


County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court

A small, stylized illustration of a pair of scales of justice, positioned behind the word "Superior" in the title.

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*Records Retention Manual
&
General Records
Retention Schedule*

REPLACES 1983 MANUAL

This manual replaces, entirely, the County Clerk Records Retention Manual and General Records Retention Schedule contained therein, published in March of 1983.

Published Under the Authority of the Local Records Committee
State of Washington, Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Archives & Records Management
Olympia, Washington

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The State of Washington
Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Archives & Records Management
Olympia, Washington

August 1993

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK
GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE
AUTHORIZATION**

In accordance with the authority granted to it by RCW 40.14.070 and WAC 414.24.050, the Local Records Committee hereby approves, adopts and publishes the COUNTY CLERK GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE, consisting of the dated pages indicated in the "List of Effective Pages" printed on the reverse hereof, as the recurring disposition schedule for public records within or pertaining to the Office of the County Clerk (Clerk of the Superior Court) of the State of Washington. The COUNTY CLERK GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE constitutes continuing authority for the disposition of public records identified therein which are held by any County Clerk.

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Destruction authorization references for any record or series to be destroyed shall cite the CC- page number and date of the page number on which the record or series appears within the COUNTY CLERK RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE.

Signed in Olympia, Washington,
this the 1st day of September, 1993.

For the Attorney General:

For the State Auditor:

For the State Archivist:

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County Clerk
Records Retention Schedule

List of Effective Pages
August, 1993

First Edition

Page CC-1 through CC-46.....Original 8/93

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Introduction

All government records are important in that government, by its very nature, affects many facets of the life of a community and its citizens. Some records are of passing or very temporary interest to anyone, while others have ongoing effect or may have established a legal or historical precedent.

Numerous statutes, court rules and legal decisions dictate how and in what form many records which come to the County Clerk are to be handled during the course of business. This manual is not intended to govern the handling of these records while they are in daily use. As a local records custodian you are charged to preserve all records within your office as property of the state of Washington.

This manual deals with the *"preserved, stored, transferred, destroyed or disposed of"* portion of RCW 40.14.020. It is through the Local Records Committee via this retention schedule that the state of Washington sets out minimum periods of time that records must be preserved, establishes technical standards for the reproduction and preservation of original records when transferred to alternative storage media, under what conditions they may be transferred to the custody of another and under what conditions they may be destroyed or otherwise disposed. Before transferring any of your records to another or before you consider disposing of any records, original or otherwise, in any manner, you must consult this document.

Contrast with Prior Schedule

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This document is intended to present in a different manner, the information contained in the superseded 1983 **County Clerk Records Retention Manual**. This manual reflects user recommendations that a number of records be combined, that some be deleted and that others be added. This document is arranged alphabetically, only. It was the considered opinion of the drafters that the prior arrangement of items by like groups was difficult to use and that, while many records may be logically grouped as to kind and subject, for ease of reference the data should be presented alphabetically.

Retention Schedule Not All-Inclusive

This document does not list all County Clerk records. Specifically, it does not list many discontinued records, nor can it anticipate all future records. It is intended that this document describe certain kinds of records, which should include many others not specifically listed or bearing an identical title. County Clerks may from time to time feel that they have records which do not fit any of the kinds of records listed here. Those records may need to be added to this general schedule, or, if the record is of an isolated, non-recurring nature, may be the subject of a one-time, local agency schedule approved by the Local Records Committee. Specific guidance concerning those records should be sought from the Secretary of State, the State Archivist, the servicing Regional Facility of the State Archives, from professional associations and other local records custodians. Forms to request the addition of or change to a record appear at the end of this manual.

Summary of Legal Requirements

In Washington, as in most states, statutes regulate the retention and disposition of government records. In Washington, the Public Records Act, RCW 40.14, is the primary statement of public policy regarding the retention and destruction of public records.

Public records defined: The term "public records" applies to any paper, correspondence, form, bound volume, film, magnetic medium, drawing or other document, regardless of form or physical characteristics, that has been created or received by any state or local government agency during the course of public business. RCW 40.14.010

Records as public property: All such public records shall be, and remain, the property of the agency. Outgoing officials and employees must pass such records on to their successors. Furthermore, public records shall be preserved, stored, transferred, destroyed and otherwise managed according to the provisions of RCW 40.14, unless otherwise provided by law.

