets the end of its retention period." [Source: ARMA.]

Transitory Record: "A record that has little or no documentary or evidential value and that need not be set aside for future use." [Source: ARMA.]

Non-record: "Item that is not usually included within the scope of official records." Examples of non-records are extra (duplicate) copies kept only for convenience, reference materials, and blank forms. [Source: ARMA.]

Life Cycle of Record: "Distinct phases of a record's existence, from creation to final disposition." This usually consists of creation, maintenance and use, and final disposition. [Source: ARMA.]

Hard Copy: "Synonymous with paper." [Source: ARMA.]

Essential / Vital Records: "Records that are fundamental to the functioning of an organization. Certain vital records contain information critical to the continued operation or survival of an organization during or immediately following a crisis. Such records are necessary to continue operations without delay under abnormal conditions. They contain information necessary to recreate an organization's legal and financial status and to preserve the rights and obligations of stakeholders." [Source: *Vital Records*, p. 6.]

APPRAISAL

Appraisal: "Process of evaluating records to determine their retention based on administrative, legal, and fiscal requirements and historical value." [Source: ARMA.]

Administrative Value: "The usefulness of a record in the conduct of an organization's business or the value of a record for the purpose for which it was created." [Source: ARMA.]

Legal Value: "Usefulness of a record in complying with statutes and regulations, as evidence in legal proceedings, as legal proof of business transactions, or to protect an individual's or organization's rights and interests." [Source: ARMA.]

Fiscal Value: "Worth of records for the conduct of current or future financial business and/or evidence thereof." [Source: ARMA.]

Historical Value: “Determination that records possess value in documenting the history of an organization and are thus worthy of permanent preservation.” [Source: ARMA.]

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES

Records Retention Schedule: “A comprehensive list of records series, indicating for each the length of time it is to be maintained and its disposition.” There are two types of records retention schedules in Connecticut: General Schedules and Agency Specific Schedules. [Source: ARMA.]

Records Retention Schedule, General: “A records schedule governing specified series of records common to several or all agencies or administrative units of a corporate body, which are sometimes characterized as functional retention schedules.” There are currently 9 schedules for state agencies and 16 schedules for municipalities. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords/retstate.htm or www.cslib.org/publicrecords/retschedules.htm. [Source: ARMA.]

Records Retention Schedule, Agency Specific: A records schedule governing specific series of records unique to an agency. For agency specific retention schedules created after July 1, 2007, see www.cslib.org/publicrecords/retstate.htm. For agency specific retention schedules issued prior to July 1, 2007, contact the Office of the Public Records Administrator.

Records Inventory: “A detailed listing that includes the types, locations, dates, volumes, equipment, classification systems, and usage data of an organization's records in order to evaluate, appraise, and organize the information.” [Source: ARMA.]

Records Series: “A group of related records filed/used together as a unit and evaluated as a unit for retention purposes, e.g., a personnel file consisting of an application, reference letters, benefit forms, etc.” [Source: ARMA.]

Disposition: “A final administrative action taken with regard to records, including destruction, transfer to another entity, or permanent preservation.” Complete and submit a *Records Disposal Authorization* (Form RC-075 for municipalities / Form RC-108 for state agencies) to request permission for disposition of public records. Disposition may involve destruction of public records or transfer of records to another record custodian. See www.cslib.org/publicrecords/opraforms.htm. [Source: ARMA.]

On-site Storage: “Storage of records on the premises of the organization.” [Source: ARMA.]

Off-site Storage: “A potentially secure location, remote from the primary location, at which inactive or vital records are stored.” For the required minimum standards for public records storage facilities, see www.cslib.org/publicrecords/opraforms.htm#guidelines. [Source: ARMA.]

RETENTION PERIODS

Retention Period: “Length of time a record must be kept to meet administrative, fiscal, legal, or historical requirements.” [Source: ARMA.]

Until Superseded: A designation indicating the retention period for a record that should be retained until a newer version of the record is created or received.

Permanent: “A record that has been determined to have sufficient historical, administrative, legal, fiscal, or other value to warrant continuing preservation.” Permanent records are usually maintained at the agency or municipality level. [Source: ARMA.]

Permanent/Archival: A record that has been designated for permanent retention **and** must be retained in an archival repository, such as the Connecticut State Archives.

SOURCES

ARMA International. *Glossary of Records and Information Management Terms*, 3rd ed. Lenexa, KS: ARMA International, 2007

General Statutes of Connecticut

Pearce-Moses, Richard. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*. Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists (SAA).

Vital Records: Identifying, Managing, and Recovering Business-Critical Records, ANSI/ARMA 5-2003