

LEGISLATORS' RECORDS TRANSFER PROCEDURE

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INTRODUCTION

“The Washington State Archives is a public trust collected and kept for the benefit of all citizens.”
The Archives is mandated *“to assist in securing the heritage of Washington State through the preservation of the documents which shape our history.”*

Secretary of State RALPH MUNRO

This guide is intended to describe the services of the Washington State Archives, to notify you of the importance of your records, and to assist you in preparing your records for transfer to the Archives so they may be enjoyed by generations of Washingtonians.

WHY SHOULD YOUR RECORDS BE SENT TO THE STATE ARCHIVES? The legal mandate of the State Archives is *“to centralize the archives of the state of Washington, to make them available for reference and scholarship, and to ensure their proper preservation.”*

Centralize: Researchers from all over the world rely on the State Archives for historical information about the State of Washington and its citizens. It is best that the information be centralized and not scattered in various locations statewide. It is also important that public records always remain in government custody.

Reference and Scholarship: The State Archives exists to preserve and make available knowledge of the collections it houses and its staff is trained to help researchers use the records efficiently in an atmosphere conducive to study and free of competing business.

Preservation: All records deteriorate, whether they are paper, audiocassettes, computer tapes, optical discs, photographs, or some other media. The State Archives stores all of the important historical records in its care in special temperature and humidity controlled vaults or rooms which slows the physical deterioration of the records and ensures that they will be preserved for posterity. Additionally, the Archives has a document conservation laboratory, which uses the latest techniques to preserve those records that come to us in disrepair.

Continuity of Care: The State Archives was established by law to care for the state’s historical records and is equipped and staffed to do so. We provide an important service to all of the State of Washington’s branches of government.

Confidential Records: In general, government records are public property and must be open to the public. The Public Disclosure Act and other state laws regulate the disclosure of public records held by the State Archives. When records are transferred to the State Archives, it assumes the responsibility for proper access.

For the donation of papers and other materials by legislator’s, legislative employees, and private parties, the State Archives has created a Deed of Gift agreement in accord with Washington’s broad public records laws. A copy of this agreement is located in Appendix B for your review.

TOURS AND TRAINING

Tours of the Washington State Archives are available upon request. You are encouraged to come and see how your records are stored and accessed. Touring the Archives helps make our procedures more understandable. Please call 753-1801 for an appointment.

CONTACTING THE WASHINGTON STATE ARCHIVES

Archives Research, and other selected Division of Archives & Records Management contacts. For supplies, reference, or records pick-up, phone the Archives Research Section.

Archives Research Section	(360) 586-1492
David Hastings, Chief of Archival Services	(360) 753-1801
Pat Hopkins, Research Archivist	(360) 586-4894
Terence Badger, Acquisitions Archivist	(360) 586-1602
State Archivist	(360) 586-2660
Deputy State Archivist	(360) 586-4893

The State Archives is located on the East Capitol Campus at:

1129 Washington Street S.E.
Olympia, Washington 98504-0238

The mailing address is:

Secretary of State
Division of Archives & Records Management
Archives Research Section
PO Box 40238
Olympia, Washington 98504-0238

Our mail stop is: 40238

The Archives Research Section hours of operation are:

8:30 – 4:30
Monday – Friday

WHAT IS THE LEGISLATIVE ARCHIVES?

The Legislative Archives, at the Washington State Archives, began in 1971 with enactment of the Legislative Records Act, Laws of Washington 1971, ex.s., c 102 (see Appendix A). This Act directed the State Archivist to assist the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate to classify and arrange the legislative records in their care for transfer to the State Archives.

Since enactment of this law, the Archives has received the original laws, journals, dockets, memorials, petitions and resolutions of the Legislature from 1854 to the present. We have received records from the House and Senate standing committees, select committees and sub-committees, which includes Bill Files, Meeting Files, and Issue Files, as well as minutes and audiocassettes of committee hearings and floor debates. Likewise, records from the party caucuses, legislative photographers, and workrooms have been collected.

In addition to this charge of collecting the records of the Legislature, the law also authorized the State Archivist to encourage the donation of your legislative papers. By establishing guidelines and procedures for transfer, the Archives can preserve your papers to document your important part in Washington State history and the legislative process.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Legislative Archives has become a major government research resource. It provides a wealth of primary source documentation whereby legislative intent can be examined and determined. It has evidential value for tracing the legislative process, and it preserves and protects the history of the State Legislature as a branch of state government.