Custody of public records: Public records must remain in the custody of the agency in which they were originally received or created. They shall not be placed in the custody of any other person or agency, public or private, or released to individuals except for disposition pursuant to law or as otherwise provided by law. RCW 40.14.070

Disposition of public records: Public records may be destroyed or transferred only in accord with the instructions and approval of the state of Washington's Local Records Committee. RCW 40.14.070

Local Records Committee: The Washington State Local Records Committee includes the State Archivist and representatives of the State Auditor and the State Attorney General. This committee has the authority to review and approve the disposition of all local government records. RCW 40.14.070

Local Records Retention Schedule: Local agencies may establish a records control program based on records retention schedules submitted to the Local Records Committee for approval. The Committee may approve, veto, or amend the schedules. Once a records retention schedule is approved by the Committee, the local agency has the authority to dispose of the records listed thereon on a recurring basis until the schedule is either revised or amended. RCW 40.14.070

General Records Retention Schedules: The Washington State Local Records Committee may approve and issue records retention schedules which give authority to local agencies for the disposition of specific types of commonly held records. General records retention schedules provide this authority on a recurring basis until such time as they might be revised or rescinded by the Committee. RCW 40.14.070

Use of microfilm: Microfilm copies of public records, having a degree of completeness and clarity that meets state standards and are officially sanctioned, have the same legal status as the paper originals. RCW 40.20.020, 5.46.010 [See also, "Microfilm" section in this manual.]

Authority to transfer records to the State Archives: Instead of being retained permanently by the agency, records designated as having archival or historical value may be officially transferred to the State Archives or one of its regional facilities. Except as provided in RCW 36.23.070, it is illegal to transfer public records to private persons or organizations or to depositories not designated by the State Archivist. RCW 40.14.070

Methods of records destruction: The primary objective of destruction is to reduce obsolete records to an illegible form. Burning, pulping and shredding are considered to be the most effective methods, the latter two frequently done in conjunction with recycling. It is recommended that local agencies keep a summary log and compile certificates or affidavits recording the date and details of record destruction for future reference. Affidavits or certificates of destruction may be placed in a court's general administration case file, for indexing/docketing and preservation. Records which are to be recycled may be taken to a recycling facility, where their pulping or shredding must be witnessed by the County Clerk or the County Clerk's designee. Any such records shall not be left unattended or unprotected while awaiting recycling. WAC 434.640

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Documenting Records Disposal

Once approval has been given, through a specific local records committee authorization or by way of a general records retention schedule, such as that contained within this manual, and arrangements have been made for the appraisal and transfer of records of potential archival value, the Clerk may proceed with the destruction of non-archival records which have passed their assigned retention period and which have been transferred to an approved alternative storage medium if the retention period is "permanent." The sample formats, on the next two pages, for recording the destruction of records are recommended. Your county may have other, similar forms available through a local records management office.

Affidavit of Records Destruction
S a m p l e

I, _____, acting as an agent of (County Clerk) _____,
hereby witness the destruction of the following public records, according to the
provisions of WAC 414.24.070 & 080.

Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00217-5 to 85-1-00260-4 (Cases 85-1-00218-8 & 85-1-00221-3 are active, not destroyed); after microfilming, per CC-25 of 8/93.

Destruction executed by: (method) _____

on (date) _____.

Signature of County Clerk or designee: _____

Signature of Agent: _____

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Destruction Log
S a m p l e

Record Series	Inclusive Dates	Disposition Authority	Date Disposed
Cash register daily detail reports	1986 thru 1988	CC-26 of 8/93	11/3/93
Cash register journals	▪	▪	▪
Check registers	▪	▪	▪
Checks, canceled	▪	▪	▪

____ County
Records Management Division

Records Destruction Notice
and Destruction Transmittal

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Complete the following form with the appropriate information.
 2. Each records series title must be typed exactly as it is found on the County Clerk Retention Schedule.
 3. Please type this form and return completed form to Records Management Division.

Department		COUNTY CLERK	Department Head		Date Submitted
Box No.	Records Series Title/Description			Inclusive Dates	Authorization (Retention Schedule Page/Date)
110	Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00217-5 to 85-1-00260-4 (Active, not destroyed: 85-1-00218-8, 85-1-00221-3)			5/31/85 to 6/24/85	CC-25 / Original 8/93 (Microfilmed)
111	Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00261-2 to 85-1-00306-6 (Active, not destroyed: 85-1-00266-3)			7/10/85 to 7/23/85	.
Destruction		Authorized Signatures			Witnessed By
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved		Department Head		Date	Method of Destruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended		Records Manager		Date	Date of Destruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Not approved					

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Services and Assistance Provided by The Division of Archives and Records Management

The Washington State Archives is a division of the Office of the Secretary of State. The Division operates under the provisions of Chapter 40.14 RCW, the Public Records Act, which also regulates the disposition of all records generated by state and local government agencies.

Technical Assistance

The Division provides state and local agencies technical assistance in complying with legal requirements and developing systems for managing their records. Services include standards, technical information and consultation on micrographics, filing and information retrieval, essential records protection, disaster preparedness and recovery, records center operations, records retention scheduling, records access and disclosure, records and recording media storage standards.

Microfilm and Document Conservation Services

The Division provides certain records management services on a charge-back basis. These include source document microfilming, film processing and duplication, and conservation of endangered historical documents. In addition the division provides both state and local agencies with security microfilm storage services.

Archives

The Division is also responsible for identifying, storing, preserving and providing public access to state and local government records which have continuing historical value beyond their usefulness to the agencies which created them. The Division has headquarter offices in Olympia which include microfilm services, records center facilities, archives and historical research, and the document conservation lab.

