

Records Management Policy

From Kittitas County Policy Wiki

DRAFT - this article is a draft. The content might not be complete.

Kittitas County Records Management Policies

1. Purpose

Kittitas County officials and employees are responsible for retaining records that document the official work of the county in accordance with retention schedules approved by the Washington State Archives' Local Records Committee. The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for appropriate retention and destruction of records within the departments of Kittitas County and to educate employees how to:

- Identify public records and their retention schedule.
- Manage, preserve, dispose of, and/or transfer, in compliance with approved retention schedules, those records, regardless of format or media, which document the organization, functions, programs, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the County; and destroy records with minimal or no retention value.

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2. Definitions

As used in this policy, the following term shall have the meaning indicated:

Archival (Appraisal Required)

Public records which may possess enduring legal and/or historic value and must be appraised by the Washington State Archives on an individual basis.*

Archival (Permanent Retention)

Public records which possess enduring legal and/or historic value and must not be destroyed.*

Born-digital

A record originally created as an electronic record. Born-digital records consist of the file along with its metadata and any attachments. Paper records that have been digitized or any other record converted into digital format are not born-digital.

Conversion

The activity of converting public records from one form (source records) to another (converted records) through the processes of imaging (digitization or microfilm preservation) or data migration (digital or magnetic).*

Database Management System

(DBMS) A software system used to access and retrieve data stored in a database (e.g. SQL Server, Oracle, Microsoft Access and other similar programs).

Electronic Information System

A system in which computerized records (electronic records) are collected, organized, and categorized to facilitate their preservation, retrieval, use, access, and disposition.

Electronic Records

Any information in a format that only a machine can process, including but not limited to video or audio cassette tape, punch card, email, and word processing files. The electronic record includes its metadata.

Essential Records

Public records that local government agencies must have in order to maintain or resume business continuity following a disaster. While the retention requirements for essential records may range from very short-term to archival, these records are necessary for an agency to resume its core functions following a disaster.* See RCW 40.10.010 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.10.010>).

Local Records Committee

(LRC) The committee established by RCW 40.14.070 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14.070>) to review and approve disposition of local government records.*

Metadata

Information describing the contents and context of data files; often referred to as "data about data". This includes but is not limited to date of creation, access information, database schema, author/sender, and electronic routing information.

Permanent Records

See Archival (Appraisal Required) and Archival (Permanent Retention) above.

Preservation

The filing, storing, or any other method of systematically maintaining and keeping secure, a record in its entirety, including metadata. This term covers materials not only filed or otherwise systematically maintained but also those temporarily removed from existing filing systems.

Primary Record Holder

The employee who creates the record, or is first to receive the record created by a non-employee.

Public Records

RCW 40.14.010 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14.010>) – Definition and classification of public records.

"... The term "public records" shall include any paper, correspondence, completed form, bound record book, photograph, film, sound recording, map drawing, machine-readable material, compact disc meeting current industry ISO specifications, or other document, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and

including such copies thereof, that have been made by or received by any agency of the state of Washington in connection with the transaction of public business..."*

RCW 42.56.010(3) (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56.010>) – "Public record" includes any writing containing information relating to the conduct of government or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics.

The interaction between the two statutes may impact how/why we retain records.

Records Series

A group of records, performing a specific function, which is used as a unit, filed as a unit, and may be transferred or destroyed as a unit. A records series may consist of a single type of form or a number of different types of documents that are filed together to document a specific function.*

Records Retention Schedule

A legal document approved by the LRC that specifies required retention periods for a record series and provides ongoing disposition authority for the records series after its approved retention period has been satisfied.

Retention Period

The retention period is the minimum amount of time that an agency is required to retain records within a record series. Retention periods are provided in records retention schedules.

Secondary Records

Copies of records (created or received), provided that the agency retains the primary record in accordance with the current approved minimum retention period.*

Transitory Records

Public records that only document information of a temporary, short-term, nature, and provided the records are:

- Not needed as evidence of a business transaction; and
- Not covered by a more specific records series.*

* Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE), Version 3.0 (November 2012)

3. Policy

3.1 Identifying Public Records

Public records are defined by three key criteria in RCW 40.14.010 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14.010>) and RCW 42.56.010 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56.010>):

1. Made by or received by any agency in the State of Washington

2. In connection with the transaction of public business
3. Regardless of physical form or characteristics

A record provides evidence of an agency's decisions and actions, and therefore has a retention value.