WHO USES THE LEGISLATIVE ARCHIVES?

The Legislative Archives is used extensively by legislative staff, attorneys, state employees, scholars in many fields, as well as the general public. Additionally, researchers from out-of-state have come to appreciate the collection because the Washington State Legislature has led the way on several key legislative issues, and also because in recent years the history of legislation in this state is so complete.

YOUR LEGISLATIVE PAPERS ARE IMPORTANT!

Your contributions to the legislative process are important and the records of those contributions, collected during the course of your legislative career, need to be preserved as part of our state's legislative history. Your papers express your concern and interests as a legislator, your deliberations on key bills and major issues of the time, as well as the prevailing attitudes and concerns of your constituents.

Your papers are a legacy, which only you can provide by insuring their preservation in the Archives. This guide serves to assist you with preserving your papers and to encourage you to do

so. In addition, State Archives staff are available to consult and assist you on request. Please call upon us.

HOW TO TRANSFER PAPERS TO THE STATE ARCHIVES

The orderly transfer of papers and records to the Washington State Archives, as well as referencing the records, is a simple process, with 7 basic steps. Follow these procedures to:

1. Identify the Archival Records Series
2. Assemble the Records Storage Box
3. Transfer Records to the Records Storage Boxes
4. Prepare the Records Transmittal Form (Box Content List)
5. Prepare the Records Storage Box Label
6. Ship the Records to the State Archives
7. Referencing Your Records at the State Archives

STEP 1. IDENTIFY THE ARCHIVAL RECORDS SERIES

Records are usually grouped into what are called RECORD SERIES. Record series are file units or documents that are arranged in accordance with a filing system or maintained as a unit because they result from the same accumulation or filing process, the same function, or the same activity.

Your records can generally be broken down into 4 basic groups:

- Legislative Records
- Political and Campaign Materials
- Professional Career and Other Papers
- Publications and Non-Record Materials

Suggested retention periods for each group is given at the end of each section.

Legislative Records

Record series usually found in Legislators' offices include:

BILL FILES: consists of bill drafts, studies, reports and correspondence regarding bills sponsored, cosponsored or of interest to the legislator. These files are usually arranged by the session year, bill number and title.

ISSUE FILES: consists of reports, studies, articles, news clippings and correspondence related to legislation under study by the legislator but not yet in bill form. These files are usually arranged alphabetically by issue.

SUBJECT FILES: consists of reports, articles, news clippings and correspondence pertaining to subjects of interest or concern to the legislator. These files are usually arranged alphabetically.

CONSTITUENT CORRESPONDENCE: consists of incoming correspondence from constituents with attached replies. Usually filed alphabetically by name of correspondent.

NOTE: constituent correspondence may be filed with specific bills or issues, if related.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE: consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence with other legislators, government officials, offices, private persons or organizations. Usually filed alphabetically by correspondent.

PRESS FILES: consists of newspaper clippings, new releases and press photos. Usually filed by subject.

NEWSLETTERS: consists of copies of newsletters sent to constituents. One copy of each Newsletter only.

SPEECH FILES: consists of drafts and final versions of speeches given.

QUESTIONNAIRES and SURVEYS: consists of a sample copy of each questionnaire sent to constituents, filed with the tabulated survey results.

Retention Suggestion: The records series listed above frequently have historical value and should be transferred to the Archives. The Archives suggests that you retain these records in your office for one year after the session to which they pertain, unless they are ongoing issues, then transfer them to the Archives in order to make way for current and future files.

Political and Campaign Materials

POLITICAL CAREER FILES: consists of party correspondence, minutes and agendas to party meetings, speeches, newspaper articles, party committee files, as well as state and national convention materials.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS: consists of campaign literature, pamphlets, newspaper articles, photographs, speeches, new releases, and samples of campaign posters, bumper stickers, lapel buttons and related memorabilia.

Retention Suggestion: Campaign materials should be transferred as soon as possible after election as they tend to otherwise become misplaced or discarded.

Professional and other Papers

PROFESSION AND OTHER PERSONAL PAPERS: biographical sketches, scrapbooks, professional writings and correspondence, and other public service career materials and memorabilia.

Retention Suggestion: these materials are frequently of historical value and can be transferred at anytime, but are usually retained until the end of public service careers.

Publications and Non-Record Materials NOT Archival--Do NOT Send to Archives

Multiple copies of publications

Magazines and Books

Directories, RCWs, WACs, obsolete forms and stationary

Published legislative materials such as bill status reports, meeting schedules, digests and calendars

Retention Suggestion: the above materials generally have no archival value and should not be sent to the Archives. Recycle or discard after their reference purpose is served.