The Washington State Archives Regional System

The Division of Archives and Records Management staffs a system of regional facilities to make its services more directly available to agencies and citizens throughout the state. These operations are managed by senior state archivists skilled in both archival and records management techniques. In addition to their other duties, the archivists will now provide archival and records management assistance to the courts in their regions (see map on reverse). Working through your local records manager, your professional associations, or directly, the archivists will be able to provide you with direct assistance on a broad range of records management problems. Counties served within each regional jurisdiction are indicated on the map which follows.

CENTRAL:

c/o History Department
Central Washington University
Ellensburg, Washington 98926
(509) 963-2136 or SCAN 453-2136
FAX (509) 963-1753 or SCAN 453-1753
TIMOTHY ECKERT

NORTHWEST:

Washington State Archives
Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington 98225-9123
(206) 650-3125 or SCAN 532-3125
FAX (206) 650-3323 or SCAN 532-3323
JAMES MOORE

PUGET SOUND:

Sunset Activity Center
1809 South 140th Street
Seattle, Washington 98168-3710
(206) 764-4276 or SCAN 443-4276
MICHAEL SAUNDERS

EASTERN:

JFK Library N1584
Eastern Washington University
Cheney, Washington 99004-2495
(509) 359-6900 or SCAN 353-6900
FAX (509) 359-6456 or SCAN 353-6456
RICHARD HOBBS

SOUTHWEST:

1120 Washington Street SE
Olympia Washington, 98504-0238
(206) 753-1684 or SCAN 234-1684
WAYNE LAWSON

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Special Service Telephone Numbers

In addition to the services of the regional archivists the division has specialists available in several fields. The following telephone numbers may be useful:

Microfilm Services (206) 586-6232 or SCAN 321-6232

Document Conservation Services (206) 753-1801 or SCAN 234-1801

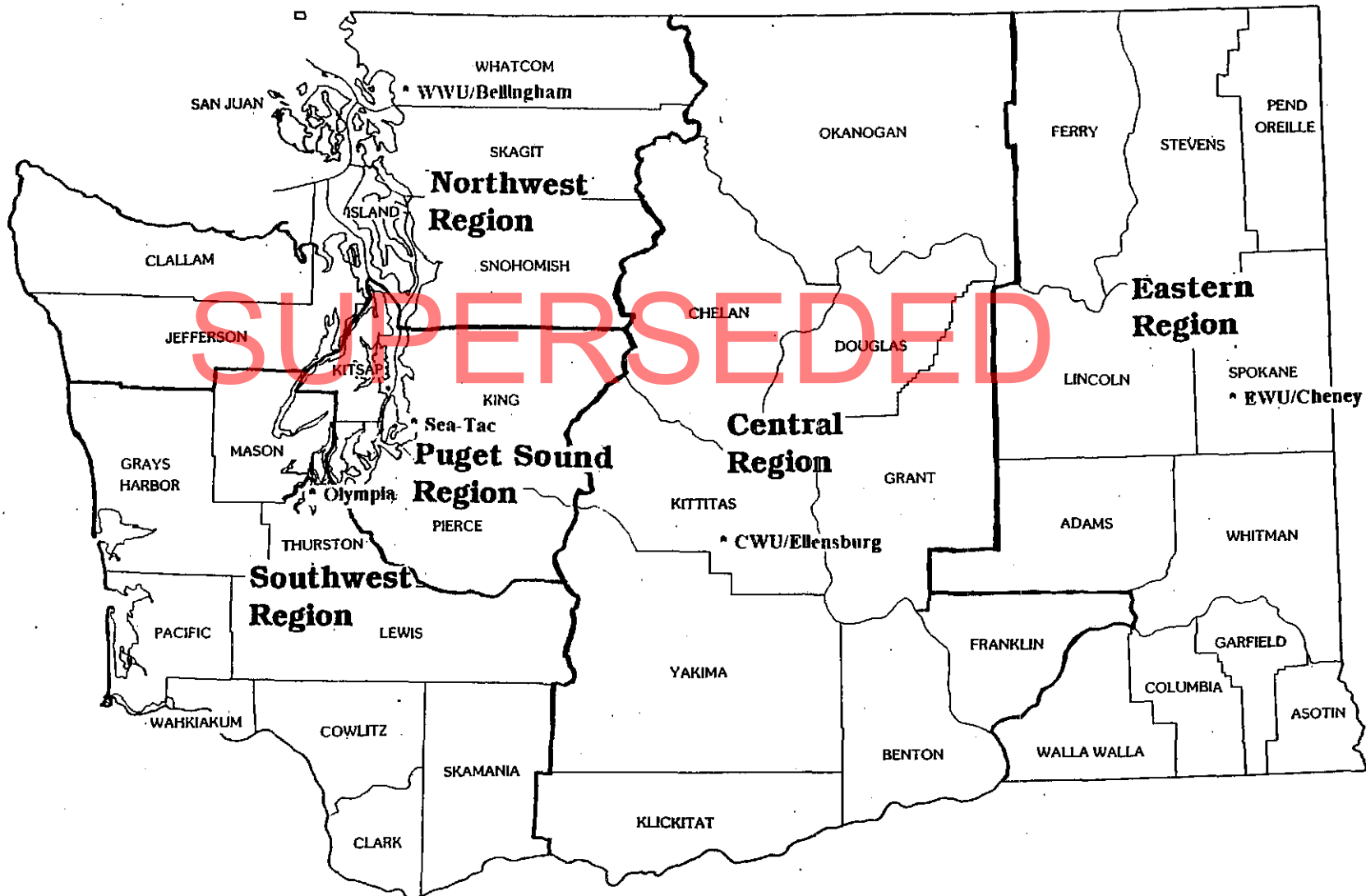
State or Deputy Archivist (206) 753-5485 or SCAN 234-5485

