



City of Dacula

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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1. PURPOSE – STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the City of Dacula to provide for efficient economical, and effective controls over the creation, distribution, organization, maintenance, use, and disposition of all City records through a comprehensive system of integrated procedures for the management of records from their creation to their ultimate disposition, consistent with the requirements of the Georgia Open Records Act and generally accepted records management principles.

2. DEFINITIONS

Approved Record's Retention and Disposition Schedule – a record's retention and disposition schedule that has been approved by Georgia Archives Local Government Record Retention Schedule.

City Record – every document, paper, letter, record, book, map, drawing, photograph, tape (sound or video recording), and all copies, duplicates, photographs, including microfilm, or other reproductions thereof, or any other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, including information contained in electronic data processing equipment and on floppy disks, optical disks, and compact disks, regardless of physical form or characteristic and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under State Law, that is created or received by the City of Dacula or any of its officers or employees pursuant to law or in the transaction of public business. A City record does not include library material acquired solely for reference, exhibit, or display or stocks of publications, advertisements, or other unsolicited written materials received by the City or any of its officers or employees. The provisions of the State of Georgia Open Records Act or any successor provisions thereof shall govern with regard to the status or the records described herein as public records or as exempt from the public records laws.

Department – any department, division, commission, authority, committee, task force, or similar entity of City records.

Department Head – the person who is in charge of a department of the City that creates or receives City records.

Essential/Vital Record – any City record necessary to resume or continue operations of the City in an emergency or disaster; recreate the legal and financial status of the City; or to protect and fulfill obligations to the citizens of the City.

Form – a document on which captions are pre-printed for entering variable data and which is used to transmit information from one point to another. Forms are generally used to cause some action, establish a memory and/or give a report. This includes stationery, envelopes, memo pads, checks, etc.

Open Records Law – O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 through 50-18-78, also known as the Georgia Open Records Act.

Permanent Record – any City record for which the retention period on Records Retention and Disposition Schedule is given as permanent.

Records Center – the facility used to provide centralized and secure storage for non-current and permanent City records.

Records Disposition – the removal or destruction of a City record from a department or from a non-current records storage center and for a City record that has passed its minimum legal retention period and no longer had value to the City, or for a permanent City record, transfer of the record to *Records Center* for archival accession.

Records Inventory – the process of location, identifying, and describing in detail the records of a department.

Records Liaison – a person designated by each Director/Division Head to implement the Records Management Program in their department.

Records Management – the creation and implementation of systematic controls for City records from the point where they are created or received through final disposition or archival retention, including distribution, use, maintenance, storage, retrieval, protection, preservation, and disposal, for the purpose of achieving adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of City government and reducing costs and improving the efficiency of record keeping. The term includes: development of Records Retention and Disposition Schedules; management of filing and information retrieval systems; protection of essential and permanent records; economical and space-effective storage of non-current records; control over the creation and distribution of forms, reports, and correspondence; management of manual, micrographic, electronic, and other records storage systems; and identification of functional record keeping requirements that ensure City records are created to adequately document the City's business transactions.

Records Management Officer – the person appointed by the City Administrator to administer the City's Record Management Program.

Records Management Program – the requirements, policies, and procedures developed by this document.

Records Retention and Disposition Schedule – a document prepared by or under the authority of the Records Management Officer that describes recurring records or records series on a continuing basis, indicating for each record series the length of time it is to be maintained in a department or Records Center, when and if the record or records series may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of; and other records disposition information that the Records Management Program may require.

Retention Period – the minimum time that must pass after the creation, recording, or receipt of a City record, or after the fulfillment of certain actions associated with a City record before the record is eligible for disposition.

3. OWNERSHIP AND CUSTODY OF CITY RECORDS

All City records as defined in Section I of this policy are hereby declared to be the property of the City of Dacula. No City official or employee has, by virtue of his or her position, any personal or property right to such records even though he or she may have developed or compiled them. The unauthorized destruction, removal from files, or use of such records is prohibited.

4. PASSWORD PROTECTED ELECTRONIC RECORDS PROHIBITED

All City records, including all electronic records, are public records. Electronic records may not be password protected unless it is a record specifically exempt from the Open Records Law. Only confidential documents as specified in the Open Records Law may be password protected as long as the creator of the document provides his/her supervisor with the password. Written confirmation from the supervisor shall be forwarded to the Records Management Officer confirming the record is confidential. Such confirmation shall note the specific law that exempts the record from being an Open Record.

