

RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE

COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS



Issued By:



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
Division of Historical Resources
Archives and Records Section
Government Records Branch

April 4, 2012

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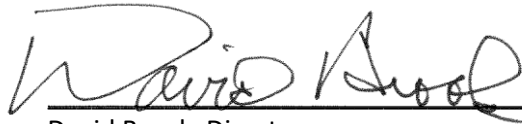
**County Boards of Elections
Records Retention Schedule**

The records retention and disposition schedule and retention periods governing the records series listed herein are hereby approved. In accordance with the provision of Chapters 121 and 132 of the *General Statutes of North Carolina*, it is agreed that the records do not and will not have further use or value for official business, research, or reference purposes after the respective retention periods specified herein and are authorized to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the agency or official having custody of them without further reference to or approval of either party to this agreement. However, records subject to audit or those legally required for ongoing official proceedings must be retained until released from such audits or official proceedings, notwithstanding the instructions of this schedule. **Public records, including electronic records, not listed in this schedule are not authorized to be destroyed.**

This local government agency and the Department of Cultural Resources agree that certain records series possess only brief administrative, fiscal, legal, research, and reference value. These records series have been designated by retention periods which allow these records to be destroyed when *“administrative/reference value ends.”* The local government agency hereby agrees that it will establish and enforce internal policies setting minimum retention periods for the records that Cultural Resources has scheduled with the disposition instruction *“destroy when administrative/reference value ends.”* If an office does not establish internal policies and retention periods, the office is not complying with the provisions of this retention schedule and is not authorized by Cultural Resources to destroy the records with the disposition instruction *“destroy when administrative/reference value ends.”*

It is further agreed that these records may not be destroyed prior to the time periods stated; however, for sufficient reason they may be retained for longer periods. This schedule is to remain in effect from the date of approval until it is reviewed and updated.

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED

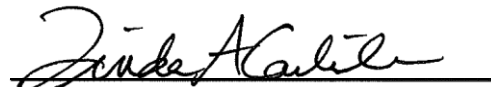


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ACKNOWLEDGED (AGREED TO COMPLY)

County Board of Elections, Director

Chairman, County Board of Elections

April 4, 2012

County/Region

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ✓ According to G.S. §121-5 and G.S. §132-3, you may only destroy public records with the consent of the Department of Cultural Resources (DCR). This schedule is the primary way DCR gives its consent. Without approving this schedule, your office is obligated to obtain the Department's permission to destroy *any* record, no matter how insignificant.
- ✓ Each record series listed on this schedule has specific disposition instructions which will indicate how long that series must be kept in your offices. In some cases, the disposition instructions are simply "Retain in office permanently," which means that those records must be kept in your offices forever. In other cases, the retention period may be "destroy in office when administrative/reference value ends." Administrative value is defined as, "the usefulness of records to support ancillary operations and the routine management of an organization." Your agency must establish and enforce internal policies by setting minimum retention periods for the records that the Department of Cultural Resources has scheduled with the disposition instructions "destroy when administrative/reference value ends."
- ✓ E-mail is a record as defined by G.S. §121-5 and G.S. §132. It is the content of the e-mail that is critical when determining the retention period of a particular e-mail, including attachments not the media in which the records were created. E-mail should be retained in the same manner as its paper counterpart. It is important for all agency employees and officials to determine the appropriate record series for specific e-mails, and retain them according to the disposition instructions.
- ✓ The Department of Cultural Resources recommends that all agency employees and officials take our online tutorials in order to familiarize themselves with records management principals and practices. DCR's online tutorials include topics such as records management, utilizing the retention schedule, e-mail management, and scanning guidelines.
- ✓ The Department of Cultural Resources provides microfilming of the minutes of major decision-making boards and commissions in a county. Once those records are filmed, we will store the silver negative (original) in our security vault.
- ✓ There is a nominal fee for filming and duplicating film. Contact the analyst assigned to your county for the most current information.

MANAGING PUBLIC RECORDS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Q. *What is this “records retention and disposition schedule”?*

- A.** This document is a tool for the employees of county board’s of elections across the state to use when managing the records in their offices. It lists records commonly found in board of elections offices, and gives an assessment of their value by indicating when (and if) those records should be destroyed. This schedule is also an agreement between your office and the Department of Cultural Resources.

This schedule serves as the inventory and schedule that the Department of Cultural Resources is directed by G.S. §121-5 (c) and G.S. §132-8 to provide. It supersedes all previous editions, including all amendments.