Archival Research (206) 586-1492 or SCAN 321-1492

Records Disaster Recovery Hotline (206) 753-1801 or SCAN 234-1801

Note: After hours, weekends and holidays, calling the -1801 number will provide you with an emergency referral number that will put you in contact with the disaster recovery assistance coordinator.

Washington State Regional Archives System



Transfer of Records to State Archives Regional Facility

Only a few of the "Disposition" listings in this document direct that records be transferred to a Regional Archives Facility. However, potentially every record is a candidate for transfer. Most of the listings direct the County Clerk to "destroy, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium." Before destroying any records, the County Clerk should have consulted the Regional Archivist in order to ascertain which records may be destroyed and which may be transferred to the custody of the Regional Archives Facility. The criteria for appraising and transferring historically important records will vary and the County Clerk should seek such appraisal and transfer guidance from the Regional Archivist.

"Approved Alternative Storage Medium"

Many of the "disposition" listings in this document direct the County Clerk to destroy the record "after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium." Any approved alternative storage medium includes microfilming and any other storage technology approved by the Secretary of State, Division of Archives and Records Management. No record should be destroyed or transferred to the Regional Archives Facility until the microfilm or other approved alternative storage medium has been checked for completeness of content and quality. Appropriate WAC and RCW provisions may govern standards and methods to be employed and the State Archives, Regional Facility, should be consulted before employing any alternative storage medium.

Microfilm

its Use and Abuse

Microfilm is a powerful records management tool. Unfortunately, its use is often abused. Microfilm should never be used simply to reduce the volume of records of temporary value.

Before launching a costly microfilm system a complete cost benefit and systems analysis study should be conducted, preferably by someone other than a prospective vendor. If a specialist is not available for this purpose then at least request more than one vendor analysis and proposal.

Legal Status of Microfilm

Chapter 5.46.010 provides that photographic reproductions, including microfilm and enlargements thereof are admissible as evidence. Chapter 40.20 provides that public agencies may cause records to be reproduced on film, including microfilm, providing that the reproducing material be of permanent material and accurately reproduce the original; and further providing that the State Archivist approve such material for state records use and that the State Auditor approve such material for local government.

State Archivist's Certification

The office of the State Archivist maintains a certification program for those local governments which wish to establish local microfilm facilities. It is important that County Clerks assure that an agency which is to microfilm public records has been certified by the State Archivist and meets those standards described in the following section.

Microfilm Standards

The State Archives will determine if a proposed microfilm service or system will meet state microfilm standards and will also advise you of any other apparent weaknesses in the proposal. In advance of any consideration of microfilm you should obtain a copy of the *Washington State Standards for Microfilm* and advise prospective equipment and service vendors of their need to meet those standards. The standards manual is available upon request from the State Archives.

Microfilm Services

Because of quality control, technical problems and higher investment costs inherent in the use of in-house microfilm systems the use of contracted microfilm services as opposed to purchasing camera systems may be advantageous. The decision should be based on a cost benefit analysis that considers both options.

Microfilming services can be obtained from the Division of Archives Microfilm Services Bureau or from commercial microfilm service bureaus certified by the State Archivist. A list of certified service bureaus is available from the State Microfilm Service Bureau.

State Microfilm Service Bureau

The Division of Archives Microfilm Service Bureau offers a full range of services for 16, 35, and 105MM microfilm systems. These include source document microfilming, film development and inspection, diazo and silver film duplicating, film cleaning and unitizing. In addition the Bureau will provide systems and cost benefit analyses, and cost estimates on request.

Security Microfilm Storage

A valid method of protecting public records is to geographically disperse multiple copies of those records. Microfilm is regarded as one of the most durable and compact methods of storing copies of original records and for dispersing the "original" silver halide film negative and diazo working copies. The Division of Archives provides security storage of microfilm for local government and has traditionally stored the silver halide negative film of all microfilmed records for the County Clerks. Because of the volume of security film stored by the Division of Archives, a controlled and documented transfer of microfilm from agencies to archival custody is necessary. A manual titled *Security Microfilm Storage* setting down the transfer and custody requirements is available from the State Archives.