5. RECORDS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS, REQUESTS BY MEDIA, AND RECORDS PENDING LITIGATION, OR PENDING AUDITS

The destruction of a City record involved in a pending request under the Open Records Law, pending litigation, or a pending audit is prohibited, even if the destruction of the record is authorized by an approved Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. Retrieval and release of all records to the public or media shall be in accordance with rules and regulations of the Open Records Law.

6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Administer the City's Records Management Program and provide advice and assistance to Director/Division Heads in its implementation;
- b. Prepare the requirements, policies and procedures for the City's Records Management Program;
- c. Review and approve all the Records Retention and Disposition Schedules for all departments;
- d. In cooperation with Director/Division Heads, identify essential records and establish a records disaster and recovery plan for each department to ensure maximum availability of the records in order to re-establish operations quickly and with minimum disruption and expense;
- e. Monitor retention/disposition schedules and administrative rules issued by the Georgia Secretary of State to determine if the Records Management Program and the City's Records Retention and Disposition Schedules are in compliance with State regulations;
- f. Disseminate information concerning State Laws and administrative rules relating to City records to the Director/Division Heads;
- g. Instruct or train Records Liaison Officers and other personnel in the Records Management Program;

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- h. Direct Records Liaison Officers and other personnel in the conduct of records inventories (of file types, not individual files) in preparation for the development of Records Retention and Disposition Schedules;
 - i. Ensure that the creation, maintenance, preservation, microfilming, electronic storage, destruction, and other disposition of City records are carried out in accordance with the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Records Management Program, this chapter and State law;
 - j. Bring to the attention of the City Administrator any noncompliance by a Director/Division Heads or other personnel with the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Records Management Program, this chapter or State law;
 - k. Develop procedures to ensure the permanent preservation of the historically valuable records of the City;
 - l. Conduct periodic reviews of departmental record keeping practices and Records Retention and Disposition Schedules to ensure that the schedules are kept current;
 - m. Provide uniform standards and efficient controls over the identification, appraisal, maintenance, protection, preservation, transfer, retention, and disposition of City records;
 - n. Review City-wide and departmental policies to ensure compliance with the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State law;
 - o. In cooperation with Director/Division Heads, incorporate records management policies, objectives, responsibilities, and authorities in pertinent departmental directives;
 - p. Review user requirements, cost feasibility studies, systems requirements, systems specifications, and other system design documents to ensure that record keeping requirements and public access requirements are incorporated into electronic record keeping systems at the design phase;
 - q. Establish procedures for the use of approved general retention and disposition schedules by City departments; and
 - r. Serve as the City's liaison to applicable State agencies for Records Management Program requirements.

7. DEPARTMENT HEADS – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every Director and Division Head shall:

- a. Cooperate with the Records Management Officer in carrying out the policies, procedures, and requirements of the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State law;
- b. Maintain City records in their custody and carry out the preservation, microfilming, electronic storage, destruction, and other disposition of those records only in accordance with the Records Management Officer;
- c. Review and approve Records Retention and Disposition Schedules and requests to dispose of City records that prepared and submitted by or under the direction of the Records Management Officer;
- d. Notify the Records Management Officer within 24 hours of the discovery of any loss, theft, or damage to a City record;
- e. Ensure the ability to access records regardless of form or medium;

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- f. Notify the Records Management Officer of proposed electronic record keeping systems to ensure compliance with electronic record keeping requirements established by the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State law;
 - g. Under the direction of the Information Technology Department/Contractor, ensure electronic records in the Director's custody are migrated forward as technology changes, for as long as the records are determined to have value, and to ensure that requests for funding for new systems or systems enhancements address requirements for backup, recopying, disaster recovery, security, public access, audit trails, and other record keeping requirements in accordance with the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State Law;
 - h. Appoint a department Records Liaison Officer in accordance with this program;
 - i. Incorporate the Records Management Program requirements in pertinent departmental policies and procedures; and
 - j. In cooperation with the Records Management Officer, identify essential records of the department and establish a Records Disaster Recovery Plan to ensure maximum availability of the records to re-establish operations quickly and with minimum disruption and expense.