Q. *How do I get it approved?*

- A.** This schedule must be acknowledged by the governing board of your county board of elections. That approval should be made in a regular meeting and recorded as an action in the minutes. It may be done as part of the consent agenda, by resolution, or other action.
-

Q. *Do I have to have all of the records listed on this schedule?*

- A.** No. This is not a list of records you must have in your office.
-

Q. *What is the definition of “administrative value”?*

- A.** Administrative value is defined as, “the usefulness of records to support ancillary operations and the routine management of an organization.” Records having administrative value are generally considered useful or relevant to the activities that caused the record to be created and/or during an audit of those activities. Traditionally, records managers have seen “administrative value” as transitory. (From Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*)
-

Q. *Do the standards correspond to the organizational structure of my office?*

- A.** Standards are grouped together to make it easier for users to find records. You may find that the records groupings reflect according to the organizational structure of your office, or you may find that records are located in various standards depending on the content of the record. The intent of the schedule’s organization is to provide an easy reference guide for the records created in your office.
-

Q. *I can’t find some of my records on this schedule.*

- A.** Contact the Records Management Analyst assigned to your county. We will work with you to amend this records schedule to include records so that you may destroy them appropriately.
-

Q. *What are public records?*

- A.** The *General Statutes of North Carolina*, Chapter §132, provides this definition of public records:

"Public record" or "public records" shall mean all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data- processing records, artifacts, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions. Agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions shall mean and include every public office, public officer or official (State or local, elected or appointed), institution, board, commission, bureau, council, department, authority or other unit of government of the State or of any county, unit, special district or other political subdivision of government.

Q. *Can anyone see my records?*

A. Yes, except as restricted by specific provisions in state or federal law. G.S. §132-6 instructs:

“Every custodian of public records shall permit any record in the custodian's custody to be inspected and examined at reasonable times and under reasonable supervision by any person, and shall, as promptly as possible, furnish copies thereof upon payment of any fees as may be prescribed by law. ... No person requesting to inspect and examine public records, or to obtain copies thereof, shall be required to disclose the purpose or motive for the request.”

Q. *What about my confidential records?*

A. Not all government records are open to public inspection. Exceptions to the access requirements in G.S. §132-6 and the definition of public records in G.S. §132-1 are found throughout the General Statutes. You must be able to cite a specific provision in the General Statutes or federal law when you restrict or deny access to a particular record.

Q. *Do I have to make copies of drafts available to the public that haven't been approved?*

A. Yes, even if a report, permit, or other record has not been finalized. Any record that is not confidential by law must be copied when a request is received, whether it is “finished” or not.

Q. *What do I do with permanent records?*

A. Permanent records should be maintained in the office that created the records, forever. Permanent records must also have a preservation duplicate, which is either a paper or microfilm copy. The State Archives will store the silver halide (original) copy of your microfilm, as long as it has been properly processed.

Q. *What is historical value?*

A. Historical records document significant events, actions, decisions, conditions, relationships, and similar developments. These records have administrative, legal, fiscal, or evidential importance for the government or its citizens. Call the analyst assigned to your county for further assistance.

Q. *I don't have any records.*

A. Nearly every position in government generates, receives, or uses records. Computer files of any kind, including drafts and e-mail, are public records. Even if your records aren't the official or final version, your records are public records. Not all records have high historical, legal, or fiscal value, but they all must be retained or destroyed in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate records schedule.

Q. *May I store our unused records in the basement (attic, outdoor shed)?*

A. Public records are public property. While we encourage offices to find places to store records that do not take up too much valuable office space, the selected space should be dry, secured, and free from pests and mold. Your office must ensure that records stored away from your main office area are well protected from natural and man-made problems, while remaining readily available to your staff and the public.

Q. *Our old records are stored in the attic, basement or off-site building, etc. Do we have to let anyone who asks see them?*

A. Yes, as long as the records are not confidential by law. You should also be aware that confidentiality can expire.

Q. *Aren't all of our old records at the State Archives?*

A. Probably not. The State Archives collects only very specific types of records from county offices. Contact the records management analyst assigned to your county for more information about which records are held or can be transferred to the State Archives for permanent preservation.

Q. *I have found some really old records. What should I do with them?*

A. Call the analyst assigned to your county. We will help you examine the records and assess their historical value.

Q. *Can I give my old records to the historical society or public library?*

A. Before you offer any record to a historical society, public library, or any other entity, you must contact the Records Management Analyst assigned to your county. Permanent records must be kept either in your offices or at the State Archives.

Q. *Whom can I call with questions?*

A. If you are located west of about Statesville, call our Western Office in Asheville at (828) 274-6789. East of Statesville, all the way to the coast, call our Raleigh office at (919) 807-7350.