Microfilm Quality Control

Use the original silver halide negative film for security only; do not jacketize it into "microfiche" or use it as a work copy. Jacketing destroys the integrity of the roll and hence the legality of the images.

Use a diazo copy as a work copy or for jacketizing, as it is less subject to abrasion.

Use guide sheets at beginning and ending of roll, file break targets on all roll film.

Use the standard resolution test target. Require that density and resolution readings be posted on all film containers. Ensure that density, resolution and other film standards are met. Inspect all film produced and reject film that does not meet standards.

Label each film container with the name of the originating organization, film roll number, date of film production, and identifying information about the contents of the roll, such as a records series title, inclusive file numbers and span dates.

Use acid-neutral film containers for storage of all film.

When filming or contracting for microfilming or other reproduction services, require compliance with the Washington State standards for the production and use of microfilm. Copies of those standards are available from the Division of Archives and Records Management.

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Machine Readable Records

Modern organizations are rapidly automating their information systems. An increasing proportion of their records are computerized, resulting in a growing body of electronic or machine readable records. Machine readable records are defined as records which require the use of a computer in order for human beings to read them. They are public records under the Public Records Act and subject to the same legal requirements as any other records.

Machine readable records possess different characteristics than conventional records, and different techniques are required to manage them. The medium is or may be fragile and short lived. Magnetic tapes and disks and optical disks have a life expectancy of ten years or fewer. Specific hardware and software are needed to regenerate the information. Because of the rapidly changing technology this hardware and software may not be available in just a very few years. Since machine readable records are not directly readable by humans, they must be "documented." Documentation includes identification of the originators of the file, purposes and descriptions of programs and software, "codebooks" containing the meaning of the codes or abbreviations used, and interior and exterior labels.

Machine readable records do offer many advantages. They can be manipulated rapidly, sorted, aggregated and listed in all sorts of combinations. For these reasons they may be far more valuable than conventional files containing the same information. They can be translated rapidly from one medium to another, and from one location to another. Unlike paper, magnetic media may be used and reused many times.

Large central mainframe or minicomputer systems generally maintain their records on tapes. The majority of these tapes are used for processing and backup. The life cycle of these tapes is short. Backup magnetic media are described in the *County Clerk Retention Schedule*, herein.

Master files containing the data itself, for some kinds of records, are described in the general schedule and are chiefly limited, at the present, to office administration, SCOMIS and accounting records. Court reporter notes may now be principally created and stored magnetically, but those electronic records are subject to the same retention and destruction requirements as notes stored on any other medium. Any such machine readable records must either be preserved on such media for the required life cycle of the information (record series) or the information converted into another medium such as hard copy printout, or better, computer output microfilm.

A basic principle to be followed in the decision to employ electronic media for records under your control is that records retention and archival considerations must be addressed at the very beginning of the system design. These considerations may be considered along with the other data administration constraints such as privacy, security, public disclosure, accuracy and consistency. Since electronic media are very perishable, we no longer have the luxury of waiting, as we did for conventional records, until the information has waited out its life on records center shelves, to determine its ultimate archival or other destiny. Nor are we able to worry later about how to retrieve electronic data, as retrieval considerations and internal as well as external labels must be incorporated at the time of creation of the electronic record. All of these considerations must be addressed at the design stage of an electronic application.

An increasing percentage of machine readable records is no longer created on centralized mainframe environments, but on personal computers, local area networks, word processing systems, etc. The "floppy disk" or "stiff" removable disk is the normal electronic media. In general, floppy disks should be considered as convenience copies. Correspondence, spread sheets, small data bases or other material should be printed regularly and filed as conventional records. If magnetic disks are to be used for long term storage, designate specific disks for this purpose and regularly copy records to them from the working disks or hard disks. The working disks can be used and reused indefinitely.

The following procedures are suggested for managing machine readable records:

1. Determine the life cycle of the electronic record data at the design or development stage of the electronic application.
2. Use the general records retention schedule for authority for disposing of processing and backup tapes or other electronic media.
3. Whenever possible, satisfy retention requirements by outputting the electronic data onto paper printouts or microfilm. The most cost effective method of outputting large files is by computer output microfilm (COM).
4. When machine readable data must be preserved on magnetic media for long periods, consider converting it to a hardware and software independent form so that it can be regenerated on any computer, using a simple program. For example, a data base file may be converted to a "flat file" (a simple two-dimensional matrix of rows and columns) in ASCII and stored on open reel tape or other electronic/magnetic media.
5. Magnetic working copy floppy disks created by word processing, personal computers or other office automation networks or systems should clearly be labeled as such and differentiated from archival copies which must be stored and managed under specific and strict controls. Archival copies should be "write-protected" to prevent alteration or inadvertent deletion or erasure of the data.

Archival or Historically Valuable Records

RCW 40.14.070 requires that records having historical or archival value be either transferred to the state archives or retained by the office of record, in accord with standards established by the state archivist.