8. RECORDS LIAISON OFFICERS – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Department Head may designate in writing to the Records Management Officer a member of the Department Head's staff to serve as the Records Liaison Officer for the implementation of the Records Management Program. If the Records Management Officer determines that more than one Records Liaison Officer should be designated for a department, the Department Head shall designate the number of Records Liaison Officers specified by the Records Management Officer for a department.

A person designated as a Records Liaison Officer shall be thoroughly familiar with departmental policies and activities and have full knowledge of and access to all City records created and maintained by the department and by all officers and employees of the department.

If a person designated as a Records Liaison Officer resigns, retires, or is removed by action of the Department Head, the Department Head shall promptly designate another person to fill the vacancy.

In addition to other duties assigned in this chapter or by State law, a Records Liaison Officer shall:

- a. In cooperation with the Records Management Officer, coordinate and implement the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Records Management Program in the department;
- b. Disseminate information to department staff concerning the Records Management Program;
- c. In cooperation with the Records Management Officer, coordinate the records inventory of the department (inventory of file types, not individual files);

- d. Verify the accuracy, content and completeness of the records inventory prior to submission to the Records Management Officer;
- e. Review departmental record keeping practice for compliance with the Records Management Program and, in consultation with the Records Management Officer, identify practices that require improvement for the purposes of increasing efficiency or implementing corrective action for program compliance;
- f. Report any noncompliance with the Records Management Program to the Department Head in writing and correct and re-submit to the Records Management Officer any records inventory that is incomplete or inaccurate; and
- g. Periodically inventory records in department or division and give report to the Records Management Officer.

9. RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE

A Records Retention and Disposition Schedule is an official policy for records and information retention and disposal. The schedule provides mandatory instructions for the disposal of records no longer needed for current city business. The City of Dacula Code of Ordinance Sec. 2-60 maintains records in accordance with approved applicable retention schedules.

The benefits of using an approved records retention schedule:

- Ensures that important records are organized and maintained in a manner that can be easily retrieved and identifiable as evidence of the City's activities
- Conserves office space, equipment, and manpower
- Helps preserve those records that are valuable for historical and research purposes
- Stabilizes the growth of records in offices through the systematic disposition of inactive records

The Retention Schedule for local government records is divided into two categories:

- Common records – records created by any local government agency, such as budget and accounting records, administration, property records, and legal records.
- Specific records – records created by a specific government agency and no other, such as elections qualifying application, planning & zoning applications, and public works work orders.

Should a retention schedule call for the retaining of a document for a period of years after certain conditions have been met, such as, completion of a project, disposition of a case or terminating of an employee, a plus sign (+) shall follow the recommended destruction date. The file shall note the special condition of retention.

Example: Applications to sell beer and wine in the City are to be retained 7 years after expiration of the application. The application was made in 2002. Therefore, the destruction date would appear as 2009+. Beginning with the year 2009 this record will be reviewed each year to determine if it can be destroyed. If the record has not

achieved its destruction date it will be carried forward until it has reached the 7-year expiration period.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

The Department Head and Records Liaison Officer of a department for which a Records Retention and Disposition Schedule has been approved shall implement the schedule in accordance with the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State law.

A City record whose retention period has expired on an approved Records Retention and Disposition Schedule must be destroyed unless an Open Records Request is pending on the records; the subject matter of the record is pertinent to pending litigation or a pending audit; the Department Head requests to the Records Management Officer in writing that the record be retained for an additional period, which request must clearly state the reason for the continued retention; or the Records Management Officer sends written notification to a Department Head that the records must be held pending review for historical appraisal.

11. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

The Records Management Officer shall approve City records proposed for destruction on a regularly scheduled basis, according to the maximum retention and records disposition guidelines in the approved retention schedule. No original record shall be destroyed without the review and concurrence of the Records Management Officer and the appropriate Department Head. The Records Management Officer is directed to supervise the destruction of records approved for final disposition on a regularly scheduled basis. Any City record, the subject matter of which is in litigation, shall not be destroyed until such litigation is final.