AUDITS, LITIGATION AND OTHER OFFICIAL ACTIONS

No record involved in a pending audit, legal or other official action may be destroyed before that audit or action is resolved.

We have used an asterisk (*) in the disposition instructions to mark records series that are commonly audited, litigated or may be subject to other official actions; however, any record has this potential. Records custodians are responsible for being aware of potential actions, and for preventing the destruction of any record that is, or may be reasonably expected to become, involved in an audit, legal or other official action.

Records used during routine audits may be destroyed when the governing body accepts the audit, if the records have completed the retention period listed in this schedule. If time remains in the retention period, the records must be maintained for the remainder of the period. The auditor's working papers must be kept according to the schedule. (See **AUDITS: PERFORMANCE** Item 6, page 2 and **AUDITS: FINANCIAL** Item 6, page 16.) Should a dispute arise over an audit, the records that were audited should be retained until that dispute is resolved.

The attorney representing the county board of elections should inform records custodians when legal matters are concluded and records will no longer be needed. Following the conclusion of any legal action, the records may be destroyed if they have met the retention period in the schedule. Otherwise, they should be kept for the remaining time period.

DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Q. When can I destroy records?

- A.** Each record series listed on this schedule has specific disposition instructions that indicate how long that series must be kept in your offices. In some cases, the disposition instructions are “Retain in office permanently,” which means that those records must be kept in your offices forever. (See also the question below, “*How should I deal with my permanent records?*”)
-

Q. How do I destroy records?

- A.** After your agency has approved this records retention and disposition schedule, records should be destroyed in one of the following ways:
- a) burned, unless prohibited by local ordinance;
 - b) shredded, or torn up so as to destroy the record content of the documents or material concerned;
 - c) placed in acid vats so as to reduce the paper to pulp and to terminate the existence of the documents or materials concerned;
 - d) buried under such conditions that the record nature of the documents or materials will be terminated;
 - e) sold as waste paper, provided that the purchaser agrees in writing that the documents or materials concerned will not be resold as documents or records.
- N.C. Administrative Code, Title 7, Chapter 4, Subchapter M, Section .0510

Confidential records should be destroyed in a secure manner so that the information contained in them cannot be used.

Q. How can I destroy records if they are not listed on this schedule?

- A.** Contact the Records Management Analyst assigned to your county. Your analyst will discuss the nature of the records with you to determine if the records have historical value. If the records do have historical value, we will discuss the possibility of transferring the records to the State Archives to be preserved permanently.

If the records do not have historical value, we will ask you to complete a **Request and Approval of Unscheduled Records Disposal** (located at the end of this schedule) if the records are not currently created. If the records are an active records series, your analyst will help you develop an amendment to this schedule so that you can continue to destroy the records appropriately.

Q. I have some old records that aren't on this schedule, but that we don't use any more. How can I get them destroyed?

- A.** At the end of this schedule is a form called the **Request and Approval of Unscheduled Records Disposal**. Complete that form and submit it to us. We will get in touch with you, and make a determination about that destruction.
-

Q. Do I have to tell anyone about the destruction?

- A.** We recommend that you report on your records retention activities to your Board of Commissioners on an annual basis. This report does not need to be detailed, but it is important that significant destructions be entered into the minutes of the Board.
-

Q. Computer storage is cheap. I'll just keep my computer records.

- A.** The best practice is to destroy all records that have met their retention requirements at the same time, regardless of format.

Q. Can I give my old records to the historical society or public library?

- A.** Before you offer any record to a historical society, public library, or any other entity, you must contact the Records Management Analyst assigned to your county. Permanent records must be kept either in your offices or at the State Archives.

**ELECTRONIC RECORDS:
E-MAIL, BORN DIGITAL RECORDS, AND DIGITAL IMAGING**

Q. When can I delete my e-mail?

- A.** E-mail is a public record as defined by G.S. §121-5 and G.S. §132. E-mail is just as much a record as any traditional paper record, and must be treated in the same ways. **It is the content of each message that is important.** If a particular message would have been filed as a paper memo, it should still be filed (either in your e-mail program or in your regular directory structure), and it should be retained the same length of time as its paper counterparts. **It is inappropriate to destroy e-mail simply because storage limits have been reached.**

Our publications will be particularly helpful in managing your e-mail (available online at <http://www.records.ncdcr.gov/>):

- *E-Mail as a Public Record in North Carolina: A Policy for Its Retention and Disposition*
- *Online E-mail Tutorial: Managing Your Inbox: E-mail as a Public Record*
- *Online Tutorial: Managing Public Records for Local Government Agencies*
- *Guidelines for E-mail as a Public Record in North Carolina: Tips and Tricks for Using Microsoft Exchange Software to Manage E-mail*

Q. Do I have to print my e-mail to file it?

- A.** As long as the e-mail is not a permanent record, as defined by the schedule, you may elect to keep it in electronic format. Permanent records should be printed and kept in human readable form.

