

# MUNICIPAL RECORDS MANUAL



ISSUED FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS  
COMMITTEE BY THE  
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM  
COMMISSION  
BUREAU OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE  
ARCHIVES

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**RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE FOR  
RECORDS OF PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS**

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**RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE FOR RECORDS OF**  
**PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**DEFINITIONS**

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings:

**ACT**-The Municipal Records Act of January 18, 1968 (P.L. 961, No. 428). (See Appendix A)

**COMMISSION** - The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

**COMMITTEE** - The Local Government Records Committee (LGRC)

**STATE ARCHIVES** - The Commission's Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives.

**PURPOSE**

This manual is issued to notify municipal officials in cities of the third class, boroughs, incorporated towns, townships of the first and second classes, including any municipal corporations as described in this paragraph which have adopted a home rule charter, and any municipal authority created by any of these municipalities of the opportunity to legally dispose of records in accordance with the provisions of the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule approved by the Local Government Records Committee. Municipalities and local governments are encouraged to consult their attorney before implementing any policy.

**THE PROGRAM**

An effective records management program can reduce storage and retrieval costs and increase productivity. Recognition of the need for a workable local records management program in Pennsylvania led to the passage of the Municipal Records Act of 1968, and the creation of the Commonwealth's Local Government Records Committee. The Committee's primary responsibility is to develop records retention and disposition schedules for each municipal office. Municipal officers are authorized by the Municipal Records Act to dispose of records in accordance with schedules and guidelines that have been approved by the Committee. It is to be understood that the schedules authorize and recommend, but do not require the disposal of records after the expiration of approved retention periods.

Under the Municipal Records Act, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is designated as the agency responsible for administering the program of the Local Government Records Committee. The Commission works through its Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives in carrying out these records functions. The Archives seek and utilize the assistance of state and municipal officials and others knowledgeable in this area to guide it in setting standards for the retention and disposition of municipal records. It is believed that the

establishment of records disposition procedures for the use of municipal officials will help ensure the preservation of records of permanent value and encourage the destruction of non-essential records when appropriate.

### **MUNICIPAL RECORDS**

The Municipal Records Act defines "public records" as "any papers, books, maps, photographs or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an entity under law or in connection with the exercise of its powers and the discharge of its duties." Retention periods listed on the Municipal Records Schedule apply to information in all forms and formats. The fact that information is created and stored electronically or on microfilm rather than on paper has no bearing on its retention status. All information included under the definition of a municipal record may be disposed of in accordance with the Municipal Records Act and disposition procedures approved by the Local Government Records Committee.

Historically valuable public records are public property and should remain in public custody. Such records should be maintained in a municipally operated or contracted archives/records center or servers. If a municipality cannot adequately care for its own historical records, provisions may be made to transfer select inactive records of historical value to the State Archives in accordance with the State Administrative Code.

Records are scheduled for permanent retention by municipal governments, either in the paper, electronic or microfilm form, if they have continuing administrative and legal value. Such records are also historically valuable. However, the fact that records are not scheduled for permanent retention does not necessarily mean they do not have any historical value or that the State Archives would not be interested in accessioning some of these records.

For example, since relatively few records from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and before have survived to the present, some records are historically valuable merely because of their age. Questions regarding the possible historical value of local public records should be referred to the Commission's Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives.

### **PROCEDURES FOR THE DESTRUCTION OR TRANSFER OF MUNICIPAL RECORDS**

Records may be destroyed or transferred in conformance with the provisions of Sections 1386 and 1388 of the Municipal Records Act. According to Section 1387, a municipal official who disposes of public records in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Records Act shall not be held liable on his/her official bond or in the way for damages for loss or in any other manner, civil or criminal, because of the disposition of public records pursuant to the provisions of this act.

These sections require a municipality to:

(a) Declare its intent to follow the Municipal Records Schedule by municipal ordinance or resolution. This is basically a one-time requirement. **However, if the schedule is revised or updated, the municipality should go on record again by ordinance or resolution and specifically identify the new schedule so there is no confusion about which retention periods to follow.** (Refer to Appendix B, *Example of Resolution Indicating Intent to follow Municipal Records Schedule*)

(b) Approve each individual act of disposition by resolution of its governing body. The records custodian should identify the records he/she wants to destroy and have the governing body of the municipality concur with these requests for destruction by means of a resolution. For example, if a municipal official wants to destroy ten boxes of canceled checks in accordance with schedule guidelines, the governing body must give its approval. The same is true if two years later he/she wants to destroy another ten boxes of canceled checks. (Refer to Appendix C, *Example of Disposition Resolution for Destruction of Specific Records*).

(c) When a municipality wishes to destroy non-permanent records listed on the schedule, only subparagraphs (a) and (b) above must be followed. The Commission does not have to be notified of such action. **Microfilm or electronic record copies may be substituted for non-permanent records unless otherwise noted in the schedule. All copies must meet appropriate standards approved by the Local Government Records Committee.**

(d) In the following instances, in addition to complying with subparagraphs (a) and (b) above, receive written consent from the Commission by submitting a Municipal Records Disposal Certification Request in duplicate to the Commission's Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives (refer to Appendix D). Please take note that if the disposal request involves compliance with retention requirements promulgated by an administering/funding/licensing agency, a copy of the appropriate rule should be included with the disposal form.

#### **Submit Disposal Forms:**

(i) Before destroying or transferring original, permanently valuable records. **Microfilm or electronic copies may be substituted for permanently valuable records unless otherwise noted in the schedule and provided that the microfilm and electronic copies meet the standards and/or policies approved by the Local Government Records Committee and contained within this Manual.**

Requests to dispose of original permanent records that have been microfilmed must be accompanied by appropriate microfilm quality inspection report forms (MCIR-1) relating to the disposal request. These forms are available from the Pennsylvania State Archives.

Municipalities adopting the permanent electronic records policy must submit Appendix E, *PDF/A Notification for Permanent Municipal Records*, to PHMC to serve as notification of their intention to follow this policy and guidelines.

(ii) Before destroying or transferring **records not listed on the schedule or records created prior to 1910.**

**AUDIT REQUIREMENTS, FEDERAL AND STATE STATUTES/ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND RECORDS INVOLVED IN LITIGATION**

Records subject to audit must be retained for the periods listed in the schedule and, in addition, must be audited and all findings resolved before such records may be destroyed. Applicable Federal and State statutes and administrative regulations may necessitate retaining records for a longer period of time than indicated in the schedule. Information on specific program regulations should be obtained from the appropriate administering/finding/licensing agency. Conversely, such statutes and regulations may permit a shorter retention than indicated in the schedule. In those instances, please contact the State Archives before disposing of records.

Records involved in any litigation must be retained until final disposition of the case even if they have met the minimum retention requirements.

## POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ELECTRONIC RECORDS INCLUDING ELECTRONIC MAIL (EMAIL) SYSTEMS

### 1. Purpose

Establish and clarify a records management policy for municipalities with respect to the creation, use, maintenance, scheduling and disposition of electronic records, digitized and born digital including those created on email systems.

### 2. Objectives

**2.1** To ensure the efficient administration and management of electronic records and the preservation of those having long-term or permanent value.

**2.2** To help ensure the accuracy, usability, longevity and legal acceptance of electronic records maintained by municipal offices.

**2.3** To ensure the accessibility of electronic records in conformance with schedules approved by the Local Government Records Committee (LGRC).

### 3. Scope

Applies to all municipalities that adopt the Municipal Records Manual.

### 4. Definitions

**Analog:** Information in human readable form such as paper or microfilm. It may be a duplicate, enlarged or reduced in size from the original.

**Born Digital:** Records that are created by a computer and require a computer to be read.

**Converting Electronic Records:** To transform a computer record from one format to another. For example, convert the

records from Microsoft Word to PDF/A, or convert the records from the current version of PDF/A to a newer, future version of PDF/A.

**Data:** Symbols or representations of facts or ideas that can be communicated, interpreted, or processed by manual or automated means. Often associated with electronic data or with statistics or measurements.

**Database:** A set of data, consisting of at least one file or a group of integrated files, usually stored in one location and made available to several users at the same time for various applications.

**Digitization:** The conversion of an analog format record (such as paper) into a machine-readable format using a scanner or camera.

**Email Messages:** Documents that are created, stored and delivered in an electronic format. Email messages and their attachments are similar to other forms of communicated messages such as correspondence, memoranda, and circular letters. Email messages also contain features commonly associated with traditional records systems, including calendars, directories, distribution lists, and attachments such as word processing documents, spreadsheets, or images that are incorporated into the email message.

**Human Readable Format:** Refers to the representation of information that can be read with the human eye and does not require machine (computer) assistance. Printed material, microfilm and microfiche are examples of human readable format.

**Long-Term Record:** Records that must be

retained for more than ten years but are not permanent.

**Migration:** The process of transferring from one operating or storage environment to another.

**Permanent Record:** Records that have been scheduled for permanent retention by the LGRC or by applicable statute and regulations.

**Social Media:** Websites that facilitate user participation, social interaction, collaboration and information sharing through the submission of user generated content. Some examples of social media tools include wikis, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter.

**Website:** A collection of web pages related by content or domain. Websites may be owned and operated by municipalities or third-party entities.

## 5. Policy

**5.1** Municipalities shall designate officials responsible for ensuring compliance with these policies when adopting local procedures by ordinance or resolution, as appropriate.

**5.2** Electronic records may be disposed of only in accordance with schedules approved by the LGRC.

**5.3** In those instances where an electronic record is the original medium for records scheduled for permanent retention, such as the official recording of minutes, files must be maintained in the format approved by the LGRC for permanent retention. If the municipality is unable to create and maintain records according to the permanent electronic records policy, provisions must be

made to provide paper copies of such records or to create archival security microfilm copies of the records.

**5.4** Offices that receive and use confidential information, as defined by applicable laws, shall take appropriate measures to maintain the confidentiality of the records in order to protect the privacy of individuals, employees, taxpayers, clients or service recipients.

**5.5** All records, whether created or stored on electronic systems must be retrievable and available for the retention period listed on records retention and disposition schedules approved by the LGRC.

**5.6** Documents and information posted on websites are subject to the same electronic records requirements as records created or maintained on internal, non-web-based electronics record keeping systems. If a record is only available on a web site, the copy on the web site is considered an official record, which must be retained according to the appropriate retention schedules.

**5.7** If a municipal government ceases to satisfy the conditions of the policy and guidelines, records that are contained in the system will be deemed destroyed by the municipal government unless other provisions have been made to render them readable, including the production paper copies or microfilm.

**5.8** The implementation and use of an electronic records-keeping system should not limit or hinder public access to public records.

**5.9** Copyright, trade secrets and other laws may apply to electronic records. It is recommended to seek legal counsel to

determine the applicability of such laws.

## **6. Procedures**

**6.1** Municipalities must maintain proper, up-to-date technical and system documentation for each information system that produces, uses, or stores electronic records, even if such systems are operated on behalf of the municipality by a contracted vendor.

**6.1.1** A municipality that maintains government records on electronic record keeping systems must establish procedures for records access, security, and migration/conversion to ensure the usability of records throughout their entire retention period.

**6.1.2** A municipality must ensure that when records are created or maintained by a third party, that all records policies are followed by the vendor.

**6.2** Authorized personnel must be able to retrieve, protect, and carry out the disposition of electronic records just as if they were maintained on paper or microfilm.

## **7. Legal Admissibility of Electronic Records**

In general, for legal admissibility of records in electronic format and help ensure municipal records may be used as evidence in court proceedings, trustworthiness must be established by thoroughly documenting the record keeping system's operation and the controls imposed on it. To implement procedures for legal admissibility of electronic records, municipalities should:

**7.1** Ensure that similar kinds of records generated and stored electronically are

created by the same processes each time and have a standardized retrieval approach.

**7.2** Substantiate that security procedures prevent unauthorized addition, modification or deletion of a record and ensure system protection against such problems as power interruptions.

**7.3** Coordinate all the above including but not limited to; municipal legal counsel, information managers, and records management staff.

## **8. Security of Electronic Records**

Municipalities shall implement and maintain an effective records security program that incorporates the following:

**8.1** Ensure that only authorized personnel have access to electronic records.

**8.2** Provide for backup and recovery of records to protect against information loss. Documented disaster recovery plans and procedures shall be established for all electronic records systems. Disaster recovery plans and procedures should be reviewed and updated biannually.

**8.3** Ensure that municipal personnel are trained to safeguard sensitive or classified electronic information. If applicable, ensure that contractors that have access to the sensitive or classified electronic information attest that they will safeguard that information in conformance with contract provisions.

**8.4** Minimize the risk of unauthorized alteration or erasure of electronic records.

**8.5** Ensure that electronic records security is included in a computer systems security plan.

## **9. Selection and Maintenance of Electronic Records Storage Media**

Municipalities shall select appropriate media and systems for storing records throughout their life which meet the following requirements:

### **9.1 Permit easy retrieval in a timely fashion.**

**9.1.1** Retain the records in a usable format for the length of their required retention period. Records with permanent retention must follow the requirements laid out in the Policy for the Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipal Offices.

**9.2** The following factors shall be considered before selecting a storage media or when converting from one medium to another:

**9.2.1** The required retention period of the records.

**9.2.2** The costs of maintaining and retrieving the records stored in that medium.

**9.2.3** The portability of the medium (selecting a medium that will run on equipment produced by multiple manufacturers) and the ability to transfer information from one medium to another as well as the flexibility of the software to be migrated into a different medium if desirable or necessary.

**9.2.4** Compliance of the storage medium with current industry and/or Federal standards if applicable.

**9.2.5** Compliance with LGRC policies regarding permanent electronic records.

**9.3** Municipalities shall ensure that all authorized users can identify and retrieve

electronic records by establishing labeling and naming conventions.

**9.4** Municipalities shall ensure that information is not lost because of changing technology or deterioration by converting or migrating electronic records. Before conversion to a different medium, municipalities shall determine that the authorized dispositions of the electronic records can be implemented after conversion.

