



Office of the Secretary of State
Washington State Archives

Records Management Advice

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Using Records Retention Schedules: Notorious/Historically Significant Case Files/Inmate Records

Purpose: Provide guidance to local government law enforcement agencies on the identification and retention of notorious/historically significant case files and inmate custody records.

The *Law Enforcement Records Retention Schedule* includes two records series with an “Archival” designation relating to notorious or historically significant case files (DAN LE2010-060) and inmate records (DAN LE2010-086).

The following list provides criteria that should be considered when evaluating whether case or inmate records should be retained according to a records series for notorious/historically significant records:

- Did the case/inmate attain contemporary public notoriety?
- Did the case/inmate receive significant media coverage?
- Did the inmate/case cause local agencies to develop or utilize new methods or technologies?
- Is the case/inmate frequently cited in scholarly or professional literature or other resources?
- Has the case/inmate caused a change in policies or laws?
- Did the case affect a large portion of the community?
- Was the case/inmate controversial?
- Was the case/inmate generally viewed by the community as important or significant?
- Was the case/inmate the subject of a well-known book or feature film?
- Did the case/inmate incur large restitution amounts?

If a case or inmate file meets one or more of the above criteria, it should be retained according to the most appropriate records series for notorious/historically significant records in the *Law Enforcement Records Retention Schedule*. Accordingly, such records should not be destroyed and the agency should contact Washington State Archives to arrange for archival appraisal and transfer.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**