Q. I use my personal e-mail account for work. No one can see my personal e-mail.

- A.** The best practice is to avoid using personal resources, including private e-mail accounts, for public business. G.S. §132-1 states that records “made or received pursuant to law or ordinance *in connection with the transaction of public business* by any agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions” are public records (emphasis added). The fact that public records reside in a personal e-mail account is irrelevant.

Q. We have an imaging system. Do we have to keep the paper?

- A.** You may scan any record, including permanent records. You will need to get approval from our agency in order to destroy paper originals that have been digitized. Your office should follow the instructions in the *North Carolina Guidelines for Managing Public Records Produced by Information Technology Systems* to conduct the Self Warranty process, develop an Electronic Records Policy, and complete a copy of the **Request to Destroy Records Duplicated by Electronic Means**, (located at the end of this schedule). Then submit all three to us.

Permanent records must have a preservation copy as defined by G.S. §132-8.2:

Preservation duplicates shall be durable, accurate, complete and clear, and such duplicates made by a photographic, photo static, microfilm, micro card, miniature photographic, or other process which accurately reproduces and forms a durable medium for so reproducing the original shall have the same force and effect for all purposes as the original record

whether the original record is in existence or not. ... Such preservation duplicates shall be preserved in the place and manner of safekeeping prescribed by the Department of Cultural Resources.

The preservation duplicate of permanent records must be either on paper or microfilm.

Non-permanent records may be retained in any format, and therefore you may be approved to destroy hard copy originals after proper imaging. You will have to take precautions with records that you must keep more than about 10 years. Computer systems do not have long life cycles. Each time you change computer systems, you will have to convert all records to the new system so that you can assure their preservation and provide access. Your office will still be required to conduct the Self-Warranty process, establish an Electronic Records Policy, and submit the **Request to Destroy Records Duplicated by Electronic Means** form for our approval.

Q. *Computer storage is cheap. I'll just keep my computer records.*

- A.** The best practice is to destroy all records that have met their retention requirements at the same time, regardless of format.

Q. *For Further Guidance regarding the creation and handling of electronic public records.*

- A.** The following documents are available on the Government Records Branch Website (<http://www.records.ncdcr.gov/>):
- Best Practices for File Naming
 - Guidelines for Digital Imaging Systems
 - Security Backup Files as Public Records in North Carolina: Guidelines for Recycling, Destruction, Erasure, and Re-Use of Security Backup Files
 - Best Practices for Social Media Usage in North Carolina

MICROFILM

Q. *Why do you still use microfilm?*

- A.** Microfilm is a legally acceptable replacement for original records, as outlined in G.S. §8-45 and §153A-436. Microfilm can be read with nothing more sophisticated than a magnifying glass. There is no software to keep current. Usually, deterioration in the film itself can be detected by visual inspection. Our office provides a publication, *Micrographics: Technical and Legal Procedures*, on our website. It explains the four groups of national standards for the production of archival quality microfilm:
- manufacture of raw film
 - filming methods
 - processing (developing) film
 - storage methods

That publication also provides sample forms, targets, and procedures that you or your vendor can use in producing film of your records.

Q. *What film services do you provide?*

- A.** The Department of Cultural Resources provides microfilming of minutes of major decision-making boards and commissions in a county. Once those records are filmed, we will store the silver original in our security vault.

There is a nominal fee for filming and duplicate film. Contact the analyst assigned to your county for the most current information.

Q. *How do I get my minutes filmed?*

- A.** We have two processes to film minutes. First, you can send photocopies of your approved minutes to us in the mail. Simply include a copy of the “*Certification of the Preparation of Minutes for Microfilming*” form (available online at <http://www.records.ncdcr.gov/imaging.htm#minutes>) with each shipment. For more detailed instructions, contact the analyst assigned to your county.

Alternatively, you can bring us your original books. We will film them and return them to you. This process is most useful when you have more minutes to film than you are willing to photocopy. It is important to remember that a representative of your office or ours must transport the original books in person so that the custody of the records is maintained. You should not mail or ship your original minutes. Call the analyst assigned to your county to make arrangements for an appointment for your books to be filmed. We will make every effort to expedite the filming so that your books will be returned to you as quickly as possible.