**9.5** Municipalities should back up electronic records on a regular basis to safeguard against the loss of information due to equipment malfunctions or human error. Duplicate copies of permanent records should be maintained at a site that is geographically separated from the original. All security copies of essential electronic records, regardless of retention period, should be stored in a separate building. Safeguards must be provided by third party vendors if electronic systems are not maintained by the municipality.

**9.6** For the maintenance of magnetic computer media, municipalities shall follow industry and national standards for safeguarding information.

**9.7** Permanent electronic records must be stored in a live server environment (see the Policy regarding the Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipal Offices). Municipalities do not have to make provisions to retain non-permanent records in a live server environment. However, municipalities are strongly encouraged to consider the advantages of storing all electronic records, especially long-term records, in a live server environment.

## **10. Social Media**

**10.1** Municipalities that use social media should be aware that social media sites contain communications sent to or received by government employees that are subject to the same electronic records requirements discussed throughout this policy.

**10.2** Social media content is subject to the Municipal Records Schedule.

**10.3** Municipalities that use social media should be aware that most social-media sites are hosted by third party providers. Consequently, the physical hardware and software that enable the social-media site are located at, and under the control of, an entity other than the municipality. These terms may impact adequacy of accessibility for people with disabilities, documentation, record keeping requirements, records management responsibilities, and records disposition.

## **11. Email**

**11.1** Municipalities shall retain and dispose of email messages and attachments that meet

the definition of records in conformance with retention schedules approved by the LGRC.

**11.2** Municipal governments shall establish standards/procedures to manage the storage email records and shall not rely on email server backup procedures to manage the retention and disposition of records created in email systems.

**11.3** Electronic messages with retention periods that are permanent, or which may be considered essential, shall be printed or saved in an electronic format approved by the LGRC. Municipal governments that do not have the technical capability to manage email messages for the full retention period in an electronic format shall create an analog copy (paper or microfilm). In addition to the content, the following information shall also be retained: name of sender, name of recipient, date and time of transmission and/or receipt. Records printed from email systems shall be filed in accordance with standard office procedures.

### **For additional information, contact:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives  
350 North Street Harrisburg, PA 17120-0090  
RA-LocalGovernment @pa.gov or  
(717) 772-3257 or (717) 783-7330 or (717) 783-9874

## **POLICY REGARDING THE FORM OF PERMANENT RECORDATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES**

### **1. AUTHORITY**

This policy on the permanent recordation for municipal offices is authorized by an Act of February 18, 1998 P.L. 27, An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in disposition of obsolete records, further providing for form of permanent recordation and for copies of destroyed records; As well as Act of Feb. 18, 1998, P.L. 178, No. 28 which states:

“Whenever any public officer of any political subdivision or agency thereof, including home rule municipalities, other than counties of the first class or agencies thereof and cities of the first class or agencies thereof, is required or authorized by law or otherwise to record or copy any document, the officers may do so by any photostatic, photographic, microphotographic, microfilm, microcard, miniature photographic, optical, electronic or other process which accurately reproduces the original and forms a durable medium for recording, storing and reproducing the original in accordance with standards, policies and procedures for the creation, maintenance, transmission or reproduction of images of records approved by the County or Local Government Records Committees, as applicable, but not less than those standards, policies and procedures approved by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Any document within the scope of this section and which previously has been recorded or copied may be reproduced by processes authorized by this section.”

### **2. PURPOSE**

The policy and procedures for electronic records previously promulgated by the Local Government Records Committee (LGRC) are herein expanded to provide for the accuracy and acceptance of permanent records maintained in electronic form. The LGRC issues related guidance in a separate document titled *Guidance for the Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipalities*. This guidance is available on PHMC’s website and is meant to supplement the policies and procedures prescribed within this section.

### **3. SCOPE**

The policy applies to all municipalities covered by the Municipal Records Act that adopt the schedule. In case of any conflict between the Standards previously issued by the LGRC and this Policy as records permanent and long-term records, the provisions of this Policy shall govern.

### **4. OBJECTIVES**

**4.1** To ensure the efficient administration and management of electronic records and the preservation of electronic records having long-term or permanent value;

**4.2** To ensure the accuracy, usability, longevity and legal acceptability of electronic records maintained by municipal offices;

**4.3** To ensure the accessibility of electronic records in conformance with schedules approved by the LGRC.

## **5. DEFINITIONS**

**5.1 Convert** – To transform a computer record from one format to another. For example, convert the records from Microsoft Word to PDF/A, or convert the records from the current version of PDF/A to a newer, future version of PDF/A.

**5.2 Conversion Source** – The copy of the record that is stored in the old format. In a conversion from Microsoft Word to PDF/A, the Microsoft Word record is the “conversion source.”

**5.3 Conversion Target** – The copy of the records that is stored in the new format. In a conversion from Microsoft Word to PDF/A, the PDF/A record is the “conversion target.”

**5.4 Fixed Format** – A Format that cannot be edited.

**5.5 Image** – The digital representation of one page.

**5.6 Long-Term Records** – Records that must be retained for more than ten years but are not permanent.

**5.7 Metadata** – Data that describes other data. Data may be descriptive (author, title, etc.) or technical (image size, color depth, image resolution, etc.)

**5.8 Migrate** – The process of transferring from one operating or storage environment to another.

**5.9 Migration Source** – The copy of the record that sits on the platform that is being abandoned in favor of new technology. The copy, for example, that sits on the older server.

**5.10 Migration Target** – The copy of the record that sits on the newer platform after the conclusion of the migration. For example, the copy of that sits on the new server.

**5.11 Page** – One side of a physical sheet of paper.

**5.12 PDF/A** – an archival version of the PDF file type designed for use in long-term and permanent preservation of electronic documents. PDF/A standards guarantee that PDF files will be readable in the future, even if computer technologies dramatically change and standard formats like Microsoft Word and PDF become inaccessible. PDF/A files are “self-contained:” all fonts, embedded files, and other parts of a PDF/A document are all saved within the document itself. PDF/A files also cannot be altered or modified after they’re created, guaranteeing that the

original version of the document is being preserved. PDF/A is free and available through Microsoft and other products.

**5.13 Permanent Records** – Records that have been scheduled for permanent retention by the LGRC or by applicable statute and regulations.

**5.14 Provenance** – Information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection.

**5.15 Renderable** – The electronic file can be presented, using an existing and available combination of software and hardware, into a visual image. An electronic image is not considered “renderable” if it is only theoretically so or if it requires software or hardware not in the possession of the municipality that retains the file.

**5.16 Security Preservation File** – A copy of an electronic record that is stored in a secure manner so that it cannot be accessed except by a limited number of authorized users and only then no other copy of the document will suffice (if, for example, a copy is suspected to have been altered and a court wants to see what the document looked like when it was captured officially).

## **6. POLICY**

**6.1** For those who have adopted the Municipal Records Retention Schedule and desire to keep permanent records in electronic format, the following applies:

**6.2** Municipal Officials are responsible for ensuring the continued accessibility of information created or maintained by their offices for the length of time (the retention period) prescribed by the Municipal Records Manual.

**6.3 Permanent Records.** To be in conformance with this policy, permanent records must be retained either in paper format, microfilm format that has been created and maintained in conformance with applicable standards approved by the LGRC, or in electronic format, one copy of which (the Security Preservation File) is maintained in the manner and under the conditions set forth in this policy and its related guidelines, issued by the State Archives. **Municipalities must send a notification (refer to Appendix E, *PDF/A Notification for Permanent Municipal Records*) to the State Archives if they decide to keep permanent records in PDF/A format.**

**6.4 Non-permanent Records.** **Municipalities are not required to make special provisions for non-permanent records in electronic format, but all such records must be accessible for the full length of their entire retention period.** For non-permanent records with a retention longer than ten years, municipalities are strongly encouraged to utilize the procedures established for permanent records to ensure viability of the records for the full length of their retention period.

**6.5** All records, whether created or maintained on electronic systems, must be maintained in a fixed format, and must be findable, retrievable, and renderable for the entire length of the retention period designated on records retention and disposition schedules approved by the LGRC. It is the responsibility of municipal government to either (a) maintain the hardware and software required to access and display the records, or (b) establish a plan to migrate the records through each successive version of software to ensure their continued accessibility throughout their required retention period. If a record is no longer findable, retrievable, or renderable, that record will be deemed destroyed.

**6.6** Electronic record keeping systems, or procedures external to the system, must provide for the secure, confidential, irreversible destruction of all copies of electronic records (including those on backup media) at the end of the retention period specified by the LGRC. The system must be capable of expunging permanent records when so ordered.

**6.7** The implementation and use of an electronic record keeping system may not limit or hinder public access to public records. Municipalities should ensure that public records maintained in such systems remain accessible and can be correlated with related records on paper, microfilm or other media.

**6.8** The executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) or his or her designee(s), as authorized by Title 37, §305(3), shall have reasonable access to all public records maintained in conformity with this policy for the purpose of examining them and reporting on their condition. Municipalities may be audited by the PHMC to ensure that their permanent records maintained in electronic form are following the policy set forth.

**6.9** With certain exceptions, municipalities are not required to make provisions to retain non-permanent records stored electronically in a human-readable format. There are situations which, due to the unusually essential nature of the records, make it necessary to require the retention of a human readable copy.

## **7. SECURITY PRESERVATION FILE**

**7.1 Administration:** While municipalities covered by this policy must adhere to the policy, they should be aware that additional standards may be necessary to develop a robust program.

**7.2** Creation of electronic records with permanent retention: Municipalities must maintain a Security Preservation File in PDF/A format. Do not confuse PDF/A with standard PDF. PDF/A is a specific variation of PDF, designed for long term preservation. PDF/A described in ISO 19005 and subsequent revisions or future standards defined in “Guidance for the Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipal Offices” is established as the required format for permanent records maintained electronically. Municipal offices may use standard file formats (TIFF, JPEG, PDF, etc.) for daily functions. The municipal office may determine at which point in their process the Security Preservation File must be created, though generally it should occur

7.2 as records are closed or complete. Systems are readily available to convert most formats to PDF/A.

**7.3 Quality Control:** Municipalities must protect the quality of the Security Preservation File maintained on electronic record keeping systems. If records are scanned from paper copies (rather than born digital), it is recommended that 100% of scanned images be quality controlled. Each must be indexed with accurate metadata to ensure future retrieval.

**7.4 Data Integrity:** To enhance legal admissibility of the Security Preservation File, trustworthiness must be established by thoroughly documenting the record keeping system's operation and the controls imposed on it. Municipalities shall:

**7.4.1 Review and verify the records before the Security Preservation File is created.**

Ensure that quality control evaluation of each image and its corresponding index data is performed. Before accepting records electronically, review data and verify for authenticity, integrity and freedom from computer viruses.

**7.4.2 Adequately design and implement security procedures to prevent unauthorized addition, modification or deletion of the Security Preservation File.**

**7.4.3 Provide audit trails.** Provide for system auditing trails and system security by utilizing software capable of monitoring and recording system access and usage.

**7.4.4 Document all processes.** Create the Security Preservation File through standardized, repeatable, and auditable processes that are well documented. Have written procedures for quality control, indexing, corrections, expungement, redaction, back-ups, security and migration.

**7.4.5 Maintain up-to-date and historical technical and system documentation for each information system that produces, uses, or stores the Security Preservation Files.**

**7.4.6 Identify metadata with each Security Preservation File sufficient to identify the record and to prove the history of ownership and creation.**

## **8. SECURITY**

**8.1 Municipalities shall implement and maintain an effective security program to protect Security Preservation Files from unauthorized access or alteration.**

**8.1.1 Network and Systems Access.** Controls must be in place to protect the Security Preservation Files against attack or software vulnerabilities, both internally and externally.

**8.1.2 Physical Access.** Controls need to be in place to prevent unauthorized physical access to resources where Security Preservation Files are stored.

**8.1.3 Confidential, Sensitive, and/or Personally Identifiable Information (PII).** Offices are responsible for identifying and classifying the Security Preservation Files, as defined by applicable laws, and must take appropriate measures to protect and maintain the confidentiality of such records.

**8.1.3 Migrate or Expunge.** When the Security Preservation File is migrated or expunged, precautions must be taken so the information cannot be reconstituted.

**8.1.4** Security Preservation Files should not be encrypted in any way, as this can severely compromise the future accessibility of the records.

## **9. PROTECTION**

**9.1** Municipalities shall implement and maintain an effective program to protect records with permanent value from loss through natural- or human-caused disaster. The program must be documented in writing.

## **10. PRESERVATION**

**10.1** Municipalities shall implement and maintain an effective program to:

**10.1.1** Migrate copies of the Security Preservation Files and their associated metadata from one environment to another each and every time software or hardware changes make such actions necessary to avoid technological obsolescence; and

**10.1.2** Convert copies of the Security Preservation Files and associated metadata from one format to another, as required for preservation and access or to avoid technological obsolescence.

**10.2** During each migration or conversion, records shall be accurately converted from the source file to the target file specifications.

**10.2.1** The migrated/converted records shall preserve, in the target file, any links to other files found in the source file. It is best not to use hyperlinks in a document if possible. If there are links to external files and the external files form part of the official record, the external files must be captured as PDF/A and migrated. The migrated/converted records shall preserve, in the target file, any functionality (such as searchability or sortability) present in the source file. No data or records shall be lost during the migration/conversion, either through data corruption or failure to convert/migrate (whether caused by system or human error).

**10.2.2** Each migration or conversion shall be documented in sufficient detail as to make the migration/conversion process understandable to future technologists who may be required to reconstruct the history of record migrations/conversions.

**10.2.3** A sufficient percentage of records and associated metadata shall be sampled and the sample shall be documented as part of the record of the migration/conversion. The size of the sample shall be determined and documented by the agency responsible for the migration or conversion.

**10.2.4 Scanning Density:** Scanning density is vital to ensure image legibility. Municipalities must employ the following scanning densities to ensure image legibility:

**10.2.5** A scanning density of 200 dots per inch (200 dpi) for office documents that contain no type fonts smaller than six (6) point, and

**10.2.6** A higher scanning density (300 dpi or 600 dpi) as needed for engineering drawings, maps and documents with type fonts smaller than six (6) point or significant background detail.

