

# City of Sonora

## Records Retention Policy

(Attachment A)

### POLICY

- **Scope:** Covers all records in any format (paper, electronic, audio, etc.). Applies to original records; duplicates and non-records may be destroyed at any time.
- **Purpose:** A Records Retention Policy saves both physical and electronic storage space. Retaining and disposing of records according to the Retention Schedule creates a regular, controlled flow of records through the office. Records may move through multiple storage locations throughout their life, such as internal office storage, departmental storage, or external storage facilities.
- **Administrative Value of Records:** Records are created to document the functions the City performs day-to-day. Records have administrative value so long as they assist the City in conducting either current or future work. The primary administrative use for most records is exhausted when the transactions to which they relate have been completed. From that point on, the records begin to lose their administrative value.
  - Some administrative records contain basic facts concerning the City's origin, policies, functions, organization, and significant administrative decisions. These records should be preserved to provide documentation of the City's operations in the past, present, and future.
- **Legal Value of Records:** Records have legal value if they contain evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations to the City, both those of the City and those of persons directly affected by the City's activities. These records must be made available if they are requested for litigation or legal hold and may not be destroyed once requested while the hold is still in place, even if the records have come to the end of their scheduled retention period.
  - Determining the legal value often means consulting with the City's attorney and reviewing statutes and regulations for rules specific about a program or function, and asking questions like:
    - Would these records be useful in case of litigation -- when would they stop being useful (i.e., is there a statute of limitations, etc.)?
    - Are there any statutes, regulations, or memorandums of understanding that require the records to be kept for a minimum amount of time?
    - Are some of the records different than others -- should the record series be split up into different descriptions with different retention periods?
- **Fiscal Value of Records:** Records of fiscal value are those which document financial authorizations, obligations, and transactions, and provide an audit trail; or those records that pertain to the financial transactions of the City. Some examples of fiscal records include budgets, ledgers, payrolls, and vouchers. After records have served their basic administrative functions, they may still have sufficient fiscal value to justify their retention in storage to protect the City from litigation, or to account for the expenditure of funds. Records with fiscal value may be subject to audit and may need to be retained for a period of time allowing for an audit to be

initiated. Once audits have been resolved, fiscal records often lose their value. When considering fiscal value, which is about financial planning, budgets, and audits, consider questions like:

- Do the records contain financial information that would be relevant or required in an audit?
  - Do the records help support the budget process now or in the future?
  - What is the audit period for those programs/records?
- **Destruction Procedures:**
    - Annual review of inactive records by the Departments.
    - Preparation of a Records Destruction Certification listing records slated for destruction.
    - Approval by City Clerk, Department Head, City Attorney (if required), and notification to City Administrator.
    - Secure destruction (shredding, electronic wiping) with documentation retained.
    - A Destruction Log is maintained by the records coordinator.
  - **Policy Review:** At least every five years or as state law changes.
  - **Compliance:** Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

#### **DIGITIZED RECORDS / SCANNED COPIES**

City departments may scan or digitize original paper records into a reliable electronic storage system. Once verified for quality and completeness, the original physical records may be destroyed if:

- The scanned copy is maintained in accordance with Government Code § 34090.5.
- The scanned copy is stored in a format compliant with long-term preservation standards (e.g., PDF/A).
- The scanned files are indexed, searchable (where applicable), and protected from unauthorized alteration or deletion.
- A Scanning Certification Log or digital asset record is created and retained, documenting:
  - Record title/series
  - Date scanned
  - Person responsible
  - Format used
  - Confirmation that records were verified prior to destruction

Records retention periods apply to the scanned version starting from the date of creation or receipt of the original document, not the scan date.

# CITY OF SONORA RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

("Current" = most recent fiscal or calendar year; "Closed" = finalized status)