Q. *What if I need my books while they’re being filmed?*

- A.** Just call the Raleigh Office at (919) 807-7350, and ask for the analyst in charge of minutes.
-

Q. *Can I e-mail you my minutes?*

- A.** Not at this time. We require originals or photocopies of the approved minutes, complete with signatures.
-

Q. *I have some old minutes that aren’t signed. Can they still be filmed?*

- A.** If the only copy you have available is unsigned, and you use it as the official copy, we will film it.
-

Q. *What if my books are destroyed after they have been filmed?*

- A.** Call the analyst assigned to your county, who will help you make arrangements to purchase copies of the microfilm from our office. You can then send those reels to a vendor, who can either make new printed books, or scan the film to create a digital copy.
-

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Q. *What should I do in case of fire or flood?*

- A.** Secure the area, and keep everyone out until fire or other safety professionals allow entry. Then, call our Raleigh office at (919) 807-7365 for the Head of the Local Records Program or (919) 807-7339 for the State Preservation Officer. If you’re in the western part of the state, call our Asheville Office at (828) 274-6789. Nights and weekends, call your local emergency management office.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE OR CLEAN ANY RECORDS.

Damaged records are extremely fragile and require careful handling. Our staff is trained in preliminary recovery techniques, and professional vendors can handle your larger disasters.

Q. What help do you give in case of an emergency?

- A.** We will do everything we can to make a visit to you at the earliest opportunity to provide hands-on assistance. We can assist you in appraising the records that have been damaged so that precious resources (and especially time) are not spent on records with lesser value. We can provide lists of professional recovery vendors that you can contact to preserve your essential and permanent records.

Q. What can I do to prepare for an emergency?

- A.** We provide training to interested governments on disaster preparation. We discuss the roles of proper inventories, staff training, and advance contracts with recovery vendors. If you would like to have this workshop presented, just call the analyst assigned to your county.

STAFF TRAINING

Q. What types of workshops or training do you offer?

- A.** We have a group of prepared workshops that we can offer at any time at various locations throughout the state. Contact your records management analyst if you are interested in having one of the workshops presented to your agency. We will work with you directly to develop training suited to your specific needs. Our basic workshops are::
- **Managing Public Records: Law and Practice in North Carolina** – our basic introduction to the Public Records law and records management;
 - **Evaluating Filing Systems** – how to evaluate and improve paper or electronic filing systems;
 - **Scanning Public Records: Laying the Groundwork** – considerations and procedures to establish an imaging system;
 - **Disaster Preparedness and Recovery** – how to be prepared for disasters, and what will have to be done after a disaster happens;
 - **Microfilming as a Preservation Tool: Digital Imaging and Microfilm** – why microfilm is still used, and how it can work with digital technologies.

Q. Will you design a workshop especially for our office?

- A.** Yes, we will. Let the analyst assigned to your county know what type of training you need.

Q. Do we have to come to Raleigh for workshops?

- A.** No, we will come to your offices to present the workshops you need. We have no minimum audience requirement. We will also do presentations for professional associations, regional consortiums, and the public.

Q. Is there a fee for workshops?

- A.** Not at this time.

Q. Are the workshops available in an online format?

- A.** Yes. There are several online tutorials available on our website (<http://www.records.ncdcr.gov/workshops.htm>), including:

- **Managing Public Records for Local Agencies-** our basic introduction to the Public Records law and records management.
- **Managing Your Inbox: E-mail as a Public Record-** More and more government employees use computers as they conduct their daily business. While computers are invaluable tools that store large amounts of data that can be easily searched, depending solely upon electronic records can be dangerous. In this workshop you will learn some of the problems associated with electronic records and you will receive advice on how to protect those records.
- **Managing Electronic Public Records: Recognizing Perils and Avoiding Pitfalls-** In addition to face-to-face workshops, the Government Records Branch is now offering an online tutorial combining an introduction to public records, electronic records, and handling e-mail.

PUBLIC RECORDS WITH SHORT-TERM VALUE

GUIDELINES FOR THEIR RETENTION AND DISPOSITION

According to North Carolina General Statutes §121 and §132, every document, paper, letter, map, book, photograph, film, sound recording, magnetic or other tape, electronic data processing record, artifact, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, made or received in connection with the transaction of public business by any state, county, municipal agency, or other political subdivision of government is considered a public record and may not be disposed of, erased, or destroyed without specific guidance from the Department of Cultural Resources. The Department of Cultural Resources recognizes that many records exist that may have very short-term value to the creating agency. These guidelines, along with any approved program records retention and disposition schedule, are intended to authorize the expeditious disposal of records possessing only brief administrative, fiscal, legal, research, or reference value, in order to enhance the efficient management of public records. Examples of those records include:

- facsimile cover sheets containing only transmittal (“to” and “from”) information, or information that does not add significance to the transmitted material;
- routing slips or other records that transmit attachments;
- reservations and confirmations;
- personal messages (including e-mail) not related to official business;
- preliminary or rough drafts containing no significant information that is not also contained in the final drafts of the records;
- documents downloaded from the World Wide Web or by file transfer protocol not used in the transaction of business;
- records that do not contain information necessary to conduct official business, meet statutory obligations, carry out administrative functions, or meet organizational objectives.