3.1.1 Records Index

No general County records index exists. Departments that choose to maintain an index are responsible for maintaining the index. Departments that do not have an index are not required to create one as the Board of County Commissioners has determined, as reflected in KCC 2.55.030 (<http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/boc/countycode/title02.aspx#2.55.030>), that such would be unduly burdensome, thus implicating the exception provided for in RCW 42.56.070(4) (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56.070>).

A records index is publicly disclosable and therefore should not contain any sensitive or redactable information.

3.2 Preserving Public Records

Kittitas County officials and employees shall retain all public records that document the official work of the county. These records, regardless of format or media, shall be retained in their native format for the minimum period required by retention schedules approved under RCW 40.14 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14>) and WAC 434-635 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=434-635>).

The Primary Record Holder is responsible for retention of the record for the prescribed period of time.

Departments shall prescribe an appropriate records maintenance program so that complete records are filed or otherwise identified and preserved, records can be found when needed, the identification and retention of permanent, essential and/or archival records are facilitated, and permanent and temporary records are physically or electronically segregated.

Each department shall:

1. Maintain records in their entirety
2. Ensure accessibility and security
3. Organize records for easy recall
4. Periodically audit procedures and adherence to them to assess their adequacy.

3.2.1 Electronic Records

Unless otherwise noted, records retention requirements apply to all electronic information systems. This section discusses specific aspects of electronic records retention:

1. Original format: all electronic records must be kept in the record's original format. This demonstrates the authenticity of the record, maintains the context of the record, and preserves both the record and its metadata.
2. Conversion: conversion of a primary record from one data format to another is allowable only if the need for conversion and method is documented and all original metadata is preserved. Examples of when this

is appropriate include new versions of software from the same vendor or moving from software of one vendor to that of another. Converting to a different format does not change any retention requirements. If a record has a 5 year retention and the original format is paper, scanning that piece of paper to an image does not change the fact it still has a 5 year retention value. Converting a Word document that has a 5 year retention to a .pdf does not change the retention of the record created in Word.

3. External systems: Kittitas County departments with access to external electronic systems shall ensure that county records sent or received on these systems; e.g. Courts (AOC, JIS), law enforcement (KITTCOM, Spillman) are preserved in an appropriate manner prior to being sent to such systems to the extent necessary to retain those records and access to them as may be required by law including applicable retention schedules.
4. County systems: Kittitas County IT is responsible for maintaining the county network and its storage devices. The primary record holder is responsible for maintaining and retaining their records within that system. Electronic backups of county systems are short term and for disaster recovery only, and as such shall not be relied upon for records management and retention.

3.3 Disposition of Public Records

Records will be destroyed at the end of their retention period. Secondary copies and records with minimal retention value, as defined in the Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule, will be destroyed when they are no longer needed for agency business. Records may be retained longer than the required minimum period if the need is documented.

All records not on legal hold must be destroyed once they have passed their retention period and any documented extensions. Records destruction shall be documented on the Kittitas County Records Disposition Log.

At a minimum, each department shall ensure that:

1. After the retention requirements have been met for records that are listed as archival or potentially archival according to the Secretary of State Retention Schedule, the department shall contact the regional archives for appraisal and possible transfer.
2. Procedures are established and are followed for disposition of all copies of records.
3. All records scheduled for disposition are disposed of in a manner that ensures destruction of any sensitive, private, proprietary, or security information.

3.3.1 Legal Holds

The County is prohibited from destroying a public record, even if it is about to be lawfully destroyed under a retention schedule, if a public records request has been made for that record. Additional retention requirements might apply if the records may be relevant to actual or anticipated litigation. The agency is required to retain the record until the record request and litigation has been resolved.

3.3.2 Digitizing and Destroying

For early destruction after digitization (DAD), see the current approved records retention schedule, section 5.5 Records Conversion.

3.4 Transfer of Public Records

Records considered archival (permanent retention) must be retained and preserved according to archival best practices until such time as they are transferred to Washington State Archives. RCW 40.14.030 (<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14.030>), 40.14.070(2)(a)(iii) (<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=40.14.070>); WAC 434-615-030 (<http://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=434-615-030>)

Records that require appraisal must be coordinated with the State Archivist.

3.5 Training

Department Heads/Elected Officials (DH/EOs), in coordination with the Records Management Committee, are responsible for training employees regarding policy and procedures. DH/EOs will ensure accessibility of records management policy and procedures to all county employees. RCW 42.56.150 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56.150>), 42.56.152 (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56.152>)

4. Resources

For additional information and resources, see the Kittitas County Records Management website: <http://camas/features/records-management/>.

Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on mm/dd/2014, Resolution 2014-xxx (<http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/uploads/bocc/resolutions/>)

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