



**Using the State Records Center:
 What is the Difference Between the State Archives and the State Records Center?**

Purpose: Provide guidance to agencies working with the State Archives and/or the Records Center.

The State Archives collects and preserves Washington state’s historical records. State and local agencies are encouraged to transfer their archival records that have met retention to the State Archives and its regional branches. The State Archives assumes custody of the transferred records for access and disclosure.

The State Records Center, an office of the State Archives, provides low-cost off-site storage to state agencies. State agencies are able to store records they don’t have room for in their own facilities. The agency maintains custody of the stored records for access and disclosure, and they can recall the records using the Records Center management system web application.

State Archives	Records Center
The State Archives and its regional branches accept records from state and local agencies	Accepts records from state agencies only
Accepts archival records past retention only	Accepts archival and non-archival records still under retention
Accepts records of all formats, including digital	Accepts paper records only
Responsible for access and public disclosure	Agencies remain responsible for access and public disclosure
Inherits legal custody of transferred records	Agencies retain legal custody of records and can recall them using the Records Center management system web application.
Transferred records are permanently preserved at the State Archives	Non-archival records are stored until their destruction. Archival records are transferred to the State Archives past retention

Visit the Records Center’s page on the Washington State Archives website for more information.

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

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