The records described above may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of when their reference value ends.

These guidelines are not intended to serve as authorization to destroy or otherwise dispose of unscheduled records. They are intended to complement the use of an approved records retention and disposition schedule for the creating government or agency, not replace or supersede it. Should a creating government or governmental agency lack an approved records retention and disposition schedule, it may not destroy or otherwise dispose of any records in its custody, whether in electronic, paper, or other format (including e-mail) until it receives approval of its **Request and Approval of Unscheduled Records Disposal** (located at the end of this schedule). Such offices should contact the Government Records Branch of the Division of Historical Resources for assistance in creating a schedule.

While records of short-term value may be discarded as described above, all public employees should be familiar with specific records retention and disposition schedules and applicable guidelines for their office and the Public Records law (G.S. §132). When in doubt about whether a record has short-term value, or whether it has special significance or importance, retain the record in question.



As of March 1, 2019, all local government agencies in North Carolina will use the General Records Schedule for Local Government Agencies to find the appropriate disposition instructions for records that fall under these standards:

- Administration and Management Records
- Budget, Fiscal, and Payroll Records
- Geographic Information Systems Records
- Information Technology Records
- Legal Records
- Personnel Records
- Public Relations Records
- Risk Management Records
- Workforce Development Records

More information about this transition can be found on our blog at <https://ncrecords.wordpress.com/2019/01/14/new-retention-schedule-model-for-north-carolina-local-governments/>.

This new Local Government General Records Schedule can be found on our website at <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/government/retention-schedules/local-government-schedules> and supersedes the correlating standards that were a part of previously approved local government agency schedules, so we have deleted those standards from the published version of this schedule.

If you have any questions, please contact [a records management analyst](#) in the Government Records Section of the State Archives of North Carolina.

STANDARD-7. PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: CANDIDACY, CAMPAIGN FINANCE, AND PETITIONS RECORDS

Records created and received by county boards of elections and used in connection with conducting local, state, and federal elections.

STANDARD-7: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: CANDIDACY AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE RECORDS AND PETITIONS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
1	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS Includes all reports, statements, and other documents filed with county boards of elections per Article 22A Regulating Contributions and Expenditures in Political Campaigns.	Destroy in office remaining records 3 years after the close of a committee, unless it is a candidate committee and the candidate continues to hold elected office. In those cases destroy candidate committee records 3 years after the candidate has left elected office and has closed all his candidate committees.	G.S. § 163-278.40
2.	CANDIDACY RECORDS Includes applications, pledges and notices, filing fee records, withdrawals, certification of registration and party affiliation, and all other related documentation.	Retain for election cycle plus term of office.	G.S. § 163 Articles 10 and 11
3.	CANDIDATES LISTS Records listing all candidates and offices sought.	Destroy in office when administrative value ends. Local Policy: Destroy in office after _____. †	
4.	PETITIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS FOR NEW PARTY (COPIES)	Destroy in office 1 year after submission of petition for certification of names.	G.S. § 163-96
5.	PETITIONS FOR ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA	Destroy in office 1 year from date of registration.	G.S. § 163 Article 19

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STANDARD-7: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: CANDIDACY AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE RECORDS AND PETITIONS			
ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
6.	PETITIONS FOR NOMINATION (COPIES)	Destroy in office when administrative value ends. Local Policy: Destroy in office after _____. †	G.S. § 163-213.5

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STANDARD-8. PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

Records created and received by county boards of elections and used in connection with conducting local, state, and federal elections.

STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
1.	ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS Generated electronically. Includes both Mail-in and One-Stop Absentee ballots.	Destroy in office 1 year from date they were received.	G.S. § 163-233
2.	ABSENTEE VOTER REGISTER Lists, catalogs, indexes, and registers of approved civilian and military absentee voters who have been mailed absentee ballots.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163-228 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.
3.	ABSENTEE VOTER POLL BOOK Lists of civilian and military voters in each precinct who have executed absentee ballots.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163-234(5) 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
4.	ABSENTEE BALLOTS (EXECUTED), LIST OF Including military and civilian absentee ballots executed.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163-232 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.
5.	ABSTRACTS Official records of elections.	a) First original. Retain in office permanently. b) Second original. Deposit with clerk of superior court. (Note: Destroy 10 years after filing) c) Third original. Deposit with the State Board of Elections who forwards it to the Secretary of State.	G.S. § 163-182.6 (a)
6.	ABSTRACTS (MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS)	a) Election board conducting the election: Retain one copy in office permanently. b) Election board conducting the election: Deposit one copy with the State Board of Elections. c) File one copy with city clerk.	G.S. § 163-300

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
7.	BALLOT PREPARATION AND APPROVAL RECORDS Includes all documentation generated electronically or otherwise received or created by county boards of elections concerning the preparation, distribution and financing of ballots.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification all records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163 Article 13A 42 U.S.C. 1973 gg et seq.
8.	BALLOT REPORTS Reports detailing the circumstances surrounding the loss, destruction, damage, or theft of ballots.	Place ballot reports relating to loss and theft of ballots into County Board of Election minutes for permanent retention.	G.S. § 163-182.2 08 NCAC 10B .0105
9.	BALLOTS (USED AND UNUSED) Includes paper ballots, electronic or electromechanical ballots, tabulation cards or tapes, voting machine ballot cards, and all similar ballot materials.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification all materials concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification all materials concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices. c) Destroy unused ballots used in federal elections 2 months after the certification of the election.	G.S. § 163 Article 15A G.S. § 163-234(9) 08 NCAC 10B .0106 U.S. Code Title 42, Chapter 20, Subchapter II § 1974 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
10.	CANDIDATE CHALLENGES Includes notices of challenge, request and notice of hearing, affidavits, and all other related documentation concerning challenges.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. §-163 Article 11B
11.	CERTIFICATES OF ELECTION (COPIES)	Retain in office permanently.	G.S. § 163-182.15 G.S. § 163-182.16 G.S. § 163-301
12.	MUNICIPAL ELECTION AGREEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS Agreements regarding conduct of city elections and financial arrangements, resolutions permitting use of absentee ballots, etc.	Destroy in office when superseded or obsolete.	G.S. § 163-285 G.S. § 163-302

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
13.	<p>POLL LIST/REGISTRATION LIST/ROSTER/AUTHORIZATION TO VOTE (ATV) Lists documenting registered electors and votes cast. Includes electronic or paper ATV related records such as ATV books, forms, unused stickers, lists, registers, indexes, or similar authorization to vote record. Includes books, computer printouts, or similar record used to verify persons are registered voters at each polling location.</p>	<p>a) Destroy in office all remaining records 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices.</p> <p>b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.</p> <p>c) Destroy unused ATV stickers used in federal elections 2 months after the certification of the election.</p> <p>d) Contact State Archives prior to destroying old poll books and voter registration books.</p>	<p>G.S. § 163 Article 15A G.S. § 163-166.7 08 NCAC 10B .0103 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.</p>
14.	<p>PRECINCT BOUNDARY AND VOTER TABULATION DISTRICTS (VTD's) RECORDS Includes copies of maps drawn to scale with all major observable features, worded description of the geographical boundaries, and all precinct organization correspondence, including e-mail. Also includes polling place change notices.</p>	<p>Destroy in office when superseded or obsolete. Obtain permission from State Board prior to such destruction.</p>	<p>G.S. § 163-128</p>

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
15.	PRECINCT OFFICIALS APPOINTMENT RECORDS Includes recommendations, qualifications, oaths, and all other related documentation concerning the appointment of board members, director of elections, precinct officials, ballot counters, and observers.	Destroy in office 2 years after expiration of term.	G.S. § 163 Article 5
16.	PRECINCT VOTING MANAGEMENT RECORDS Includes written instructions on how ballots should be marked and counted; unofficial and duplicate precinct returns; receipts for ballots, boxes, and voting equipment; precinct officials' certifications and statements; and all other related documentation.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163 Article 12 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.
17.	PROTEST OF ELECTION RECORDS Includes records relating to the way an election was conducted.	a) Destroy in office records concerning protests that are not appealed 60 days after the board's ruling. b) Destroy in office after 2 years or when challenge is sustained, overruled, or dismissed, whichever occurs later.*	G.S. § 163-182.9 et seq. 08 NCAC Chapter 02