## **11. STORAGE**

**11.1** To ensure that the Security Preservation Files are accessible and usable throughout their life span, municipalities must select appropriate media and systems to fulfill the retention requirements of the records. The following provisions are required for the storage and maintenance of the security preservation files.

**11.1.1** Records scheduled for permanent retention must be retained in an online environment. Store the Security Preservation Files and associated metadata on a server (or a mainframe acting as a server). The Security Preservation File must not be retained solely on any kind of removable media; copies may be retained on removable media. The Security Preservation Files may be backed up on either paper or microfilm if that proves to be a more cost-effective approach to the long term maintenance of the records.

**11.1.2** Maintain copies of permanently valuable or essential (systems critical) records to provide for disaster recovery and business continuity. The copies shall be designated:

**Security Preservation File copy:** Retain in a live (online) environment and do not use except to create the Backup and Access copies.

**Backup copy of the Security Preservation File:** A copy to be used only in the event of a disaster that disrupts or destroys the Access copy. Retain at a site that is geographically separated from the original Security Preservation Files.

**Access copy:** Use to access the records. Retain locally. May be in the native format.

**11.2** To minimize risk of loss, municipalities must select appropriate locations and provide appropriate environmental conditions, as detailed in the “Guidance for The Form of Permanent Recordation for Municipal Offices,” for storage of media and systems used to store electronic records. Municipalities should develop their own policies. to adequately minimize the risk of loss.

**For additional information contact:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Bureau of the Pennsylvania State Archives

350 North Street

Harrisburg, PA 17120-0090

Telephone: (717) 772-3257 or (717) 783-7330 or (717) 783-9874

RA-LocalGovernment@pa.gov

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# STANDARDS FOR MICROFILMING MUNICIPAL RECORDS

## 1. Authority

The standards were adopted by the Local Government Records Committee in accordance with the Municipal Records Act.

## 2. Purpose

The standards are designed to help ensure the accuracy, usability, longevity and legal acceptance of microforms generated by municipal offices.

## 3. Scope

The standards relate to the filming, processing, inspection, handling and storage of microform copies, of records created by municipal offices covered by the Municipal Records Act. They must be included as part of the requirements in all microfilm service contracts. With minor exceptions, these standards are in strict conformance with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) standards and practices. Raster Output Microforms are covered by the standards. Color films are not covered by the standards.

## 4. Definitions

**AIIM.** Acronym for Association for Information and Image Management. AIIM was founded in 1943 as the National Microfilm Association and later became the Association for Information and Image Management. AIIM is an ANSI (American National Standards Institute) accredited standards development organization. AIIM also holds the Secretariat for the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) committee focused on information management compliance issues.

**ANSI.** Acronym for the American National Standards Institute. ANSI is comprised of government agencies, organizations, companies, academic and international bodies, and individuals.

**Aperture card:** (1) A card with a rectangular opening(s) specifically prepared for the mounting or insertion of microfilm. (2) A processable card of standard dimensions into which microfilm frames can be inserted.

**Archival quality:** The ability of a processed print or film to permanently retain its original characteristics. The ability to resist deterioration.

**Base:** Transparent plastic material, usually of cellulose triacetate or polyester, upon which a photographic emulsion or other material may be coated.

**Camera microfilm:** First generation microfilm; also called the master film.

**Computer-Output Microfilm (COM):** Microforms containing data produced by a recorder from computer-generated electrical signals.

**Dense (Density):** (1) The light-absorbing or light-reflecting characteristics of a photographic image. (2) The relation of amount of text to non-text areas on a document.

**Dots per inch (dpi):** Measure of output device resolution and quality, e.g., number of pixels per inch on display device. Measures the number of dots horizontally and vertically.

**Duplicate:** (1) A copy of a microform made by contact printing or by optical means. (2) To make multiple copies of a document or

microfilm, usually with the aid of the master film or intermediate copies.

**Emulsion:** A single- or multi-layered coating consisting of light-sensitive materials in a medium carried as a thin layer on a film base.

**Exposure:** (1) The act of exposing a sensitive material to light/radiant energy. (2) The time during which a sensitized material is subjected to the action of radiation. (3) The product of radiation intensity and the time during which it acts on the photosensitive material.

**Generation:** One of the successive stages of photographic reproduction. The first generation is the camera film. Copies made from this first generation are second generation, etc.

**Image:** (1) A representation of information produced by light/radiant energy. (2) In electronic imaging, digital representation of a document.

**ISO.** Acronym for the International Organization for Standardization. ISO is the world's largest developer and publisher of International Standards. ISO is a network of the national standards institutes of 157 countries. ISO is a non-governmental organization that forms a bridge between the public and private sectors.

**Jacket:** A flat, transparent, plastic carrier with single or multiple film channels made to hold single or multiple microfilm images.

**Master film:** Any film, but generally the camera microfilm, used to produce further reproductions, such as intermediates or distribution copies.

**Methylene blue:** A chemical dye formed during the testing of archival permanence of processed microimages using the methylene-blue method.

**Microfiche:** A transparent sheet of film with microimages arranged in a grid pattern.

**Microfilm:** (1) A fine-grain, high-resolution film used to record images reduced in size from the original. (2) A microform consisting of strips of film on rolls that contain multiple microimages. (3) To record microphotographs on film.

**Microform:** A form, usually film, which contains microimages.

**NAPM:** Acronym for National Association of Photographic Manufacturers, Inc. Trade and technical information organization of photographic products manufacturers and suppliers. Also a standards developer for the fields of photography and optics both domestically and internationally. Standards secretariat and developer for ANSI/NAPM IT (Imaging Technologies) committees, ISO TC42-Photography and ISO TC172-Optics and optical instruments.

**Negative-appearing image:** An image in which the lines and characters appear light against a dark background.

**NIST:** Acronym for National Institute for Standards and Technology. Formerly known as the National Bureau of Standards (NBS), founded in 1901, NIST is a non-regulatory federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

**Planetary camera:** A type of microfilm camera in which the document being photographed and the film remain in a stationary position during the exposure. The document is on a plane surface at the time of filming. Also known as a flatbed camera.

**Polyester:** A transparent plastic made from polyesters and used as a film base because of its dimensional stability, strength, resistance to tearing and relative nonflammability.

**Positive-appearing image:** An image in which the lines and characters appear dark against a light background.

**Processing:** A series of steps involved in the treatment of exposed photographic material to make the latent image visible and ultimately usable, e.g., development, fixing, washing, drying.

**Raster:** Description of a rectangular or square array formed by a number of horizontal scan lines comprising a number of picture elements. The number of scan lines establishes the vertical dimension of the array and the number of picture elements forms vertical rows which establish the horizontal dimension of the array.

**Raster COM (R-COM):** Device that produces microforms from any computer-managed pixel image storage device.

**Records, Essential:** Records, regardless of archival value, which are essential to functions of government during and after an emergency. Also, those records essential to the protection of the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals for whose rights and interests it has responsibility.

**Records, Permanent:** Records which have been scheduled for permanent retention by the Local Government Records Committee or by applicable statute or regulation.

**Reduction ratio:** The relationship (ratio) between the dimensions of the original or master and the corresponding dimensions of the microimage; e.g., reduction ratio is expressed as 1:24.

**Residual thiosulfate ion:** Ammonium or sodium thiosulfate (hypo) remaining in film or paper after washing. Synonymous with residual hypo.

**Resolution:** The ability of a photographic system to record fine detail.

**Roll microfilm:** Microfilm that is or can be put on a reel, spool or core.

**Rotary camera:** A type of microfilm camera that photographs documents while they are being moved by some form of transport mechanism. The document transport mechanism is connected to a film-transport mechanism, and the film also moves during exposure so there is no difference in the rate of relative movement between the film and the image of the document.

**Safety film:** A comparatively nonflammable film support (base) that meets ANSI requirements for safety film.

**Silver film:** A photographic film containing photosensitive silver compounds suspended in a suitable material. When developed, the image consists of metallic silver.

**Silver halide:** A compound of silver and one of the following elements known as halogens: chlorine, bromine, iodine, and fluorine.

**Splice:** A joint made by cementing, taping or welding (heat splice) two pieces of film or paper together so they will function as a single piece when passing through a camera, processing machine, viewer or other apparatus.

**Target:** (1) Any document or chart containing identification information, coding or test charts. (2) An aid to technical or bibliographic control that is photographed on the film preceding or following the document.

## 5. General Provisions

When a microform copy is to serve as or in place of the original record or is to serve as a security copy of the original record, the following general standards shall apply:

**5.1** Microimages, including the generation intended for use by office staff or the general public, shall contain all of the recorded information shown on the originals and shall be able to serve the purpose for which the original records were created or maintained. Microimages shall be free of obstructions, shadows or glare which impair the legibility of a document.

**5.2** Microimages of the records shall be arranged, identified and indexed so that any individual document or component of the records can be located with reasonable ease.

## **6. Creation of Archival Security Microfilm Copies of Permanent Records**

**6.1** All municipal records custodians engaged in, or contracting for, the microfilming of permanent records shall provide for the creation of an archival security microfilm copy of such records.

**6.2** Permanent records are those records which have been scheduled for permanent retention either in the original or microfilm copy by the Local Government Records Committee or by applicable statute and regulation.

**6.3** An archival security microfilm copy is a copy which is created, used, inspected and stored in conformance with standards for archival security microfilm.

**6.4** The original camera film (Master Negative) of records scheduled for permanent retention shall never be used for reference purposes and should normally be designated as the archival security microfilm copy. Silver-gelatin duplicate negatives or silver-gelatin duplicate positives that meet appropriate standards may serve as the security copy if necessary. If the original camera film is to be jacketed or cut for aperture cards, an uncut duplicate roll of silver halide film that meets

the appropriate standards for security film shall be made and designated as the official security copy. Records custodians employing systems that do not produce an original silver-gelatin microfilm which meets permanency standards shall make a silver-gelatin duplicate negative or silver-gelatin duplicate positive which does meet these standards.

## **7. Film Stock, Processing and Quality Standards for Archival Security Microfilm Copies of Permanent Records**

**7.1 Film:** Stock Safety Photographic film as specified in NAPM IT9.1-1996 and ISO 18906:2000 having a maximum life expectancy (LE) rating of 500.

**7.2 Density:** Background densities of negative-appearing archival security microfilm copies shall, where possible, be between .9 and 1.2. In certain instances, some poor-contrast documents may require lower densities in order to make the entire image legible and reproducible as mentioned in ANSI/AIIM MS23-2004, *Standard Recommended Practice- Production, Inspection, and Quality Assurance of First-Generation, Silver Microforms of Documents*. Densities of raster COM microforms should be adequate and uniform; all information must be reproduced accurately and completely so that its use will not be impaired. Raster COM microforms must meet all appropriate density standards. Background density on positive appearing negative camera film shall not exceed 0.35. The density of silver duplicate positives designated as the security copy shall be between 0.04 and 0.20 where possible. Background density of Computer Output Silver Gelatin (1N) Microfilm (full reversal processing) shall, where possible, be between 1.5-1.8 (1.8 preferred).

**7.3 Base-plus-Fog Density:** The base-plus-fog density of unexposed, processed, clear-based film shall not exceed 0.10. When a tinted-base film is used, the density will increase

by 0.10 or 0.20 which must be added to the 0.10 value. The use of tinted, high fog base films is not recommended.

**7.4 Resolution:** A minimum resolution of 90 lines per millimeter shall be obtained regardless of reduction ratio used or the type of camera used, and the 4.0 pattern shall be resolved. In cases where raster COM microforms are reproduced, measurement of resolution and quality of raster COM film is determined in dots per inch. Raster COM microforms must meet all appropriate resolution standards. A paper print made from the third generation microfilm copy should be able to serve the same purpose for which the original records were created.

**7.5 Residual Thiosulfate:** Residual Thiosulfate ion concentration must be greater than zero but shall not exceed 0.014 grams per square meter in a clear area in accordance with NAPM IT9.1-1996.

## **8. Identification, Technical, and Declaratory Targets for Roll Microfilm**

**8.1** All roll microfilm shall include targets which adequately identify the records and targets needed to check for compliance with resolution requirements. A blank, white sheet of paper shall be photographed at the beginning of each roll to test the uniformity of the illumination and the cleanliness of the camera's optical system. Resolution test targets shall be filmed near the beginning and end of each roll. Targets used shall be AIIM X303 or an equivalent for planetary cameras; or AIIM X113 or the equivalent for rotary cameras. Do not use photostatic or electrostatic copies of resolution charts. Identification targets shall state the name of the municipality and office; name and title of the records custodian responsible for the records at the time of filming; reduction ratio; and record series title, dates, and such volumes or serial numbers needed to clearly identify the records. Each roll shall end with a declaration by the camera operator. The declaration shall include the operator's

signature, date the declaration was filmed, and restatement of records filmed. **Retakes and retake targets should normally be spliced onto the beginning of the roll in which the errors occurred, preceding the start target. The use of intelligent/blip encoded microfilm may necessitate the use of different retake procedures.**

**8.2** Filming sequence should be:

- 1) Blank white sheet of paper
- 2) Start target
- 3) Roll number target
- 4) Resolution test target
- 5) Reduction ratio target
- 6) Agency and record series identification target(s)
- 7) If applicable, "continued from preceding roll" target--instances where volume is filmed on more than one roll
- 8) The text
- 9) If end of book, film "end of volume" target--if not end of volume, but end of roll coming, film "continued on next roll" target
- 10) If end of roll, film the declaration by the camera operator, the resolution target, and the "end of roll" target
- 11) Raster COM microforms should also contain a target stating the name of the conversion vendor; and a target indicating the dots inch (dpi) at which the conversion was done, in addition to proper identification targets (no resolution or scanner target should be overlaid on the microform)

## **9. Splices**

Splicing of archival security microfilm rolls should be avoided, but if splicing is necessary, care should be taken to keep the number of splices to a maximum four per roll. Ultrasonic splicing meets standards for polyester base film.