Some County Clerk records, especially some case files, may have historical values which extend beyond their legal, financial or administrative uses. Identifying case files which may have historical or precedent-setting value is substantially the job of the County Clerk. Newsworthy cases may become candidates for preservation, as might cases which are appealed and whose ultimate disposition may set some legal precedent. Other candidates for case file preservation may be new causes of action or those involving new or changed legislation or procedures.

The process of identifying County Clerk records for transfer to the Regional Facility and for identifying archival and historically valuable records is one of collaboration between the regional archivist and the County Clerk. County Clerks are urged to confer with the regional archivist for suggestions and direction regarding the identification of records having historical or archival value and before transferring any records to the regional facility.

Disaster Recovery - Emergency Procedures

Contrary to popular belief, there is a great deal that can be done to recover records damaged in most disasters. The key is acting rapidly and being prepared. **Appendix A** contains an outline of basic steps that should be taken to recover disaster damaged paper records.

Records Storage - Problems and Standards

For common sense and technical considerations regarding the storage of records, refer to **Appendix B**.

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County Clerk
and
Clerk of the Superior Court

General Records Retention Schedule

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Records Retention Schedule

Format of Listings

Types of records are listed alphabetically. Listing includes:

DESCRIPTION: Describes the record or type of record and may include the name of sample records of the kind described. The description may include a common successor to a discontinued record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Lists the minimum length of time the original record must be kept. The County Clerk may keep records longer and for as long as she/he sees fit. County Clerks are also reminded that the measure of the time a record must be kept, the period described in this schedule, may depend on and only start counting from a benchmark "clock starting" criteria, such as the entry of a final judgment in a case. For example, court reporter notes for a civil case must be kept for six years from termination of the case, whether by a judgment, an appeal mandate, a dismissal, etc.

DISPOSITION: Describes the disposition of the record after the "period" to retain the original record has expired. Some of the records contain RCW cites for specific disposition authority.

CLASSIFICATION: Records are classified as OPR, official public records, or OFM, office files and memoranda, defined in RCW 40.14.010. The designations are broad categories which carry different retention periods and disposition criteria reflected in the Period and Disposition entries for those records. Generally, OPR items in the County Clerk offices are to be retained permanently while OFM items may be destroyed after stated intervals. OFM records include not only those records which are of only temporary utility or value, but also those records which are copies of records for which another office has the principal, official, original or primary copy and the responsibility to preserve that copy. To the extent possible, the description portion of the listings reflect which other office has or should have the primary copy of a document also held by the County Clerk.

Permanent Retention Records Which Cannot be Microfilmed: It is sometimes the case that the County Clerk will receive for filing an audio or video tape (or another item which cannot be microfilmed) as part of a court file or other record for which the minimum retention period is listed as permanent. This schedule does not address the apparent contradiction in having a perishable medium, such as magnetic tape, as part of a permanent record. At the time of this writing (Autumn of 1992), a state court rule is being proposed which will resolve such problems. In the meantime County Clerks should retain such materials unless local court rules or specific court orders provide alternative procedures.

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Abandoned or Unclaimed Property Reports

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of *Report of Unclaimed or Abandoned Property* sent to the Department of Revenue or unclaimed and undeliverable restitution transmitted in accordance with RCW 7.68.290. Reference to surrender to Department of Revenue should be recorded in case file. Does not include exhibits.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Abstract of Judgment

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. Official documentation of Superior Court proceedings and filings. May include sealed documents, published depositions and exhibits.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Account Reconciliation Records

DESCRIPTION: Locally prepared report indicating reconciliation of bank statements with check registers and/or account ledgers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Accounting Correspondence

DESCRIPTION: Accounting related correspondence not included in case file or other record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Administrative Working Files

DESCRIPTION: Usually topical files containing correspondence and data relating to the particular topic. Usually involves procedure, policy, personnel and management information.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 2 years

DISPOSITION: It is recommended that working files remain in the office as long as the topic of the file is effective and for so long as it is or may be important to preserve a history of the topic.

CLASS: OFM

Annual Report to OAC

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of a formal annual statistical report to Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC).

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until publication in OAC's annual report

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Annual Reports

DESCRIPTION: Any report, whether required or optional, issued by the office which provides an official review of the previous year's activities.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Arbitration Files

DESCRIPTION: Any data pertaining to a county's mandatory arbitration, to the extent that the data within the arbitration file are not made a part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until time for filing appeal from arbitration award has expired.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Attendance Record

DESCRIPTION: Office record of juror daily attendance, mileage and reimbursable expenses, used to prepare cost bill for juror payments.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

WITNESS DESCRIPTION: Office record of witness daily attendance, mileage and reimbursable expenses, used to prepare cost bill for witness payments.

MINIMUM WITNESS PERIOD: Until placed in case file.

