



ARA-8.09 - Destruction of Records

Administrative Rules Adopted by City Council (ARC)

Policy category: [Archives & Records Management](#)

Policy number: ARA-8.09

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

Administrative Rule Adopted by City Council

ARC-ARA-8.09

Search Code, Charter,
Policy

Keywords

Search

Purpose

As the agency responsible for setting procedures and securing permission from the State Archivist for destruction of City records, Archives and Records Management (ARM) sets policy on the destruction of records stored at the Records Center and provides policies for bureaus destroying records in their offices. The purpose of this policy is to provide rules and procedures for the routine destruction of public records to ensure compliance with city, state and federal recordkeeping requirements.

In keeping with records management standards, city records should not be maintained beyond their established retention. In addition to possible liability issues, records kept beyond their determined life impacts City resources for additional storage, equipment and personnel time.

Authority

City Code Chapter 3.76.040 M

The Archives and Records Management Program shall:...Establish procedures for the prompt and orderly disposition of City records for which the state archivist has granted authority to destroy because they no longer possess administrative, legal, or research value to warrant their retention;

3.76.070 Destruction of Records

City records covered by a records retention schedule shall be destroyed according to the parameters set forth in the retention schedule. In general, records shall not be retained beyond their prescribed retention.

Policies

1. All City records shall be managed according to authorized Records Retention Schedules. The Records Retention Schedules are the legal authority to dispose of public records.

- a. Official City records shall be scheduled for disposition according to their approved retention cycle.
 - b. Bureaus may arrange for destruction with an authorized vendor, within their offices, or send records to the Archives and Records Center to be destroyed.
 - c. Records shall be disposed of in a manner keeping with the sensitivity of the records.
 - d. Records stored with the Archives and Records Center shall be destroyed on schedule. A/RM will set procedures for notification of destruction and authorization.
 - i. Records in the Records Center will not be maintained beyond their retention unless they are needed for an audit, litigation or are historically significant.
 - ii. After bureau notification of pending destruction, records will be destroyed unless they qualify for one of the above conditions.
2. Records required for litigation or audits will be maintained until the need has been fulfilled, even if they might otherwise be destroyed.
 3. Records having historical significance will be transferred to the Archives, even if they might otherwise be destroyed.
 4. Official notification of records accidentally destroyed or lost will be sent to A/RM as soon as the loss is identified.
 5. Records will be destroyed in a manner keeping with their level of sensitivity.

Responsibilities

Bureau

1. Bureaus shall establish internal policies for evaluating office records on a yearly basis.
2. Records meeting their legal retention will be appropriately destroyed by the bureau, approved vendor, or sent to the Archives and Records Center for destruction.
3. Records past their retention that are also required for audit or litigation will be identified and evaluated for their earliest destruction, once the need has been met.
4. Bureaus will promptly notify A/RM of records stored at the Records Center requiring an audit or litigation hold.
5. Bureaus shall notify A/RM of changes to the laws affecting their records.

6. Bureaus will promptly review A/RM destruction notices and identify records needing to be retained due to litigation or audit.
7. Bureaus will contact A/RM if records held in their office and ready for destruction may have historical value. Any records identified in the Records Retention Schedules as being Permanent, Archival, or requiring Archival Review may not be destroyed by the bureau.
8. Bureaus shall notify A/RM in writing as soon as they become aware that records have been lost or accidentally destroyed; the notification will include a description of the records and the circumstances leading to the loss.

Archives and Records Management

1. Only records classified using an appropriate Records Retention Schedule that have not met their retention will be accepted for storage at the Archives and Records Center.
2. Records that have met their retention and are not historically significant may be sent to the Archives and Records Center for destruction.
3. At least once a year, A/RM will notify bureaus which records stored at the Records Center have met their retention.
 - a. Records involved in an audit or litigation will be held until the need has been filled.
 - b. After notifying bureaus of a pending destruction, the Archives and Records Center will destroy boxes not required for audits or litigation.
 - c. Records deemed potentially historical will be transferred to the Archives for evaluation.

HISTORY

Ordinance No. 182637, passed by City Council April 1, 2009 and effective May 1, 2009.

Administratively renamed ARA-8.09 on December 6, 2022