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
18.	RECOUNT RECORDS Records relating to the request and conduct of a recount of votes cast.	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163-182.7 08 NCAC Chapter 09 42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.
19.	RETURNS BASED UPON VOTING TABULATION DISTRICT (VTD) Record of votes cast by voters in each VTD regardless of where that voted.	Destroy in office after two years.	G.S. § 163-132.5G
20.	SAMPLE AUDIT COUNTS	a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices.	G.S. § 163-182.2
21.	STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS	Destroy in office after administrative value ends.* Local Policy: Destroy in office after_____. †	

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STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: ELECTION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
22.	STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS NUMBERED MEMOS Includes SEIMS and Administrative records.	Destroy in office when administrative value ends or otherwise authorized by the SBOE.	Issued as needed by the SBOE.
23.	VOTING MACHINE LISTS, TESTING RECORDS AND CERTIFICATIONS Includes inventory lists showing number of machines, storage locations and registration numbers. Includes records of machine testing prior to each election where the machine is used. Certifications relate to the preparation of and sealing of machines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Destroy in office inventories, warranties, and registration data after the voting systems are no longer in use and have been disposed of as authorized by the SBE. b) Destroy certifications and machine testing related records 5 years after the certification of the election the machine was tested for. c) Destroy in office remaining records when superseded or obsolete. 	
24.	VOTER CHALLENGES Includes notices of challenge, request and notice of hearing, affidavits, and all other related documentation concerning challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Destroy in office 2 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election not involving federal offices. b) Destroy in office 22 months after certification records concerning a primary, general, or special election involving federal offices. 	G.S. §-163 Article 8

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STANDARD-9. PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS

Records created and received by county boards of elections and used to register voters and maintain voter rolls for local, state, and federal elections.

STANDARD-8: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
1.	AGENCY NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT (NVRA): PREFERENCE FORM FROM PUBLIC AGENCIES Forms confirming that a person has declined an offer to register to vote.	Destroy in office after the completion of two list maintenance procedures. Electronic versions of such data in possession of the SBOE shall be the responsibility of the SBOE and not the county.	G.S. § 163-82.14 11 C.F.R. 8
2.	DENIED/INCOMPLETE VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS IN QUE	Destroy in office after two federal elections.	2009-05 SBOE Numbered Memo and Guidelines for Voter Registration

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STANDARD-9: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
3.	<p>LIST MAINTENANCE DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reports from the county board, from the Department of Transportation or a voter registration agency b) A notice of cancellation on a Voter Registration Application/Update Form c) A notice of cancellation received from an election jurisdiction outside the state d) Confirmation mailing sent by the county board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A postage prepaid and preaddressed return card returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service 2. Nonforwardable mail sent by the county board to voter and returned by the Postal Service as undeliverable e) National Change of Address (NCOA) list maintenance records. f) All documents generated by the required biennial list maintenance procedures. 	Destroy in office after the completion of two list maintenance procedures.	G.S. § 163-82.14
4.	<p>LOGBOOKS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES Includes logbooks of voter registration forms given out to voter registration drives.</p>	Destroy in office after 1 year.	G.S. § 163-82.14

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STANDARD-9: PROGRAM OPERATIONAL RECORDS: VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS

ITEM #	RECORD SERIES TITLE	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	CITATION
5.	<p>VOTER-REQUESTED CHANGES A Voter Registration Application/Update form, or a voter registration card, or a written statement that is signed with registrant’s current information requesting changes of records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Change of name and/or address b) Change of party affiliation 	Destroy in office 5 years after voter is classified as Removed and contact State Archives prior to destroying.	G.S. § 163-82.14
6.	VOTER REGISTRATION LISTS AND REPORTS	Destroy in office when superseded or obsolete.	G.S. § 163 Article 7A
7.	<p>VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS Includes all voter registration records (active, inactive, removed). Also includes records regarding voluntary and involuntary cancellations (death, felony convictions, notices from other jurisdictions, voter requests).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Destroy in office 5 years after voter is classified as Removed. b) Contact State Archives prior to destroying old voter registration records. 	G.S. § 163 Article 7A GS § 163-82.10(a)

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The formatting of this document has been modified to comply with the web content accessibility requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), effective April 24, 2026. Its content remains unchanged.

For accessibility purposes, we have removed the following PDF forms from the appendix:

- Request for Change in Records Schedule
- Request for Disposal of Unscheduled Records
- Request for Disposal of Original Records Duplicated by Electronic Means

The latest versions of these forms are instead available for download on our website at:

<https://archives.ncdcr.gov/government/rm-tools>.

For the most current FAQs about commonly asked records management questions and services, please see: <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/government/rm-tools/faq>.

If you have any questions, please contact recordsmanagement@dncr.nc.gov.

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