STEP 2. ASSEMBLE THE RECORDS STORAGE BOX

Records storage boxes are available FREE of charge upon request. Call the Archives at 586-1492 and we will either send them to you or bring them to you.

STEP 3. TRANSFER RECORDS TO THE RECORDS STORAGE BOXES

Records storage boxes are designed to accommodate either letter or legal sized file folders. Please place the files so that they face the front of the box (if letter sized files are used) or face away from the box lid when open (for legal size files). Leave about 1” of space in the box. Do not over-pack; over-packing causes difficulty in referencing. NOTE: please do not put pendaflex files (hanging files) in the boxes. They do not fit, and are a safety hazard for the staff, which references the box.

STEP 4. PREPARE THE RECORDS TRANSMITTAL FORM (BOX CONTENT LIST)

The Records Transmittal form is a listing of records sent to the Archives, by BOX number, RECORD SERIES TITLE and FILE TITLE. It is not necessary to prepare a separate Transmittal Form for each box, however, a complete file title listing is necessary for retrieval purposes.

When preparing the form:

- Leave the top set of boxes blank
- On the next set of boxes fill in the Name of Agency (House or Senate), Office Name (Legislator’s Name), and the name of the person transmitting the records to the Archives
- On the lower sections, leave Location blank (we will fill this in), type in the Box number, the Record Series, the File Titles, and the corresponding Inclusive Dates.

Once we have received the forms and the boxes, we will send you back the transmittal with the remaining information added to expedite reference of your records (see step 7).

A sample form is shown below to follow, or you may call the Archives for assistance if you have any questions. Appendix C of this guide is a blank Transmittal Form, which you may make copies of for use, or you may call the Archives and we can send you an MS Word Template, which you can use on your computer.

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
DIVISION OF ARCHIVES & RECORDS MANAGEMENT
ARCHIVAL RECORDS TRANSMITTAL**

Received By	Date	Accession Number
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Name of Agency	Office/Sub-Division	Transmitted By
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Location	Box #	Record Series/File Title	Date(s)

STEP 5. PREPARE THE RECORDS STORAGE BOX LABEL

Boxes should be labeled consecutively, beginning with Box number 1, i.e.:

- Box # 1: Bill Files, 1996-98
- Box # 2: Issue Files, 1996-97
- Box # 3: General Correspondence, 1996-97

Box labels need to show:

- Records Group Title, i.e.: Washington State (Senate or House of Representative)
- Sub-Group Title: Legislator’s Name
- Record Series Title, i.e.: Bill Files, Issue Files, etc. (See Step 1.)
- Arrangement, i.e.: Alphabetical, Chronological, Numerical, etc.
- Description, usually citing the first and last File Title in the box, i.e.:
 HB 1489 – ESHB 2089, Social and Health Services – Welfare, Jones – Smith
- Inclusive Date, dates for entire contents of Box, i.e.: 1995-98
- Box Number

The Archives staff will fill in the Control Number and Accession Number.

Place the label under the hand hold on the end of the Box which faces forward (directions as to label placement are usually on the box).

RECORD GROUP TITLE		
Senator John Jones’ Papers		
SUB-GROUP TITLE		
Legislative Files		
SERIES TITLE		
Bill Files		
ARRANGEMENT		
Numerical, by Bill Number		
DESCRIPTION		
HB 112 – HB 2043		
INCLUSIVE DATES		
1999-2000		
CONTROL NO.	ACCESSION NO.	BOX NO.
		1

STEP 6. SHIP THE RECORDS TO THE STATE ARCHIVES

Once the boxes have been packed, labeled and the transmittals prepared, they are ready for shipment to the Archives. At this point you may either send them to us through campus mail (if 3 boxes or less) at MS 40238, or you may call the Archives at 586-1492 for us to pick them up.

We will pick the boxes up within 48 hours of your request.

STEP 7. REFERENCING YOUR RECORDS AT THE ARCHIVES

Requests for files, copies from files or information from files may be obtained by calling the ARCHIVES RESEARCH SECTION at 586-1492. We can either have the files available for you to look at here at the Archives, or we can send them back to you through campus mail.

Reference service can be expedited by referring to your transmittal form and supplying the Archives staff with the ACCESSION NUMBER, BOX NUMBER, FILE TITLE, and ARCHIVES SHELF LOCATION.