WITNESS RECORD DISPOSITION: Place in case file or any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Automatic Account Reconciliation Records

DESCRIPTION: Any automatically prepared reconciliation of bank statements, check registers and/or account ledgers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Bank Statements

DESCRIPTION: Includes canceled checks and record of debits and credits for daily and investment accounts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Bond Dockets

DESCRIPTION: May be a discontinued record; replaced by SCOMIS docket entry; hard copy in case file. May have been bound volumes containing the original or copies of bonds filed by administrators, guardians and executors as security copies of bonds in case files. See also "Official Bond Register" for county officials' bonds.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Book of Levies

DESCRIPTION: May be a discontinued record; Probably included post-judgment execution documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Budget

DESCRIPTION: The office copy of the officially adopted budget, submitted to executive and/or legislative branch of county government.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded by new budget

DISPOSITION: Destroy **CLASS:** OFM

Budget & Estimated Revenue Projections

DESCRIPTION: The office copy of projections of revenue and expenditures submitted to county governing body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy **CLASS:** OFM

Case files

DESCRIPTION: Official documentation of Superior Court proceedings and filings. May include sealed documents, published depositions and exhibits.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender after 1978, tax warrant, tax case, territorial, territorial district court case files. See, also, "Tax Case Files," "Tax Warrant Case Files," "Territorial Case Files" and "Territorial District Court Case Files." Access to files or individual documents may be restricted by court order.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender prior to 1978, family court case files.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Some may be archival or historically valuable; contact regional archivist before destruction. Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. Before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. **CLASS:** OPR

Cash Book

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; locally maintained list of receipts and/or disbursements, which may be replaced by Receipt Reporting System (RRS) record of receipts and/or disbursements.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Cash Register Adjustments Summary

DESCRIPTION: Any record reflecting details of any adjustments made to any automated or manual accounting records. Includes Receipt Reporting System (RRS) and any successor system's report reflecting all cash register adjustments made for each accounting day. If all adjustments are included in Journal Detail Report, this record may be deleted and only the Journal Detail Report retained.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Backup Diskettes

DESCRIPTION: Daily backups of automated accounting computer, includes Receipt Reporting System and successor systems.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 cycles

DISPOSITION: Reuse

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Daily Detail Reports

DESCRIPTION: Record of every detail of every transaction for each accounting day. May include Receipt Reporting System-generated reports, its successor system or other similarly maintained records.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Cash Register Journals

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by Receipt Reporting System (RRS) Journal Detail Report. Any other periodic non-RRS daily financial transaction recapitulation.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

SUPERSEDED

Cash Register Revenue Account Distribution Summary

DESCRIPTION: Any daily or other regularly compiled summary reflecting the distribution of receipts into revenue reporting codes, including BARS/ARMS standard Washington revenue codes and any successor or local revenue distribution method. Includes Receipt Reporting System (RRS) or successor system report reflecting distribution of receipts into various county and state funds, by revenue code. This record must be preserved as a separate record as long as individual counties have the ability to alter the BARS/ARMS distribution tables.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Tapes

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of receipts given to payers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years.

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Check Registers

DESCRIPTION: Ledger showing deposits and withdrawals in Clerk's or other checking and/or investment accounts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Checks, canceled

DESCRIPTION: Clerk's bank checks returned by bank once negotiated by payee.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Clerk's Minute Book

DESCRIPTION: Separate collection of clerk's notes of proceedings if not originally placed in case file. May be minutes recorded on court calendars, bound and retained without transfer to case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS 'copy case' be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Contracts

DESCRIPTION: Written statement of terms of agreement between office and another office, agency or individual; AKA: Agreements

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year after termination

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Correspondence, general (See Administrative Working Files)

Cost Bill

JUROR COST BILL DESCRIPTION: Any records used to compute payments owed to jurors. Includes per diem, mileage and any other reimbursable expenses.

MINIMUM JUROR COST BILL PERIOD: 3 years

JUROR COST BILL DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

WITNESS COST BILL DESCRIPTION: That claim for witness fees, mileage, per diem and any other reimbursable expenses, approved by the court.

MINIMUM WITNESS COST BILL PERIOD: Until placed in case file or transferred to any approved alternative storage medium.

WITNESS COST BILL DISPOSITION: Place in case file or any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Court Calendars

DESCRIPTION: Schedule of proceedings held in Superior Court. If used for Clerk's minutes, see "Clerk's Minutes" record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 month

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Court Reporter/Recorder Notes/Tapes/Diskettes

DESCRIPTION: Paper record or approved electronic storage of record of court proceedings, including audio and video records.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD, CIVIL: Termination of case + 6 years.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD, CRIMINAL: Termination of case + 15 years.

DISPOSITION: Destroy per RCW 36.23.070.

CLASS: OPR

Daily Microfilm, Daily Recordings (see Journals)

Day Books

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; locally maintained unofficial diary.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OFM

Deposit Slips

DESCRIPTION: Record of bank or savings institution deposit transactions

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Depositions, Unpublished/Unopened

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record as of 9/89.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment.

DISPOSITION: Release or destroy.

