

RECORDS DISPOSAL – Overview

3 Nov. 2015

Identifying, preparing, and reporting records for disposal is the responsibility of the Records Manager of each Office and Department.

Why Yearly Records Disposal?

1. Frees up storage and office space for other uses – **COUNTY SPACE IS LIMITED**
2. Eliminates unnecessary indirect costs for space maintenance of records
3. Eliminates large back-logs requiring considerable time to process for disposal

Recommended: Reserve annual dates on your Outlook Calendar to review and purge records

What records can be disposed of?

There are legal minimums for retention of government records.

1. Consult the PHMC (Pennsylvania Historic & Museum Commission) County Records Manual for retention schedules of records for your office/department available on the County Archives webpage (Public Records > Archives > Records Retention Manual).
 - 1.1 Retention schedules state the minimum time records must be kept.
IF NEEDED, records can, and should, be kept longer (for audits, grants, etc.)
 - 1.2 Download the section of PHMC County Records Manual pertaining to your office or department and make notes as needed (such as keeping a record series longer for audits, grants, etc.). Invaluable to the next Records Manager.
2. Consult any other authorizing entity for retention schedules pertaining to your records.

What are the basic steps in preparing records for disposal?

1. Identify and separate those records for maintenance recycling or shredding and those confidential records for shredding by an outside vendor.
2. Remove items, such as notebooks, clips, etc., that can damage the recycling or shredding machines. (Reuse notebooks, clips, etc.)
3. Place records in cardboard boxes and clearly labeled “Recycle” or “Shred”

DISPOSAL:

There are several methods of records disposal; offices must choose the method appropriate to the sensitivity level of the material.

- **1. MATERIAL THAT IS CONFIDENTIAL OR RESTRICTED should be PROFESSIONALLY SHREDED by an approved vendor.**

Procedure:

1. Make arrangements with a shredding contractor from the list approved by the Finance Department.
2. The contractor will come to your site and shred records designated records while witnessed by someone from your office or department. The cost of on-site shredding is charged to your department.

➤ **2. Disposal of MATERIAL THAT IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL OR RESTRICTED is overseen by the Facilities Department.**

Procedure:

1. Submit an SRO to Maintenance to request pickup. Include the number of boxes, the pick-up location, whether the records are to be shredded or just recycled, and the name of the staff person who will assist in removing the records.

For just records to be recycled:

2. Maintenance personnel will dispose of recycled disposals to a county-owned dumpster for recycling

For non-confidential records* to be shredded:

3. Maintenance personnel will transport non-confidential/non-restricted records to be shredded to a recycling facility in Harrisburg where boxes will be dropped off, put on conveyor belts, chopped, cut, ripped and baled to be sent away for recycling. There is no additional cost to offices for this service.

*These records would NOT be confidential but deemed to contain “sensitive” information by the office or department.

Reporting

1. Complete a *County Records Disposal Log* form, found in the ***County Records Manual*** (Appendix II-b, pg. 153). Distribute copies as follows: one to PHMC; one to County Archives; and one for your office’s files (as per state regulation).
2. Provide any required reporting to any other authorizing agency and keep one for your files.

Questions regarding PHMC retention schedules:

Contact Barbara Bartos – County Archivist – Ex. 7886