## **10. Quality Control Practices and Procedures**

**10.1** Procedures to be followed in

establishing and operating a microfilm program should conform to appropriate recommendations contained in ANSI/AIIM MS23-2004, *Standard Recommended Practice- Production, Inspection, and Quality Assurance of First- Generation, Silver Microforms of Documents*. Each camera negative shall be checked for proper identification targets, density, resolution and visual defects.

**10.2** The ability of archival security microfilm copies of permanent records to serve as a substitute for the original records shall be adequately confirmed and documented. Quality control logs for such film shall be maintained to document adherence to standards. At a minimum, such logs should verify the following:

**10.2.1** The images are legible and can serve the purposes for which the original records were created or maintained.

**10.2.2** Roll film contains all required identification, technical and declaratory targets.

**10.2.3** Density readings were taken on a blank white sheet of paper at the beginning of the roll, and, at a minimum, on the background of document images at the beginning, middle, and end of each roll.

**10.2.4** A Base-plus-Fog Density Reading ( $D_{min}$ ) for each roll.

**10.2.5** The number of the pattern resolved from a reading of the resolution test chart and the reduction ratio on each roll.

**10.2.6** Methylene Blue tests are being done on a regular basis. Testing should be done by an

outside laboratory at a minimum on a monthly basis. Appropriate sample strips must be inspected within fourteen days after processing. Certificates from the laboratory, documenting that the microfilm passed the methylene blue test, should be maintained along with the logs. The certificates should include the name of the agency whose film was processed, processing date, date of methylene blue test, test results, processor used and the signature of the person who did the test.

### **11. Formats and Headings for Unitized Microfilm Systems (aperture cards, microfiche and jacketed film)**

Unitized microfilm systems records should be designed and administered so that the resulting microfilm file is an accurate representation of the original records. Any indexes, registers, or other finding aids should be microfilmed and located in a readily identifiable place within the collection of microfilmed records.

Formats for microfiche should conform to ANSI/AIIM MS5-1992. The data on heading or title areas on all microforms should be legible without magnification. The data should conform to ANSI/AIIM MS19-1993.

### **12. Computer Output Silver Gelatin (1N) Microfilm Procedures**

COM programs should conform to standards set down in ANSI/AIIM MS1-1996. Density of Computer-Output Microfilm should be between 1.5 and 1.8 (Full Reversal).

### **13. Storage Conditions for Archival Security Microfilm Copies of Permanent Records**

The security copy shall be stored and inspected in conformance with ISO 5466:1996, ISO 18902:2001, and ANSI/AIIM MS45.

**13.1** Maximum temperature should not exceed 21 degrees Celsius (69.8 degrees Fahrenheit) with a variation of no more than three degrees Celsius (five degrees Fahrenheit) within a 24- hour period. Relative humidity should be kept within 20 percent to 30 percent. Cycling of relative humidity should be no greater than plus or minus five percent over a 24- hour period.

**13.2** Air-conditioning with filtration system shall be utilized to remove gaseous impurities.

**13.3** Facility shall provide protection from fire, theft and natural disaster.

**13.4** The security microfilm copy shall be maintained in a separate building from the user copy.

**13.5** Film shall be stored in closed containers made of an inert material such as plastic, acid- free paper, or nonferrous metals. Cores or reels shall be noncorroding such as plastic compounds or nonferrous metals. Rubber bands shall not be used to fasten film onto reels or cores.

**13.6** Security copy shall not be stored with non-silver film.

**13.7** As appropriate, a sampling of randomly selected microforms shall be inspected in conformance with ANSI/AIIM MS45.

For each inspection period, a different lot shall be chosen allowing some overlap to note changes in previously inspected film.

#### **14. Security Copies of Essential and Long- Term Records**

The security microfilm copy of long-term records shall be created and stored

in conformance with standards for archival security microfilm copies of permanent re- cords. The following sections are applicable to long-term records: Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

**14.1** Long-term records are any records that need to be maintained for more than ten years either in the original or microfilm copy. Security microfilm copies of essential records should be stored where appropriate in conformance with standards for long-term and permanent records. All security microfilm copies of essential records, regardless of retention periods, should be stored in a separate building from the user copy.

#### **15. Short-Term Records**

**15.1** Short-term records are defined as records that require retention for ten years or less as indicated in the Municipal Records Manual.

Silver halide or other films are acceptable as the camera film. Film shall be processed in accordance with applicable ANSI/AIIM standards for their particular film types. The following sections are applicable to short-term records: Sections 5, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8, and 10.1.

#### **16. Reference Copies of Microforms**

The standards relating to the film stock, processing, use and storage of archival security microfilm copies of permanent records do not apply to reference, user or additional duplicate copies. These copies may be on film types other than silver-halide, safety base film and should be processed in accordance with applicable ANSI/AIIM standards for their particular film types.

**For additional information, contact:**

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum  
Commission  
Bureau of Archives and History 350  
North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0090  
[RA-LocalGovernment@state.pa.us](mailto:RA-LocalGovernment@state.pa.us) or  
(717) 783-9874 or (717) 772-3257

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL RECORDS**

### **AL-1 Administrative and Subject Files**

Often referred to as Administrative Files, General Correspondence, Program Files or Subject Files. May include correspondence, reports, program forms and other records created or received in the course of administering specific programs and providing basic municipal services. Portions of the file or the complete file may contain records which summarize primary program activities and functions such as annual departmental/office reports, procedural manuals, long-term studies or comprehensive program assessment studies, series of bulletins/ newsletters and other published materials created in connection with special events or the administration of on-going programs, and correspondence documenting agency policy. Such files may also include or consist primarily of routine correspondence; replies not part of a specific subject file; communications on supply, maintenance and other internal operations matters; correspondence of a transitory nature having no value after an action is completed; and general housekeeping records. Files may include items such as technical or professional publications maintained solely for reference purposes that are not considered to be "records" under the Municipal Records Act.

(1) Records that summarize the origin and administration of major municipal policies and programs.

**Retain** permanently for administrative and historical purposes.

(2) Routine correspondence and program files, and housekeeping records.

**Retain** as long as of administrative value.

### **AL-2 Agendas**

**Includes** agendas for meetings of governing bodies, boards, agencies and committees.

**Retain** one copy permanently if not included with minutes. **Retain** duplicate copies as long as of administrative value.

### **AL-3 Annexation, Consolidation and Boundary Change Records**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical reasons.

### **AL-4 Bonds, Performance and Security**

**Includes** bonds required of employees or contractors.

**Retain** 6 years after expiration. **Retain** as prescribed by the retention period for contracts if bonds are part of a contract

**AL-5 Bylaws, Regulations and Rules of Order**

**Retain** until superseded or revoked.

**AL-6 Cemetery Records**

**Includes burial/ exhumation/ removal records; lot location files; and lot ownership records.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**AL-7 Charters and Related Records**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**AL-8 Contract Files**

**Includes advertisements, instruction to bidders, specifications, bids and proposals, bid summary and tabulation sheets, signed original contracts, instructions to bidders, leases or agreements, certified payrolls and other supporting work papers.**

**(1) Bids, Proposals, Price Quotations and Qualified Contractor Memoranda**

If successful - **Retain** 6 years after termination of general written contracts. **Retain** records related to construction contracts 12 years after termination.

If unsuccessful - **Retain** 3 years after job completion.

**(2) Contracts and Agreements**

**Retain** general written contracts 6 years after termination. **Retain** construction contracts 12 years after termination.

**AL-9 Deeds to Municipal Property and Related Land Records**

**Includes date, names of grantors and grantees, property description and location, amount of sale, conditions and terms of deed, date recorded and signature of Recorder.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**AL-10 Disaster plans for Municipal Facilities**

**Includes information on disaster response team, emergency procedures, records priorities, rehabilitation/recovery methods, and may include information on supplies and services as well as floor plans.**

**Retain** until superseded or obsolete.

**AL-11 Easements**

**Used to document the municipality's right to limited use of private property. shows date, names and signatures of parties involved, location of property and terms of agreement.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**AL-12 Election Records**

**(1) Certificates of Election**

**Retain** 11 months. **Retain** Federal election records 22 months.

**(2) Certifications for Referenda**

**Retain** permanently.

**(3) Notice of Nominations to be made**

**Retain** 11 months. **Retain** Federal election records 22 months.

**(4) Ethics Commission Statements of Financial Interest**

**Required by the State Ethics Commission. Shows name and address, office sought, occupation, names and occupations of spouse and minor dependent children, financial disclosure information and signature.**

**Retain** 5 years.

**AL-13 Executive Vetoes and Veto Messages**

**Retain** permanently

**AL-14 Grant Administration Records**

**Includes** fiscal and program records.

Comply with retention requirements promulgated by the appropriate administering/funding/licensing agency.

**AL-15 Hazardous Substance Survey Forms (HSSE)**

**Indicates hazardous substances present at workplaces and their chemical abstract service numbers, chemical names, and physical and health hazards. Required by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Worker and Community Right to Know Program.**

**Retain 30 years.** If used as health and exposure record for employee involved in a specific incident, **Retain 30 years** after termination of employment. (See **Personnel Records**, Individual Employee Medical Records).

**AL-16 Historic Preservation Documentation (Submitted to Pennsylvania Historical And Museum Commission)**

**(1) Environmental Review Papers**

**Retain 8 years.**

**(2) Historical and Architectural Information Inventory/Survey Data**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and historical purposes.

**(3) National Register of Historic Places Documentation**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and historical purposes.

**AL-17 Insurance Claims and Policies**

**Includes policies or contracts of insurance, claims and supporting papers for liability, property and other areas of municipal operations.**

**Retain** claims 6 years after final settlement. **Retain** policies, contracts and supporting papers 6 years after expiration, provided all claims have been settled.

**AL-18 Legislative Investigation Records**

**Retain 10 years;** then contact State Archives regarding historical value.

**AL-19 Litigation Case Files**

**Contains papers relating to all types of cases litigated on behalf of the municipality by the solicitor.**

### **(1) Case Files**

**Retain** closed cases as long as of administrative and legal value. **Retain** cases of precedential value permanently.

### **(2) Opinions**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and legal value.

### **AL-20 Liquid Fuel Tax Records**

**Usually consists of copies of vouchers and cancelled checks, bank statements, bills, correspondence with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation regarding aid applications and other records pertaining to the use of Liquid Fuels Tax Funds.**

**Retain** 7 years.

### **AL-21 Mailing Lists**

**Retain** until superseded or obsolete

### **AL-22 Master Property and Equipment/Fixed Assets Inventories**

**Listing of all municipal-owned equipment and physical property. May include equipment lists, serial or model numbers, purchase costs, insurance records, expenditures and year purchased. "Fixed assets" involves property used for the production of goods and services, such as machinery, mineral resources, buildings etc.**

**Retain** property and equipment inventories 5 years after superseded or obsolete. **Retain** fixed assets inventories permanently .

### **AL-23 Material Safety Data Sheets(MSDS)**

**Includes information supplied by manufactures on all hazardous substances in particular products used in the workplace in conformance with section 4 of Act (35P.S.7304). Indicates product identification; ingredients; fire, explosion and reactivity data; environmental and precautionary information; health hazard data; and suggested first aid. Used to comply with the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.**

**Retain** 30 years. If used as health and exposure record for employee involved in a specific incident, **Retain** 30 years after termination of employment. (See **Personnel Records**, Individual Employee Medical Records).

**AL-24 Minutes**

**Minutes of the Governing Board and Other Municipal Boards, Authorities and Commissions and Committees thereof. (Including but not limited to: Board of Health; Charter Commission; Civil Service Commission; Emergency Medical Services Council; Library Board; Licensing and Review Boards; Municipal Authorities such as Industrial Development, Parking, Sewer, Traffic, Transit and Water; Park and Recreation Boards; Pension Board, Planning Commission, Shade Tree Commission and Zoning Hearing Board). Includes all records accepted as part of the minutes.**

**(1) Official Minutes**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**(2) Recordings of Public Meetings**

**Retain** recordings of public meetings used in the preparation of the official minutes until the official minutes are approved. **Retain** recordings of public meetings made for other purposes as long as of administrative value.

**AL-25 Municipal Lien Files**

**Liens filed by a municipality to secure payment for taxes or other purposes.**

**Retain** 1 year after satisfaction.

**AL-26 Municipal Obligations**

**Relates to the financing of municipal projects through bonded indebtedness and loans. May include applications, proposals, correspondence, and the original financial instruments.**

**(1) Bonds and Coupons**

**Retain** 6 years after cancellation.

**(2) Bond Ledgers and Books**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and legal purposes.

**(3) Canceled Notes**

**Retain** 6 years.

**(4) Loan Files**

Retain 6 years after final payment on loan.