Destruction of original records that have been duplicated – Original paper records that have been duplicated on microfilm, microfiche, data processing, or word processing equipment may be destroyed prior to the retention period specified in the records schedule without further approval provided the following three (3) conditions are met:

- (1.) The duplicate copy of the information contained in the original record is maintained for the specified time.
- (2.) The original paper record has not been scheduled for permanent preservation.
- (3.) The Records Management Officer has agreed to the destruction of the original paper record and the destruction is recorded.

Unscheduled Records – A City record that is obsolete or that has not been identified on an approved Records Retention and Disposition Schedule may be destroyed if its destruction has been approved in the same manner required by this chapter, and the Records Retention Officer has approved a request for destruction authorization.

12.RECORDS CENTER

The Records Center serves as centralized records storage facilities for all departments for the storage of non-current City records and is under the direct control and supervision of the Records Management Officer. The Records Management Officer shall establish policies and procedures regulating the operations and use by City departments. The City Hall Storage Building, located behind City Hall, shall serve as the repository for current-permanent and records of less importance.

13.ELECTRONIC RECORDS – STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION

The creation, maintenance, preservation, electronic document imaging, and storage of the electronic records of the City must comply with the Records Management Program, this chapter, and State law. All operational procedures of document imaging and electronic systems are under the supervision of the Manager of Information Systems.

Destruction of Data Processing Records – Computer printouts and other data processing input/output may be destroyed without specific authorization and recording provided the following conditions apply:

- (1.)The information is retained on magnetic media (e.g., magnetic tape, diskettes, etc.) and the media is scheduled in a Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.
- (2.)The output copy is not specifically listed and scheduled in this Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

14.ELECTRONIC MAIL

The City of Dacula provides e-mail services to help its employees conduct business effectively. E-mail is a public record and should be used for City business. It is intended to expedite communications, reduce paperwork, and automate routine office tasks; thereby increasing productivity and reducing costs. The same discretion should be used in maintaining and storing e-mail messages as other city produced records.

15.GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR STORAGE IN RECORD CENTERS

- a. The Record Liaison, appointed under the direction of the Department Head, will be responsible for the coordination of the department's records storage in conjunction with the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Records Management Policy. The Records Management Officer will witness receipt and approve all record storage deposits in the Records Center.
- b. The Record Liaison for each department will be responsible for inventory, and coordination of filing and records management in their department's storage and filing facility in

conjunction with the rule and regulations of this policy and State of Georgia records retention requirements.

- c. **Type of Storage Box** – Paper records will be stored in one cubic foot six boxes (10”x12”x15¼”). Boxes greater than the designated size will not be accepted in the Records Center.
- d. **Packing of Box** – records should be categorized by date and item description. Disposition of records will be by year and type of record. Records shall be stored in similar categories and dates (years).
- e. **Packing of Box** – leave enough room equivalent to “one hand’s width” (about ½ inch) in each box when packing. Do not overly pack the box.
- f. **Paperwork Submittal** – an entry form must be completed with record descriptions and signed by the Department Head and Record Liaison.
- g. **Record Disposition** – a disposition notice in compliance to the retention schedule will be sent to the Department Head and Records Liaison prior to any destruction of records.
- h. Disposition of records must be approved by the Department Head and Records Management Officer and in compliance with Local and State Retention regulations.

16. INDEXING SYSTEM

The purpose of the City of Dacula Records Management Indexing is to provide a standardized system for identifying stored boxes and allow for speedy retrieval of stored documents.

Each number has a specific meaning and provides information regarding the category number, number of boxes, documents contained within. Listed below the index number is a Destroy Date. This date reflects when the documents contained in the box are eligible for destruction.

Below is a brief description of each number given in the indexing sequence.

Index Number Example: 01-02-03

01 = Department Number. This is the number assigned for each Department. *Example: 01= Finance; 02= Human Resources; 03= Court; etc.*

02 = Year in which material contained inside the box was created and boxed for retention. All boxes should contain only one complete year documents/files. Documents with different retention time lengths may not be placed in the same box.

03 = Box number in sequence. *Example: Box number 3 out of 5 boxes.*

The actual destruction date will be displayed on the box.

Example: Destroy Date – December 31, 2007

17. DEPARTMENT INDEX NUMBERS

Finance	01	Court/Marshals	04
Administration	02	Elections	05
Human Resources	03	Planning & Zoning	06

Public Works 07
Records Management 08
Taxation 09