| TYPE OF RECORD                                             | YEARS                            | REMARKS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Correspondence                                             | 3                                | Reports, General/Public                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>FINANCIAL</b>                                           | Audit Date + 4/7                 | 4-years City, 4-years State, 7-years Federal                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Expense Reports                                            | Audit Date + 4/7                 | Or until audited, whichever is first                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Budget and Related Items                                   | Audit Date + 4/7                 | Or until audited, whichever is first                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Billing/Invoices/Accounting Reports & Records              | Audit Date + 4/7                 | Or until audited, whichever is first                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Audits/Taxes                                               | Audit Date + 4/7                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Checks/Ledgers/Registers Business Licenses                 | Audit Date + 4/7                 | Or until audited, whichever is first<br><i>Note: Checks are to be kept for 5 years</i>                                                                                                                                                     |
| Fees/Receipts/Accounts Payable/Receivables/Deposits        | Audit Date + 4/7                 | Or until audited, whichever is first                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Grants                                                     | Active +5                        | Active until the end of the grant year, or refer to the grant application close-out procedures                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>                                     |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| PERS, Social Security, SSI                                 | Permanent                        | EEOC/ADEA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Training Records:<br>Miscellaneous Safety<br>(Police/Fire) | Current Yr +7<br>Terminated +7   | Employee training applications, volunteer program training, class training materials, internships, etc. For Safety: Paperwork documenting internal and external training                                                                   |
| Recruitment                                                | Closed +3                        | May include, but not limited to: Applications, resumes, alternate lists/logs, indices, ethnicity disclosures examination, materials examination, answer sheets, job bulletins, eligibility, electronic database, interview documents, etc. |
| Employee Rights:<br>Miscellaneous<br>Safety (Police/Fire)  | Terminated + 2<br>Terminated + 5 | May include, but not limited to: Arbitration, grievances, sexual harassment, Civil Rights, complaints, terminations, disciplinary actions, etc.                                                                                            |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Personnel Files:<br>Miscellaneous Safety<br>(Police/Fire) | Terminated +3<br>Terminated +5 | May include, but not limited to:<br>Release authorizations, certifications,<br>reassignments, outside employment,<br>commendations, disciplinary actions,<br>Terminations, oaths of office, evaluations, pre-<br>employment medicals, fingerprints, IDs, etc. |
| Medical Leave Includes                                    | Closed +30                     | Family Leave, certifications, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Toxic Exposure Reports                                    | Active                         | Until the employee leaves/terminates                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Negotiations                                              | Permanent                      | Notes, notebooks, correspondence,<br>contracts, and Memorandum of<br>Understandings                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Associations                                              | Active                         | Active while membership is current                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Payroll                                                   | 5                              | General                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Employee Time Sheets                                      | Audit Date + 6                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Attendance                                                | Active+1                       | Active until the employee terminates                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Payroll Register                                          | Permanent                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Federal and State Tax                                     | Audit Date +4                  | W-4's and W-2's (also 1099's)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Salary Records                                            | Terminated+ 3                  | Deduction authorization, beneficiary<br>designations, unemployment claims,<br>garnishments, etc.                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>EQUIPMENT /SUPPLIES</b>                                |                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Inventory                                                 | Active                         | Active until revised                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Purchase Request/Order                                    | Audit Date + 4/7               | Or until audited, whichever is first                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Vehicle File Records                                      | 2                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Inspection Reports                                        | Active                         | Active until revised/rescinded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Vendor Information                                        | Active                         | Active until revised/rescinded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Building Leases                                           | Active                         | Active until the lease terminates                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>POLICY/PROCEDURES/<br/>ORGANIZATION</b>                |                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Polices/Procedures (All)                                  | Active                         | Active until revised/rescinded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Organization Charts                                       | Active                         | Active until revised                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Vision/Mission Statements                                 | Active                         | Active until revised                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Reports                                                               | Current + 2                                     | Documentation received, created, and/or submitted to the council                                                                                                                                                          |
| Tapes, Audio/Video                                                           | Current + 2                                     | When used for minute preparation, and may have historical value                                                                                                                                                           |
| Request for Proposals Request for Qualifications                             | 3                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Resolutions/Ordinances/<br>Minutes/Code Book/Council<br>Agendas              | Permanent                                       | Original resolutions, ordinances, minutes, agendas, and special meeting notices, including certificates of posting, original summaries, original communications, and action agendas for councils, boards, and commissions |
| Contracts                                                                    | Active 4/7                                      | Active until contract terminates - + 4/7 if subject to audit                                                                                                                                                              |
| Public Hearings                                                              | 5                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Health/Safety Documents                                                      | 3                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Studies/Feasibility Studies                                                  | 5                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Monthly Activity Reports                                                     | 2                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Plans and Goals                                                              | Active                                          | Active until revised/rescinded/superseded/<br>completed                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>RECORDS MANAGEMENT</b>                                                    |                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Records Retention Schedule                                                   | Active                                          | Active until revised                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Records Transfer List                                                        | Active                                          | Active until the disposal of records                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Legal Opinions                                                               | Active +1                                       | Active until issues are resolved                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Lawsuits/Small Claims Large<br>Lawsuits                                      | Active +1<br>Permanent                          | Active until litigation is complete                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES</b>                                              |                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Administration/Campaign<br>Statements and Conflict of<br>Interest            | Current +5                                      | FPPC Opinions                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Statement of Economic Interest<br>Oath of Office<br>Certificates of Election | Terminated +7<br>Terminated +6<br>Terminated +4 | FPPC Opinions                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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| <b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>                                                                                                 |                                |                                                                                                       |
| Accident/Incident Reports                                                                                              | Closed +7                      | Reports and related records                                                                           |
| Insurance Certificates                                                                                                 | Permanent                      | Liability, workers' compensation, property                                                            |
| Workers Compensation                                                                                                   | Claim Closed,<br>Terminated +5 | Claim files, reports, and incident working files                                                      |
| Claims, Damage                                                                                                         | Closed +5                      | Paid/Denied                                                                                           |
| Risk Management Reports                                                                                                | Closed +5                      | Federal OSHA forms, loss analysis reports, safety reports, etc.                                       |
| Bonds, Insurance                                                                                                       | Permanent                      | Bonds and insurance policies insuring city property and other assets                                  |
| <b>DEVELOPMENT</b>                                                                                                     |                                |                                                                                                       |
| Development Agreements, Development Standards, CEQA Documents, General Plan Documents, Deeds & Notes, Building Permits | Permanent                      |                                                                                                       |
| Logs                                                                                                                   | Current +5                     | Records listing permits, certificates of occupancy, inspections, building activity, daily, plan check |
| Maps/Plats/Permits/Surveys                                                                                             | Permanent                      | Plans, building, signs, grading, encroachment, blueprints, and specifications, etc.                   |
| Violations, Building, Property & Zoning                                                                                | Closed +2                      |                                                                                                       |
| Property Acquisition/Disposition                                                                                       | Closed+10                      | Sale, purchase, exchange, lease, rental, etc.                                                         |
| Redevelopment Budgets                                                                                                  | Permanent                      |                                                                                                       |
| Assessment Districts                                                                                                   | Permanent                      |                                                                                                       |
| Annexations                                                                                                            | Permanent                      |                                                                                                       |
| Emergency Management Plan                                                                                              | Permanent                      | Unless revised                                                                                        |

If not listed above, City of Sonora Records management guidelines will subscribe and defer to the Secretary of State's Local Government Records Management Guidelines.