**AL-27 Municipal Records Disposal Certification Request Forms**

**Submitted to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission**

**Retain permanently for administrative, and legal purposes.**

**AL-28 Notices of Violation of Municipal Ordinance**

**Includes notice of violation, correspondence and resolution.**

**Retain 30 days after issue is settled or resolved.**

**AL-29 Oaths of Municipal Officials**

**Retain 6 years.**

**AL-30 Permits and Licenses**

**Business or special event license or permit issuance records covering vendors, peddlers, trash collectors, flea markets, yard sales, entertainment and recreational events, explosive license records or other local legislation and similar permit applications.**

**Retain 3 years after expiration of license or denial of application.**

**AL-31 Petitions**

**Retain 5 years. Retain permanently those resulting in an ordinance or charter change.**

**AL-32 Photographs**

**Includes photographs of municipal officials, buildings, public celebrations, etc.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value; then contact State Archives regarding historical value.**

**AL-33 Press Release**

**Announcing matters relating to the municipality's business or administrative operations, the release indicates date, details of the event or activity and officials involved.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value.**

**AL-34 Proclamations and Letters of Commendation**

**Includes official proclamations relating to municipal events and letters of commendation for employees, citizens etc.**

**Retain permanently for administrative and historical purposes.**

**AL-35 Public Meeting/Hearing Notices and Proof of Publication**

**Notice contains information such as meeting date, location and time. Proof of publication includes documentation verifying that proper public notice was given.**

**Retain 10 years**

**AL-36 Recycling Program Records**

**Retain 10 years.**

**AL-37 Reports**

**(1) Annual Municipal and Municipal Department/Board/Commission Reports.**

**Retain permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes if not part of the minutes.**

**(2) Quarterly, Monthly and other Periodic Routine Activity Reports.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value.**

**AL-38 Real Estate Registry Records**

**Maps, plans, books and relating documentation showing the situation and dimensions of all property located in a municipality.**

**Retain permanently.**

**AL-39 Request for Service Records**

**Includes nature of request, name of respondent, and resolution.**

**Retain 1 year after satisfaction of request.**

**AL-40 Resolutions and Ordinances**

**Consists of resolutions and ordinances indicating date, issue or policy involved, and appropriate signatures. Relates to various aspects of municipal administration and business.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**AL-41 Roster of Officials (Submitted to The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation)**

**Information includes name of municipal official, title, contact information, political affiliation and term end date.**

**Retain** permanently.

**AL-42 Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certificates**

**Department of Revenue form includes type of expenditure, name and address of municipality, official's title and signature.**

**Retain** 3 years from the end of the year in which the last sale or lease takes place.

**AL-43 Survey of Financial Condition Forms (Submitted to Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development)**

**Retain** 5 years.

**AL-44 Survey Records**

**Includes employee and opinion surveys, and summaries.**

**Retain** routine surveys as long as of administrative value. **Retain** those relating to budget or charter changes permanently.

**AL-45 Treasurers' Bond Certifications (Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation)**

**Includes name, municipality, amount of bond, surety company, date, and signatures.**

**Retain** 7 years.

**AL-46 Right To Know Requests**

**Requests for records made pursuant to open records legislation. Includes written request, information submitted with the request, related communications, and response**

**Retain** 2 years.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES RECORDS**

### **ES-1 Audio Tapes and Logs**

**Consists of recordings and lists of all incoming and outgoing calls on the emergency radio system.**

**Retain** recordings 30 days unless being held as evidence. **Retain** logs 3 years after last entry. (Record custodians may wish to consult their legal counsel before these records are disposed of regarding any potential legal value. Incidents involving minors, casualties, serious injury, homicides, fires or any matter under investigation or unsolved law enforcement cases may necessitate retention of data relating to these incidents longer for ongoing legal needs.)

### **ES-2 Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Records**

**Includes description of comprehensive emergency programs and provides for overall coordination of activities during emergencies or major disasters. Contains information on operations, organization and personnel, administration, logistics and training programs.**

**Retain** 3 years after superseded.

### **ES-3 Emergency Medical Treatment Records (Trip Reports)**

**Reports indicates pre-hospital care and assessment for patient transported to the hospital by ambulance. Generally shows date, patient's name and address, and treatment provided.**

**Retain** 7 years.

### **ES-4 Incident Cards/Reports**

**Completed by dispatcher, record generally includes date, time, caller's name and address, description of incident and action taken.**

**Retain** 3 years. (Record custodians may wish to consult their legal counsel before these records are disposed of regarding any potential legal value. Incidents involving minors, casualties, serious injury, homicides, fires or any matter under investigation or unsolved law enforcement cases may necessitate retention of data relating to these incidents longer for ongoing legal needs.)

**ES-5 Quality Assurance Reviews**

**Consists of studies of problem cases used to determine whether adequate pre-hospital treatment and assessment were provided.**

**Retain 10 years.**

**ES-6 Radio Dispatcher's Logs**

**Daily record consisting of dispatcher's notes or observations on equipment problems or unusual events during shift.**

**Retain 3 years after last entry.**

## FINANCIAL AND PURCHASING RECORDS

### **FN-1 Account Distribution Summaries (Treasurer's Report)**

**Includes records showing a summary of receipts, disbursements and other activity against each account.**

Weekly/Monthly- **Retain 3 years.**

Year-End – **Retain 7 years.**

### **FN-2 Accounts Payable Files and Ledgers**

**May contain bills, check vouchers, invoices, purchase orders and requisitions, receiving reports and other records of payment for goods and services. Used to document monies spent by the department or cost center.**

**Retain 7 years.**

### **FN-3 Accounts Receivable Files and Ledgers**

**Used to document monies owed and paid to the municipality. Generally shows date, department or fund, amount received and account totals.**

**Retain 7 years.**

### **FN-4 Annual Audit and Financial Reports**

**Including Elected and Appointed Officials, Survey of Financial Condition and Tax Information submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.**

**Retain 5 years.**

### **FN-5 Annual Budgets and Related Records**

**Usually includes final budget as approved, departmental requests, review files, correspondence and related papers.**

**Retain one copy of the annual budget permanently. Retain all other related papers 7 years.**

**FN-6 Audit Reports-Official**

**Record of examination of municipal finances prepared by internal or external auditors. Usually includes financial statements showing the status of all funds and accounts.**

**Retain Permanently.**

**FN-7 Audit Workpapers**

**Consists of accounting notes and papers used in preparation of official audit reports.**

**Retain current plus 3 prior audit cycles.**

**FN-8 Balance Sheet**

**Lists assets and liabilities, and shows the financial condition of the municipality on the last day of the accounting period.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-9 Bank Statements and Reconciliations**

**Prepared by banks, record indicates date, municipal deposits and withdrawals, and account totals.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-10 Cancelled Checks**

**Consists of checks that have been paid by the bank and returned to the depositor as evidence that the payee has received the funds.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-11 Check Registers**

**Usually shows date, check number, vendor name or number, gross amount, discount and final amount of check.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-12 Daily Cash Records**

**Indicates daily cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each department.**

**Retain 3 years.**

**FN-13 Deposit Slips**

**Consists of copies of slips listing and accompanying bank deposits showing date, account, check numbers and amounts**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-14 Depreciation Schedules**

**Used for planning equipment expenditures and budgeting, record indicates depreciation allowances for age or wear.**

**Retain for life of equipment plus 3 years.**

**FN-15 Expense Reports (Employee)**

**Contains record of expenditures by employees traveling on official business. may also include receipts, permission slips or authorization forms, and other records relating to travel expenses.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-16 Financial Statements**

**Usually indicates date, account, receipts, expenditures (actual and budget) and balances.**

**Periodic- Retain until final completion of audit.  
Certified by auditor- Retain permanently.**

**FN-17 Investment Records**

**Includes records relating to original financial instruments executed to invest municipal funds showing amount of certificate, term and rate of interest.**

**Retain 6 years after cancellation.**

**FN-18 Purchase Order Files**

**Copy of purchase order usually shows number, name and address of vender, department and account, date, quantity, unit price and total cost. File may also include invoices, bills of lading and purchase requisitions.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-19 Purchasing Files**

**Relates to acquisition of services, goods and equipment. File may include specifications, bids, quotes, contracts and other related papers.**

**Retain 6 years.**

**FN-20 Supply Requisitions**

**Usually indicates date, department requesting supplies, items needed, total cost and account number.**

**Retain 2 years.**

**FN-21 Surplus Property Logs**

**Consists of inventory control logs listing surplus property by item. May include description, inventory number, cost, year purchased and date inventoried.**

**Retain until suspended or obsolete.**

**FN-22 Surplus Property Sale Files**

**Contains legal advertisements, quotes or offers from vendors, inventory of sale items, receipts or transmittals for funds received and title transfers.**

**Retain 3 years.**

**FN-23 Utility and Paid Service Receipts**

**Retain 7 years.**

**FN-24 Vendor Files**

**Includes vendor's name and address, product and service information, vendor identification and name of contact person.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete.**

**FN-25 Voucher Files**

**Record generally shows number, date, description of goods or services, and amount. Copy of check or check request is usually attached and indicates date, department, vendor name and amount.**

**Retain 7 years.**

## FIRE RECORDS

**FR-1 Annual Fire Loss Records**

Retain permanently.

**FR-2 Certification of Service**

For paid and volunteer fire fighters. Submitted to the Office of Auditor General.

Retain current report plus two prior audit cycles.

**FR-3 Daily Activity Records**

Records pertaining to staff activity, including assignment sheets, reports, sign-in logs, and work schedules. Serves as a time record.

Retain 3 years.

**FR-4 Daily Bulletins/Blotters/Dispatcher's Logs**

Lists time and location of all calls received for fire services. Chronological summary of departmental activities.

Retain 3 years after last entry.

**FR-5 Drill Reports**

Retain 7 years.

**FR-6 Incident Reports**

(1) Reports dealing with serious incidents or major issues such as status of equipment, facilities, or personnel performance.

Retain permanently.

(2) Reports on routine activities or other periodic reports.

Retain 3 years

**FR-7 Equipment Assignment Records**

Retain as long as of administrative value.

**FR-8 Fire Codes and Ordinances**

Retain permanently.

**FR-9 Fire Safety Inspection Records**

**(1) Automated sprinkler system records.**

Retain until superseded or obsolete.

**(2) Building surveys and inspection records and notices of violations.**

Retain 10 years.

**FR-10 Hydrant Records**

**(1) Location listings and maps.**

Retain until superseded or  
obsolete.

**(2) Major maintenance/testing records.**

Retain 2 years after hydrant is removed or replaced.

**FR-11 Fire Investigation Case Files**

**(1) Arson investigation records, disaster or casualty records or records of major fires or significant fires of suspicious origin or fires resulting in death and/or injury.**

Retain permanently.

**(2) Routine fire investigation records.**

Retain 10 years after cause determined.

**FR-12 Maintenance Records**

**(1) Equipment and maintenance logs/inspection reports.**

Retain for life of equipment or transfer with vehicle if appropriate.

**(2) Fire alarm box test records.**

Retain 2 years after box is removed or replaced.

**FR-13 Permits and Related Applications**

**Includes permits for blasting, fireworks display, open burning, and other hazardous operations.**

**Retain 3 years after expiration/revocation.**

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RECORDS**

### **IT-1 Computer Inventory Records**

**Records documenting the assignment of a specific computer to an individual as well as inventories of licensed software, may include address or mailbox data assigned to the individual.**

**Retain 4 years after computer removed from service or is reassigned.**

### **IT-2 Computer Systems Documentation**

**Hardware and software manuals and program coding.**

**Retain 1 year after migration of all records with ongoing value to new system.**

### **IT-3 Equipment and Network Usage Documentation**

**Policies and procedures for appropriate use of agency equipment and software including those covering access and security, systems development, and data retention and disposition.**

**Retain 1 year after updated or superseded.**

### **IT-4 Equipment Records**

**Includes purchase orders, warranties, service contracts, service histories and correspondence.**

**Retain for life of equipment.**

### **IT-5 Computer Usage Files and Reports**

**Electronic files or automated logs created to monitor computer system usage including but not limited to login files, system usage files, data entry logs, records of individual computer program use and reports detailing department costs.**

**Retain for 1 year.**

**IT-6 Network and PC Password and Security Identifications**

**Records documenting the issuance or selection of a network password and the administration of security of the agency's network.**

**Retain 1 year.**

**IT-7 System Architecture Documents and Wiring Schemas**

**Records documenting the location of wiring and the design of the overall agency network environment.**

**Retain for life of network.**

**IT-8 Operating System and Hardware Conversion Plans**

**Records relating to the replacement of equipment or computer operating systems.**

**Retain 1 year after successful conversion.**

**IT-9 Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Plans**

**Records related to the protection and reestablishment of computer services and equipment in case of a disaster.**

**Retain until superseded or revised.**

**IT-10 System Backup Files**

**Copies of master files or databases, application software, logs, directories, and other records needed to restore a system in case of disaster.**

**Retain until superseded.**

**IT-11 Security Records**

**Records used to control or monitor the security of a computer system and its data, including but not limited to information relating to firewalls, intrusion detection, unauthorized access and other security measures.**

**Retain 1 year.**

**IT-12 Input Documents**

**Copies of records or forms designed solely for input into the system when the original records are retained by the originating office.**

**Retain** as long as of administrative value.

**IT-13 User Requests for IT Services**

**Records used to document the requests for technical assistance and responses to these requests.**

**Retain** as long as of administrative value.

**IT-14 Network Implementation Project Files**

**Records used to plan and implement a network including reports, justifications, and working diagrams of proposed network.**

**Retain** until superseded.

## **LIBRARY RECORDS**

### **LI-1 Book and Materials Inventories**

**Complete listing of the library's holdings including books, periodicals, films and other materials available at the library.**

**Retain** until superseded or obsolete.

### **LI-2 Book Purchase and Disposal Records**

**Listing of books, periodicals, films and other materials added to or deleted from the library's holdings.**

**Retain** 2 years.

### **LI-3 Circulation Records**

**Consists of daily, weekly, monthly and annual circulation statistics.**

**Retain** 2 years. **Retain** annual statistics permanently if not incorporated in annual report.

### **LI-4 Patron Registration Files**

**Master listing of library patrons. Information includes date, patron's name, address and telephone number, and expiration date of card.**

**Retain** 3 years after expiration of card. For patrons with delinquencies, **retain** 3 years after settlement.

### **LI-5 Reports to the State Library**

**Retain** permanently.

### **LI-6 Rules and Regulations**

**Includes rules and regulations relating to use of the building and the collections.**

**Retain** 5 years after revoked or superseded.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION RECORDS**

### **PR-1 Accident/Incident Reports**

**Includes reports of accidents, and unusual happenings or infractions of rules occurring within municipal parks.**

**Retain 3 years.**

### **PR-2 Citations**

**Copy of citation issued by park personnel to persons who violate rules and regulations showing date, name of offender and offence.**

**Retain 3 years.**

### **PR-3 Operation and Maintenance Records**

**Contains records of operation and maintenance of sites and equipment showing date, problem and repair work performed.**

**Retain 5 years.**

### **PR-4 Park Planning Files**

**Includes master plans and working plans for each park. Shows layout, topography and proposed improvements.**

**Retain permanently.**

### **PR-5 Park Program Files**

**Contains records relating to events, activities or special programs at municipal parks.**

**Retain 2 years.**

### **PR-6 Park Rules and Regulations**

**Consists of rules and regulations relating to use of park facilities and equipment.**

**Retain 5 years after revoked or superseded.**

**PR-7 Park Use Records**

**Includes records relating to use of park facilities such as tennis courts, golf courses, athletic fields and playgrounds.**

**Retain 3 years.**

**PR-8 Public Bathing Facilities**

**Includes operational data, chemicals used, chlorination levels, and other information relating to pool maintenance and safety personnel. Also contains inspections, notices of violations, service requests, enforcement records, laboratory results, operational reports, complaints, and correspondence.**

**Retain 4 years.**

## PAYROLL RECORDS

### **PL-1 Cancelled Payroll Checks**

Retain 7 years .

### **PL-2 Employee Payroll Adjustment Records**

Usually includes employee's name and social security number and amounts withheld for Federal and State taxes, insurance, bonds and any other deductions.

Retain 4 years.

### **PL-3 Individual Employee's Earning Record - Terminated Employees:**

Salary history includes employee's name and address, social security number, department, position, date of birth, date employed, and salary/earnings history totals posted for the duration of employment.

#### **Employees Who Separate With Post-Termination Benefits**

Retain 5 years after all benefits have been paid if not part of personnel files.

#### **Employees Who Separate Without Post-Termination Benefits**

Retain 5 years after termination of employment.

### **PL-4 Payroll Deduction Authorizations**

Completed by employee, the record usually indicates employee's name and address, department, social security number, deductions authorized and employee's signature.

Retain 4 years after cancelled or superseded.

### **PL-5 Payroll Earnings and Deductions Registers:**

Generally includes employee's name and social security number, gross earnings, taxes withheld, deductions, net earnings, check number and date of employment.

**Pay Period Reports - Retain 4 years.**

**Year-to-Date Annual Summary -** If payroll data is posted to individual employee's earning record, retain 7 years; otherwise, retain 50 years.

**PL-6 Payroll Voucher (Check) Registers**

**Shows date, check number and amount, employee's name and social security number, and department.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**PL-7 Pension Files – Individual Employees**

**Contains records relating to status of individual pension accounts including beneficiary information, contributions, withdrawals and any other actions relating to the account.**

**Retain 3 years after all benefits have been paid.**

**PL-8 Pension Plan Data Sheets (Submitted to Pennsylvania Public Employee Retirement Commission)**

**Includes type of plan, name of employee, wages, date of birth, date of hire, date of release, amount of contributions to the plan and signature of administrative officer.**

**Retain 10 years.**

**PL-9 Pension Plans– Annual Summary Records**

**Includes summary data compiled annually to document the employment history of employees, their eligibility for pension benefits, and the payment of benefits.**

**Retain permanently for administrative purposes .**

**PL-10 Pension Plans - Administration Records**

**Shows terms and conditions of pension benefits payable to eligible retired employees. May also include actuarial evaluations, reports, data sheets and other records used to administer the plans.**

**Retain 6 years after termination of plan.**

**PL-11 Quarterly Returns of Withholding of Federal Income Tax**

**Includes reports showing Federal Income taxes withheld from employee's pay by quarter.**

**Retain 4 years.**

**PL-12 Quarterly Statements of State and Local Taxes Withheld**

Consists of reports showing state and local taxes withheld from employee's pay by quarter.

Retain 4 years.

**PL-13 Social Security Reports**

Shows social security withholdings from employee's pay. Indicates employer's name, reporting period, number of employees, wages paid and contributions to the fund.

Retain 4 years.

**PL-14 Time Cards and Attendance Records (Includes Vacation and Leave Slips and Work Schedules)**

Usually indicates employee's name, date, and hours worked each day.

Retain 3 years.

**PL-15 Unemployment Compensation Records  
(Contributory Form UC-2/2A/2B and Supporting Records)**

Includes quarterly reports showing unemployment compensation contributions paid by municipality and wage reports indicating social security numbers, employees' names and total wages.

Retain 4 years after contributions have been paid.

**PL-16 Wage and Tax Statements (W-2 Forms)**

Shows employer's name and address; employee's identification and social security numbers, name and address; gross earnings; and amounts withheld for Federal, State and local taxes.

Retain 4 years after due date of tax.

**PL-17 Withholding Allowance Certificates (W-4 Forms)**

Indicates employee's name and address, social security number, exemptions and signature.

Retain 4 years after new certificate is filed or employment is terminated.

**PL-18 1099 Forms (Employer's copy of U.S. Information Return for Calendar Year)**

**Retain 4 years**

## PERSONNEL RECORDS

### PS-1 Administrative Organizational Charts

Charts show organizational breakdowns for offices and departments.

Retain one copy permanently if not included with minutes. Retain duplicate copies as long as of administrative value.

### PS-2 Applications for Employment (Not Hired)

Includes employment applications, resumes, and other pre-employment records for persons not hired.

Retain 2 years.

### PS-3 Civil Service Commission Records (Other Than Those Filed in Individual Personnel Folders)

May include announcements, test outlines, examination histories, eligibility lists, correspondence, and other related papers.

Retain as long as administrative value.

### PS-4 Commercial Drivers License Records (CDL)

May include job applications, driver information, employment record, drug test results, accident reports, reviews and summaries, I-9 forms, violations and supervisor training records.

Comply with retention requirements promulgated by the appropriate licensing agency .

### PS-5 Emergency Information Sheets

Retain most recent update for tenure of employee.

### PS-6 Employee Health Insurance Claim Files

Includes claims submitted by employees for reimbursement of medical expenses incurred under health care coverage. May also contain supporting papers such as physician's statements.

Retain 5 years after settlement of claim.

### PS-7 Employee Medical Records

**Includes pre-employment physicals and other medical records showing the health or physical condition of employees during their tenure of employment.**

**Retain** same length of time as Employee Personnel Records. However, if employee has been exposed to toxic substances or harmful physical agents in the work place, **Retain** at least 30 years after termination of employment and comply with appropriate Occupational Safety and Health Standards issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (29 CFR Ch. XVII). (See **Administrative and Legal Records**, Hazardous Substance Survey Forms and Material Safety Data Sheets).

**PS-8 Employee Personnel Records**

**Includes Applications for Employment, Commendations, Correspondence, Health Insurance Membership Applications, I-9 Forms, Letters of Resignation, Life Insurance Applications, Performance Evaluations, Personnel Change Forms, Personnel History Card, Photo Identification Records, References, Resume, Retirement Membership Applications, Salary Review Forms, Separation Report, Training Records, and Vacation and Sick Leave Reports.**

**Employees Who Separate With Post-Termination Benefits**

**Retain** summary information including employee's name, address, date of birth, Social Security number, job and salary history, benefit information, and termination data permanently if not maintained in a separate file.

**Retain** all other records 5 years after termination of employment. (If applicable, comply with union rules relating to certain types of personnel records such as evaluations and reprimands).

**Employees Who Separate Without Post-Termination Benefits**

**Retain** 5 years after termination of employment. (If applicable, comply with union rules relating to certain types of personnel records such as evaluations and reprimands).

**PS-9 Equal Employment Opportunity Records**

**Includes affirmative action report (EEO-4) showing total number of job positions broken down by employment classifications, and related records as well as official discrimination complaint files.**

**Retain** compliance reports and related records 3 years. **Retain** official discrimination complaint case files 4 years after resolution of case.

**PS-10 Job Descriptions and Announcements**

**Consists of narrative descriptions of the duties and responsibilities of employees.**

Descriptions – **Retain** current plus one prior revision.

Announcements – **Retain** 2 years after position has been filled.

**PS-11 Labor Negotiations Files**

**Contains correspondence, reports and other documents used to negotiate contracts with labor unions representing employees.**

**Retain** 5 years after expiration of contract.

**PS-12 Labor Union Contracts**

**Negotiated with labor unions representing employees, the record includes date, terms of agreement and signatures of appropriate officials.**

**Retain** 20 years after expiration.

**PS-13 Union Grievances**

**Filed by employees represented by labor unions alleging violations of the contract. Record usually indicates date, parties involved, and grievance.**

**Retain** 3 years after final resolution.

**PS-14 Worker's Compensation Records**

**Consists of employer's report of occupational injury or disease, hospital statements, doctor's reports, correspondence and other papers relating to claims.**

**Retain** 4 years after the signing of final settlement receipt, or 4 years after death of recipient. **Retain** 10 years if suspension agreement has been filed.

**PLANNING AND BUILDING/ZONING  
CODE ENFORCEMENT RECORDS**

**PZ-1 Aerial Photographs**

**Taken for planning or study purposes, photographs show rivers, streams, towns, cities, bridges, transportation systems and other features.**

**Retain** until superseded or obsolete; then **contact** State Archives regarding historical value.

**PZ-2 Building and Housing Construction Records**

**Includes plans, specs, permits, inspections, plan reviews, certifications, and verifications of payment for non residential or single family homes.**

**Retain** records relating to commercial buildings and structures until structure is demolished. **Retain** records relating to other structures 5 years after certificate of occupancy has been issued or 5 years after final approval of project (if no certificate of occupancy has been issued).

**PZ-3 Building Permits and Applications**

**Generally includes name of municipality, permit number, date, owner's name and address, contractor's name, lot number and size, description of proposed work or use, construction cost, information on sewage and road encroachment permits, and signature of applicant.**

**Retain** records relating to commercial buildings and structures until structure is demolished. **Retain** records relating to other structures 5 years after certificate of occupancy has been issued or 5 years after final approval of project (if no certificate of occupancy has been issued).

**PZ-4 Certificates of Use and Occupancy**

**Information includes permit number, date, property location, owner's name and address, zoning district, how the property is to be used, inspection information, building code edition, and signature(s) of enforcing authority.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-5 Complaints, Citations, Notices of Violations, and Investigations**

**Includes nature of complaint, details of incident, investigation information and disposition.**

Retain 3 years after final disposition.

**PZ-6 Comprehensive Master Plans**

Master development plan adopted by the municipality or the county. Refers to land use, economic development, population, housing needs, utilities and services, environmental and human services, and community facilities.

Retain permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-7 Contractors' Licensing Records**

Includes copies of plumbers, electricians and other trade licenses, applications for licenses and tests to determine licensing.

Retain 7 years.

**PZ-8 Demolition Permits and Applications and Condemnation Records**

Includes notice of condemnation, name of municipality, permit number, site plan, date, owner's name and address, demolition contractor's name, lot number and size, and signature of applicant.

Retain permanently.

**PZ-9 Economic Development and Redevelopment Files**

Comply with retention requirements promulgated by the appropriate administering/funding/licensing agency.

**PZ-10 Flood Plain Management Records**

Annual Reports of Flood Plain Management Activities (Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Community And Economic Development):

Retain 5 years.

**Variances to Flood Plain Regulations:**

Retain permanently.

**PZ-11 Maps and Plats**

May include the following categories of maps: community facilities, zoning, flood plain, geologic survey, land use, subdivision, topographic, and water and soil.

**Retain** one copy permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes. **Retain** other copies until superseded or obsolete.

**PZ-12 Ordinance Amendment Reviews**

**File includes copies of ordinances and amendments relating to zoning, floodplain, subdivision and land use, related documentation and the Board's recommendations.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-13 Planning Commission Board Minutes**

**Official record of the Planning Commission meeting including date, names of members present and absent, issues discussed, motions, reports and actions taken.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-14 Planning Studies and Surveys**

**Consists of reports related to all aspects of planning such as storm water management, housing, parks and open space guidelines, mass transit, traffic, community facilities, population and business development.**

**Retain** permanently for administrative and historical purposes.

**PZ-15 Reports of Buildings or Zoning Permits Issued and Local Public Construction  
(Submitted to U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census)**

**Retain** 5 years.

**PZ-16 Subdivision and Land Development Reviews and Approvals/Disapprovals**

**File includes applications, official review, approval or disapproval, plot plans, storm water management plans, financial security and development agreements, memoranda, notes and correspondence.**

**Retain** application form, official review and report, approval or disapproval, plot plans, engineering drawings, and financial security and development agreements permanently. **Retain** other records as long as of administrative value.

**PZ-17 Zoning Court Cases**

**Consists of records documenting the municipality's position on zoning cases that are heard before the courts.**

Retain permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-18 Zoning Hearing Board Applications**

Usually indicates petitioner's name and address, property location, description of requested proposed use or change, variance, or special exception, reasons for petition and signature of petitioner.

Retain 3 years after final decision.

**PZ-19 Zoning Hearing Board Decisions**

Includes decision, findings of fact, conclusions of law and reasons therefore. Signed by chairperson of Zoning Hearing Board.

Retain permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-20 Zoning Hearing Board Minutes**

Official record of the Zoning Hearing Board meeting, including date, names of members present and absent, issues discussed, appeals heard and decisions made.

Retain permanently for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

**PZ-21 Zoning Hearing Tapes, Stenographic Notes and Transcripts**

Consists of recordings and notes made during Zoning Board hearings and transcripts of proceedings.

Retain tapes and notes 90 days after final decision if no appeal to Common Pleas Court is filed. If appeal to Common Pleas Court is filed, **retain** tapes, notes and transcripts until resolution of case.

## **POLICE RECORDS**

### **PO-1 Animal Law Enforcement Records**

Retain 2 years.

### **PO-2 Bicycle Registration Records**

Retain 2 years.

### **PO-3 Calibration Records**

Includes chemical analysis intoxilizer, vehicle speedometer, radar, vehicle and other speed measuring devices.

Retain 5 years.

### **PO-4 Citations (Traffic and Non-Traffic)**

Retain 3 years if not part of Criminal History Case File.

### **PO-5 Community Relations Files**

Includes information relating to business and home security surveys, crime prevention, education programs, neighborhood crime watch, and public safety.

Retain as long as of administrative value.

### **PO-6 Complaints/Incident Reports/Offense Reports/Initial Activity Reports**

Initial reports completed by officers providing basic information on nature of offense or complaint, time frames, names, descriptions, vital statistics, vehicle information and actions taken.

Retain 3 years if not part of Criminal History Case File.

### **PO-7 Court Orders**

Orders signed by the judge including expungements and protection from abuse orders.

Retain as long as of administrative and legal value if not part of Criminal History Case File.

**PO-8 Criminal History/Investigatory Case Files**

**Official case file records, including but not limited to: arrest and detention records, citations and complaints, crime analysis, evidence records, field notes, hospital and medical records, lab reports, offense reports, probation and parole records, press releases, warrants, subpoenas, and vehicular reports.**

**(1) Homicides/Suspicious Deaths:**

**Retain 75 years.**

**(2) Summary Cases:**

**Retain 5 years after close of investigation.**

**(3) All other Cases**

**Retain 20 years after close of investigation.**

**PO-9 Criminal History Dissemination Records**

**Records that document the dissemination of criminal histories and other law enforcement information to other agencies or criminal information systems. Information includes name of requester, agency requesting, reason for request, information disseminated and signatures.**

**Retain same length of time as case file. If no criminal record is found, retain 2 years.**

**PO-10 Daily Activity Records**

**Records pertaining to officer activity, including assignment sheets, officer activity reports, patrol logs, sign-in logs, and work schedule. Serves as a time record.**

**Retain 3 years.**

**PO-11 Dispatcher's Logs**

**Lists time and location of all calls received for police services.**

**Retain 3 years after last entry.**

**PO-12 Firearms and Ammunition Records (Departmental)**

**Records and inventories of assigned weapons and other equipment.**

**Retain 2 years after superseded or obsolete.**

**PO-13 Hunting Accident Reports (Submitted to the Pennsylvania Game Commission)**

**Retain 2 years.**

**PO-14 Internal Affairs Case Files**

**(1) Incident Log:**

**Retain 7 years after last entry.**

**(2) Substantiated Charges:**

**Retain 3 years after termination of employment.**

**(3) Unsubstantiated Charges:**

**Retain 3 years after close of investigation or comply with union rules if applicable.**

**PO-15 K-9 Corps Records**

**Retain veterinary and training records 2 years after retirement or death of dog.**

**PO-16 Master Name Index**

**Usually in card form. Serves as a name index to the official case files.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value.**

**PO-17 Missing Persons File**

**Information may include missing person's declaration statement, name and description of individual, circumstances of disappearance, family members and contacts, operator and vehicle information, photographs, and case status.**

**Retain until case considered closed.**

**PO-18 Motor Vehicle Records**

**(1) Accident Reports:**

**Retain** 5 years after close of investigation if not part of Criminal History Case File.

**(2) Parking Violations (Tickets):**

**Retain** 1 year after all fines have been paid.

**(3) Police Requests for Removal of Abandoned or Impounded Vehicles:**

**Retain** 2 years.

**(4) Recommendations for Special Driver's Examinations:**

**Retain** 1 year.

**PO-19 Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting Program Worksheets and Printouts**

**Retain** 2 years.

**PO-20 Permits and Related Applications**

**Includes** handicapped parking, parades, inflammables and explosives, peddling and other permits.

**Retain** 3 years after expiration.

**PO-21 Property Records (Evidence/Found/Recovered)**

**Information includes** a description of the item, the source of the item, the number assigned to the item and the disposition of the item.

**Retain** 6 years after property is no longer in custody of the Police Department, if record is not part of Criminal History Case File.

**PO-22 Temporary Detention Records**

**(1) Detention Reports (includes name of prisoner, name of arresting officer, date and time of detention, date and time of release, charges, disposition, property inventory etc.)**

**Retain** 3 years if not part of Criminal History Case File.

**(2) Inspection Reports (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections)**

Retain 4 years.

**PO-23 Towing Records**

**(1) Tow Truck Operator's Schedules**

Retain as long as of administrative value.

**(2) Towing Service Records (lists date of tow, reason for tow, description of vehicle, and date of release).**

Retain 1 year after all fines have been paid.

**PO-24 Training Records**

**Includes all training materials, reports, grants and studies created by the police department.**

Retain as long as administrative value.

**PO-25 Vacation/Vacant House Check Records**

Retain 30 days unless used as evidence.

**PO-26 Video/Audio Tapes**

**Documents officer activity including video taping of drunk drivers who have been arrested. Often used as evidence.**

Retain 30 days if not used as evidence.

**PO-27 Waivers/Release Forms**

**Forms completed by citizen releasing police from injury or damage claims.**

Retain as long as administrative and legal value.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH RECORDS**

### **PH-1 Applications for Food Service Manager/Operator Certification**

Retain 5 years.

### **PH-2 Citations**

Copy of citation issued by health department personnel for violations of regulations showing the name of the person or establishment and offense, date and time and location, and signature.

Retain 3 years.

### **PH-3 Epidemiological Reports**

Retain 7 years.

### **PH-4 Food Embargo, Condemnation, and Recall Records**

Retain 7 years.

### **PH-5 General Nuisance Records - Non-Structure**

Notices of Violation and Correspondence including but not limited to:

- a. Tall Grass/Weeds
- b. Animal Fecal Matter
- c. Odors
- d. Filthy Conditions
- e. Decaying Matter

Retain 2 years after final disposition.

### **PH-6 Health Inspection Records**

Includes applications for annual licenses, bacteriological reports, certificates of health complaints, copies of licenses, inspection reports, notices of violation, enforcement and legal records, and correspondence.

Retain 4 years.

### **PH-7 Reports to the State Board of Health**

Retain 5 years.

**PH-8 State Permits and Approvals**

**Retain** in compliance with regulations promulgated by the issuing agency.

**PH-9 Vector Control Records**

**(Includes field contact reports, investigations, logbooks, spraying records and treatment records).**

**Retain** 4 years.

**FULL-TIME MUNICIPAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT RECORDS**

**Full-time Municipal Health Departments, as designated by the State Department of Health, should contact the State Archives at the following address for copies of the Retention and Disposition Schedule approved for their departments:**

**Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau of Archives and History  
Pennsylvania State Archives Building  
350 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0090**

**[RA-LocalGovernment@state.pa.us](mailto:RA-LocalGovernment@state.pa.us) or  
(717) 787-3913 or 783-9874**

## **PUBLIC WORKS/ENGINEERING RECORDS**

### **PW-1 Applications/Licenses/Permits**

**For access driveway locations, handicapped parking spaces, load zones and signs.**

#### **(1) Annual or short term**

**Retain 3 years after expiration.**

#### **(2) Continuing/Indefinite**

**Retain until revoked or suspended.**

### **PW-2 Complaints and Notification of Hazards**

**Includes nature of complaint, details of incident, investigation information and disposition.**

**Retain 2 years after correction/final resolution.**

### **PW-3 Construction Inspection Reports**

**Includes regular and special inspection reports of municipal buildings and public works facilities. Serves as evidence of compliance by contractors with codes, specifications, and other requirements.**

**Retain 12 years after acceptance of project.**

### **PW-4 Construction Plans and Specifications**

**Usually developed by architects and engineering consulting firms under contract with the municipality for designs of buildings and facilities, the plan includes descriptive narrative and drawings.**

**Retain until structure is reconstructed or is no longer municipal property/responsibility; transfer to new owner if appropriate.**

### **PW-5 Engineering Drawings**

**Contains original engineering drawings of municipal buildings and public works projects usually developed by municipal engineers or architects/engineering consulting firms and showing design details.**

**Retain permanently for administrative and historical purposes.**

**PW-6 Equipment Records**

**Consists of operational and maintenance records for municipal public works equipment showing date of inspection or repair and work done.**

**Retain for life of equipment.**

**PW-7 Highway Transfers**

**Includes agreements, encumbrances, engineering data, general project information, maps, resolutions and other supporting papers.**

**Retain permanently.**

**PW-8 Maintenance Records-Road/Building/Facility**

**Relates to maintenance and other work performed on major equipment, systems or infrastructure. Usually indicates date, type of repair, cost and persons doing the work.**

**(1) Routine**

**Retain 5 years**

**(2) Structural**

**Retain until structure is reconstructed or is no longer municipal property/responsibility; transfer to new owner if applicable.**

**PW-9 Maps**

**May include highway, land use, community facilities, water and soil, topographic, geological survey, borough and township and others.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete.**

**PW-10 Road and Bridge Books and Papers**

**Shows the location, design and maintenance of municipal roads and bridges. Also may contain notes on field inspections, recommendations and expenses for repairs.**

**Retain permanently.**

**PW-11 Road Mileage Reports (Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation)**

**Retain permanently.**

**PW-12 Road Operations Procedures**

**Retain until superseded.**

**PW-13 Storm Water Management Records**

**Includes agreements and requirements, applications for reimbursement, copies of county plans, site plans and technical studies.**

**Retain permanently.**

**PW-14 Street Light Records**

**(1) Installation Records and Plans**

**Retain until light is removed or replaced.**

**(2) Routine Maintenance Records**

**Retain 5 years.**

**PW-15 Street Records**

**(1) Assessment Notification Records**

**Retain 3 years after all payments have been made.**

**(2) Opening Orders and Deeds of Dedication**

**Retain permanently.**

**(3) Street Cut/Excavation Permits**

**Retain 5 years.**

**PW-16 Traffic Studies**

**Includes delay and traffic flow studies, speed, time, and volume.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value.**

**PW-17 Transportation System Performance Forms**

**Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.**

**Retain 3 years.**

**PW-18 Underground Conduit-PA One Call Records**

**Retain 1 year.**

## TAX COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT RECORDS

### TA-1 Bill of Taxes

A list of all unpaid taxes outstanding against any property advertised for by sheriff sale. (Filed by Tax Collector with Sheriff)

Retain 2 years.

### TA-2 Certifications for Taxes Paid on Real Estate

Certifications provided by Tax Collector on taxes paid on real estate.

Retain 2 years.

### TA-3 Change of Address Records

Request to change mailing address for tax bills, usually indicates name and address where tax bills are to be mailed.

Retain 2 years.

### TA-4 Delinquent Tax Collection Records (non real estate)

Lien lists, etc.

Retain 1 year after delinquent taxes have been paid.

### TA-5 Exoneration Certificates Issued to Tax Collector

Provided to the Tax Collector by the governing body discharging the Tax Collector from collecting a particular tax.

Retain 5 years.

### TA-6 General and Special Tax Ledgers and Related Records

Includes Real Estate, Per Capita, Occupation, Emergency and Municipal Services, Earned Income, Intangible Personal Property, Mercantile, Business Privilege, Amusement and other Local Taxes.

Retain 7 years.

**TA-7 Mobile Home Removal Permits (Issued by Tax Collector)**

Generally lists date, owner's name and address, taxing district, description of mobile home, destination, certification that all taxes have been paid and signature of Tax Collector.

Retain 2 years after expiration.

**TA-8 Occupational Tax Lists**

Includes taxpayer's name, address, occupation, and classification code.

Retain until superseded or obsolete.

**TA-9 Tax Return Forms/Cards**

Usually indicates date; taxpayer's name; address and social security number.

Retain 5 years.

**TA-10 Public Utility Realty Reports**

Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue.

Retain 7 years.

**TA-11 Real Estate Transfer Records (From Recorder of Deeds)**

Information includes transfer data, property location, valuation data, exemption data, signature and date.

Retain as long as of administrative value.

**TA-12 Tax Bills, Paid Receipts**

Copy of tax bills or notices returned with payment showing date, taxpayer's name and address.

Retain 2 years.

**TA-13 Tax Collector's Monthly Report to Taxing Districts**

Monthly reports submitted to the taxing district. Lists all taxes collected for the reporting period, including beginning balance, total amount collected, discounts,

**penalties, amount remitted, interest earnings, signatures of tax collector and taxing district and date.**

**Retain 7 years.**

**TA-14 Tax Collector's Return Sheets**

**Submitted to Tax Claim Bureau. Generally shows municipality, name of tax collector, total of taxes returned, signature of authority levying tax, property owner's name and address, description of property, assessed valuation and total taxes due.**

**Retain 1 year after delinquent taxes have been paid.**

**TA-15 Tax "Duplicates" (Real Estate and Non-Real Estate)**

**Shows taxpayer's name and address, valuations and total taxes due.**

**Retain "duplicates" containing information on tax payments for 7 years. Retain other copies of the "duplicates" as long as of administrative value.**

**TA-16 Tax Millage Certificates**

**Consists of certifications by municipalities and school districts indicating the amount of millage for various taxes.**

**Retain permanently.**

## **ASSESSMENT RECORDS**

(For Third Class Cities Which Conduct Their Own Real Estate Assessment)

### **TA-17 Abatements and Exonerations**

**Consists of records relating to the cancellation or reduction of an assessed tax. May contain request forms, petitions and correspondence.**

**Retain 5 years.**

### **TA-18 Appraisal Forms**

**Completed by tax appraisers in assessing property for tax purposes. Shows owner's name and address, property location, evaluation and other assessment data.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete.**

### **TA-19 Assessment Appeal Papers**

**Relates to appeals by property owners of their tax assessment. Usually consists of appeal form from owner, notices of Board meeting and final decision, relevant correspondence and legal documents if case is appealed to court.**

**Retain 3 years after settlement. Retain 5 years after settlement if appealed to court.**

### **TA-20 Change of Assessment Notices**

**Request to change mailing address for tax bills usually indicates name of owner; district map and lot number, location of property; and name and address where tax bills are to be mailed.**

**Retain 5 years.**

### **TA-21 Developers' Plans**

**Includes plot plans from developers showing proposed property layouts.**

**Retain as long as of administrative value.**

### **TA-22 Exemption Files**

**Contains applications for exemption of property from taxation due to non-profit or**

**non-taxable status and the Board's decision. Application provides information on organizations' background, economic status and real property.**

**Retain 3 years after expiration of exemption.**

**TA-23 Industrial/Commercial Assessment Reports**

**Consists of files for large industrial/commercial complexes showing assessment or valuation for each structure. May contain confidential income statements used as a factor in determining assessments.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete.**

**TA-24 Mobile Home and House Trailer Reports**

**Includes forms completed by owners of mobile home parks. Report usually indicates name and address of trailer owner, dates of arrival and departure and description of trailer. Park plans and correspondence may also appear in file.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete**

**TA-25 Property Record Cards**

**Generally includes district, map and lot numbers; size of lot; record of owners showing names, addresses and sale prices; property factors; assessment data and building record.**

**Retain permanently.**

**TA-26 Real Estate Tax Duplicates (Third Class Cities)**

**Usually shows owner's name and address, a brief description of the taxable real estate, assessed value and the amount of tax due.**

**Retain 21 years; then contact the State Archives regarding historical value.**

**TA-27 Real Estate Tax Maps and Aerial Photographs**

**Consists of plans, maps and photographs of subdivisions and municipalities showing parcel numbers, streets, rivers, streams and other physical features.**

**Retain until superseded or obsolete; then contact the State Archives concerning transfer.**

**WASTE MANAGEMENT AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL RECORDS**

**WM-1 Act 537 Plan, Revisions and Supplements  
(Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act of 1966 as Amended)**

Retain until superseded or obsolete.

**WM-2 BioSolids Disposal Records  
(Sludge)**

**Includes permits and permit applications, contracts, operational reports, laboratory analysis reports, and related correspondence.**

**Retain** permits and applications until superseded or obsolete. **Retain** reports and related records 30 years.

**WM-3 Investigation Case Files  
(Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Records)**

**Includes inspection reports, notices of violation, laboratory results, investigations, complaints, enforcement actions, and related correspondence.**

**Retain** 25 years after case is closed.

**WM-4 Lab Accreditation Records**

**Includes applications for accreditation, certificates, quality manual, standard operating procedures, training files, equipment records, logs, studies, corrective actions and all other records and documents required by PA Chapter 252.**

**Retain** applications and certifications until superseded or obsolete. **Retain** all other records for 5 years.

**WM-5 Notification of Permits and Permit Revisions**

**(Act 14 of 1984, Amending the Pennsylvania Administrative Code, Section 1905 A)**

**Retain** 10 years.

**WM-6 On-Lot Sewage System Records:**

**On-lot sewage system permits, and sewage planning module components for subdivisions (Includes plans and specifications, applications for permits, inspections, test results, copies of permits issued, notices of violation, and related records.**

**Retain** permits until supersede or obsolete. **Retain** other records until system is replaced or property is connected to a public sewage treatment system.

**WM-7 Operating Records for Public Sewage Treatment Systems, Sewer Line Extensions, and Pumping Facilities:**

**Daily Plant Operating Records**

**Retain** 2 years.

**Discharge Monitoring Reports**

**Retain** 5 years.

**Yearly Waste Load Management Reports (25 Pa. Code, Chapter 94)**

**Retain** 2 years.

**WM-8 Planning Modules for New Land Development  
(Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection)**

**Retain** as long as of administrative value.

**WM-9 Public Sewage Treatment System Installation Records Relating to Subdivisions**

**Includes plans, specifications, sewage planning module components, county subdivision applications and related records.**

**Retain** plans and specifications permanently. **Retain** other records 5 years after completion of project.

**WM-10 Public Sewage Treatment Systems/Sewer Line Extensions/  
Pumping Facilities Records as Required by the Clean Streams  
Act**

**Includes plans, specifications and permits, national pollution discharge elimination system permit applications (NPDES), and related records.**

**Retain** permitting records until superseded or obsolete. **Retain** all other records permanently.

**WM-11 Sewer Assessment Notification Records**  
**(For initial installation)**

**Retain** 1 year after all payments have been made.

**WM-12 Sewer Enforcement Officer Certification Records**

**Retain** until expiration of certification.

**WM-13 Sewer Rights of Way and Easements**

**Retain** permanently.

**WM-14 Solid Waste Records**  
**(Landfills)**

**Case files (includes applications for landfill permits, copies of permits, complaints, daily disposal logs, ground water monitoring records, inspections, module 1 applications, notice of violation, reviews of proposed sites, sampling reports, volume and weight records and related correspondence).**

**Retain** permits until supersede or obsolete. **Retain** all other records for 30 years after lifespan of facility.

**WM-15 Toxic Reduction Evaluation Reports**

**Includes engineering analysis, pollutant control evaluations, quality reviews and systems inventories**

**Retain** permanently.

**WM-16 Transporter/Hauler Records**

**Includes log books, permit applications including vehicle information, notices of violation, inspection and operational reports, and related correspondence.**

**Retain** 10 years.

## **WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION RECORDS**

### **WQ-1 Operating Records for Water Treatment Plants**

#### **Annual Reports and Special Studies**

**Retain** permanently.

#### **Daily Operating Reports**

**Retain** 2 years.

#### **Monthly Operating Reports**

**Retain** 10 years.

### **WQ-2 Permit Files For Water Treatment Plants and Public Water Supply Systems (Includes applications, approvals/disapprovals, plans, maps, specifications, engineering drawings, variances, inspection reports, and related correspondence)**

**Retain** permanently.

### **WQ-3 Water Line Assessment Notification Records: (For initial installation)**

**Retain** 3 years after all payments have been made.

### **WQ-4 Water Quality Records: (Includes inspections, tests, monitoring reports, chemical analyses, and supporting documentation)**

**Retain** annual water supply reports, emergency response plans, operation and maintenance plans until superseded or obsolete. **Retain** other records 12 years.

### **WQ-5 Waterworks Operators Certification Records**

**Retain** until expiration of certification.

### **WQ-6 Meter Reading Records**

**Retain** 5 years.

APPENDIX A

**MUNICIPAL RECORDS ACT \***  
**TITLE 53. MUNICIPALITIES GENERALLY**  
**PART III. GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**  
**SUBPART B. GOVERNING BODY**  
**CHAPTER 13. GENERAL PROVISIONS**  
**SUBCHAPTER F. RECORDS**

**Section 1381. Short title and scope of subchapter**

(a) **Short title of subchapter.**-- This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the Municipal Records Act.

(b) **Scope of subchapter.**-- This subchapter applies to the following entities:

(1) A city of the third class, borough, incorporated town, township of the first class or township of the second class, including any municipal corporation as described in this paragraph which has adopted a home rule charter.

(2) Municipal authorities created by any municipal corporation which is subject to this subchapter. This subchapter does not apply to cities of the first class, second class or second class A.

**Section 1382. Definitions**

The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**"Commission."** The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

**"Committee."** The Local Government Records Committee.

**"Public records."** Any papers, books, maps, photographs or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an entity under law or in connection with the exercise of its powers and the discharge of its duties.

**Section 1383. Disposition of public records**

Public records may be disposed of if the disposition is in conformity with schedules and regulations which are promulgated by the committee as established by section 1385 (relating to Local Government Records Committee).

### **Section 1384. Proposed retention and disposal schedules**

The commission, in cooperation with the several associations of municipal officials and related Commonwealth agencies, shall make a study of public records and shall prepare proposed retention and disposition schedules for submission to the committee for its approval and advise each of them of all applicable operative schedules and prepare updates of these schedules as needed. No such schedule shall be operative unless approved by the committee.

### **Section 1385. Local Government Records Committee**

**(a) Establishment.--** There shall be established under the commission the Local Government Records Committee which shall consist of the Auditor General, the State Treasurer, the General Counsel, the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Secretary of Community and Economic Development and five other members to be appointed by the Governor to represent each of the following municipal associations: the League of Cities, the State Association of Boroughs, the State Association of Township Commissioners, the State Association of Township Supervisors and the Municipal Authorities' Association. Each ex officio member of the committee may designate in writing a representative to act in place of the member. The Secretary of Community and Economic Development shall serve as chairman, and the executive director of the commission shall serve as secretary. Meetings of the committee shall be at the call of the chairman.

**(b) Powers and duties.--** The committee shall have the powers and duties vested in and imposed upon it by this subchapter and shall promulgate regulations not inconsistent with law necessary to adequately effectuate its powers and duties.

### **Section 1386. Effect of approval of schedule**

**(a) Disposition generally.--** Whenever a schedule is approved by the committee, a copy shall be filed with the commission which shall, through appropriate means, notify the entities that the schedule has been approved. Upon such notification, the schedule becomes effective and may be acted upon by them until superseded by a subsequent duly approved schedule. Each entity shall declare its intent to follow the schedule by ordinance or resolution. Each individual act of disposition shall be approved by resolution of the governing body.

**(b) Disposition of permanent retention records.--** Original records scheduled for permanent retention may be disposed of if, in addition to the procedures listed in this section, the entity generates and maintains a copy of the original in conformance with section 1388 (relating to recording and copying records) and receives written permission from the commission to dispose of the records. Written permission from the commission is required only for disposition actions involving records scheduled for permanent retention, records not listed on the schedules and records selected for transfer to the State Archives.

### **Section 1387. Nonliability of official**

An official shall not be held liable on his official bond for damages for loss or in any other manner, civil or criminal, because of the disposition of public records pursuant to the provisions of this subchapter.

### **Section 1388. Recording and copying records**

**(a) Authorized methods.--** Records may be recorded or copied in conformance with section 1 of the act of May 9, 1949 (P.L. 908, no. 250), entitled "An act relating to public records of political subdivisions other than cities and counties of the first class; authorizing the recording and copying of documents, plats, papers and instruments of writing by photostatic, photographic, microfilm or other mechanical process, and the admissibility thereof and enlargements thereof in evidence; providing for the storage of duplicates and sale of microfilm copies of official records and for the destruction of other records deemed valueless; and providing for the services of the department of property and supplies to political subdivisions," and applicable policies, standards and procedures adopted by the committee.

**(b) Evidence of records.--** Upon disposition of any public records under this subchapter, the copy shall be receivable in evidence in any court or proceeding and shall have the same force and effect as though the original public record had been produced and proved.

### **Section 1389. Applicability of other statutes**

This subchapter is intended as a supplement to existing statutes. The existing statutes which provide for destruction may be utilized by officials in lieu of compliance with this subchapter. Nothing in this subchapter shall prevent officials from retaining records longer than the periods which may be provided in schedules approved by the committee.

---

\* Act No. 428 was approved January 18, 1968. The Act was amended on October 15, 1980 by Act No. 164. This amendment made the General Counsel an ex officio member of the Local Government Records Committee and removed the Attorney General from the Committee. The Act was further amended on February 18, 1998 by Act No. 27 and on May 5, 1998 by Act No. 50.

APPENDIX B

Example of Resolution indicating intent to follow Municipal Records Schedule

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF (Governing Body) \_\_\_\_\_, of  
(Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA, DECLARING ITS INTENT TO FOLLOW THE SCHEDULES AND  
PROCEDURES FOR DISPOSITION OF RECORDS AS SET FORTH IN THE MUNICIPAL  
RECORDS MANUAL APPROVED ON DECEMBER 16, 2008.

WHEREAS, a Local Government Records Committee was created by Act 428 of 1968  
and empowered thereby to make rules and regulations for records disposition; and,

WHEREAS, the Municipal Records Manual was approved by said committee on  
December 16, 2008; and,

WHEREAS, the (Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
desires to dispose of records according to statutory requirements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by (Governing Body) \_\_\_\_\_ of  
(Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ County,  
Pennsylvania, that it intends to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as  
set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008.

Signatures

Attest:

Seal

12/2008

APPENDIX C

Example of Disposition Resolution for destruction of specific records

RESOLUTION

Resolved by the (Governing Body) \_\_\_\_\_ of  
(Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ County,  
Pennsylvania, That

WHEREAS, by virtue of Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, adopted  
(date) \_\_\_\_\_, the (Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
declared its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for the disposition of records as set  
forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved December 16, 2008, and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with Act 428 of 1968, each individual act of disposition  
shall be approved by resolution of the governing body of the municipality;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That (Governing Body) \_\_\_\_\_  
of (Municipality Name) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ County,  
Pennsylvania, in accordance with the above cited Municipal Records Manual, hereby authorizes  
the disposition of the following public records:

Office

Record title, dates, cubic feet

Office

Record title, dates, cubic feet

Signatures

Attest:

Seal



APPENDIX E

PDF/A NOTIFICATION FOR PERMANENT MUNICIPAL RECORDS

This form must be completed for any series of records that a municipal government wishes to maintain electronically to satisfy permanent retention.

- 1. Municipality \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. County: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Office of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Records Title: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Retention Period in Records Manual: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Citation in Records Manual: \_\_\_\_\_

This form serves as notification that the records series described above are permanent or long-term official records that will be maintained in PDF/A format, a specific variation of PDF designed for long-term preservation, in accordance with the policy standards and guidelines approved by the Local Government Records Committee and in force on the date of this certification. I understand that the municipality is responsible for the quality of the security preservation files, their verification, protection, offsite backup, and continued storage in an online environment. these files shall be available for review by the Pennsylvania historical and museum commission (PHMC) for verification purposes.

SIGNATURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICER

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHMC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECIEPT

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F

### USING THE INDEX

- Step One:** Look up the record series in the alphabetical index and find the citation that accompanies the entry.
- Step Two:** Browse down the alphabetical listing of citations (found below) until you find the citation that accompanies the records series. The citation key shows which section and/or municipal office within the Manual to look in to find the records series.
- Step Three:** The number that appears in the second part of the citation represents the numerical order of the records series within that particular municipal office or Manual section.
- Example:** A citation of (PL-6) would therefore represent the 6<sup>th</sup> records series in the Payroll Records section of the Municipal Records Manual.

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### KEY TO CITATIONS

AL	Administrative and Legal Records
ES	Emergency Services Records
FN	Financial and Purchasing Records
FR	Fire Records
IT	Information Technology
LY	Library Records
PR	Parks and Recreation Records
PL	Payroll Records
PS	Personnel Records
PZ	Planning and Zoning/Code Enforcement Records
PO	Police Records
PH	Public Health Records
PW	Public Works/Engineering Records
TA	Tax Collection and Assessment Records
WM	Waste Management and Sewage Disposal Records
WQ	Water Quality, Supply and Distribution Records

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