Dike District Files

DESCRIPTION: May be filed in Civil files series. Court orders establishing Dike Districts, compensation for lands and appointment of Commissioners.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Diking & Drainage District Journals

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; chronological listing of documents and events pertaining to a particular Dike or Drainage District.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OFM

Docket

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe alphabetic or numerical listing of cases, chronology of events within particular cases and the schedule of cases heard during a particular span of time. Generally replaced by SCOMIS index and docketing. See, also, "Court Calendars." May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, coroners, civil appeals, civil, bond, criminal appeal and trial dockets. Access to files or documents may be restricted by court order.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

DISCONTINUED DOCKET SERIES: Coroners, bar dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Not applicable.

Employment Applications

DESCRIPTION: Written record of professional and biographical data submitted by job applicants. Original applications may be held by central personnel office within county.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 90 days from hire date; however, application of person hired becomes part of employee's permanent record, may be held by central personnel office.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Execution Docket/Index

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by SCOMIS docket entry; hard copy in case file. Chronological and/or alphabetic listing of judgments and post-judgment documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Exhibits

CIVIL EXHIBITS DESCRIPTION: May include unpublished depositions and civil exhibits marked but not offered, marked but rejected and those admitted, transcripts and exhibits included in appeals from lower courts and administrative agencies. Does not include published depositions, as they are part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION CIVIL PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment.

CRIMINAL EXHIBITS DESCRIPTION: May include unpublished depositions and criminal exhibits marked but not offered, marked but rejected and those admitted. Does not include published depositions, as they are part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION CRIMINAL PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment. RCW 36.23.070

CIVIL & CRIMINAL EXHIBITS DISPOSITION: Release or destroy. RCW 36.23.070, 63.40.010.

CLASS: OPR

Fee Book

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record. Locally maintained list of receipts and/or disbursements; replaced by RRS Journal Detail Report and/or check registers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Fee Transmittals

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of or summary of periodic financial transactions transmitted to County Treasurer; principal transmittal held by County Treasurer.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Grand Jury Records

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; records pertaining to matters before any grand jury, may be sealed or unsealed.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Index

DESCRIPTION: Variously used to describe alphabetic listing of cases or persons. Generally replaced by SCOMIS index. May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, assignees, bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropractors, medical, notary, bonds of county officials, optometry, powers of attorney, records of wills and attorneys indices.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

DISCONTINUED INDEX SERIES: Bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropractors, medical and optometry.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

DISCONTINUED INDEX SERIES: Notary

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Not applicable

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Department of Licensing.

Job Descriptions

DESCRIPTION: Official published description of duties and required skills/education for a specific staff position within a county office or offices. Official, current and superseded job descriptions may/should be retained by a central personnel office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Journals

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe chronological listing of documents and events in particular cases. Generally replaced by SCOMIS docket. May be open and/or restricted-access records. Also includes "daily microfilm" or "security microfilm" of documents as the "journal" required of RCW 36.23.030.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant and tax case journals.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, and family court case journals.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Juror Attendance Record (see Attendance Records)

Juror Cost Bill (see Cost Bill)

Jury List

MASTER LIST DESCRIPTION: List of all persons eligible to serve as jurors who have been randomly selected for the jury pool.

MINIMUM RETENTION MASTER LIST PERIOD: Until superseded.

TERM LIST DESCRIPTION: List of all prospective jurors for a particular jury term, randomly selected from the jury master list. AKA "venire."

MINIMUM RETENTION TERM LIST PERIOD: Until end of term.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Land Registration Files (Torrens Act)

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; may be replaced by civil case file; folder(s) containing all papers filed in a land registration/torrens case.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Letters of ()

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file or destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OFM

Microfilm, Daily or "Security" (see Journals)

Monthly Report to OAC

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of monthly statistical report to Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC).

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until publication in Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC)'s annual report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Mother's Petition/Pension

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

Naturalization Records

DESCRIPTION: Various types of naturalization-related records, including declarations of intentions, delayed birth files, naturalization affidavits, notifications of application for admission to U.S. citizenship, orders fixing naturalization terms, petitions & records, petitions, receipts for certificates of citizenship, record of final decrees of citizenship and record of petitions dockets. May be discontinued.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

Oaths: Bailiff, Court Reporter, Court Commissioner, & Others

DESCRIPTION: Oaths signed as part of position. Similar to oaths signed by deputies to other elected officials. May be a part of a miscellaneous SCOMIS (civil) file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year after termination

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Official Bond Files

DESCRIPTION: File containing official bonds of county officials; may include junior taxing district officials' bonds; Clerk's bond is recorded in County Auditor's Office and filed in Treasurer's Office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Old Age Assistance Claims

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record. Records containing chronological listing of documents pertaining to requests for financial assistance for elderly persons.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

One-Party Consent Files

DESCRIPTION: Those sealed and unsealed wiretap records and reviews of wiretaps, to the extent that they are not made a part of a case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file if unsealed, place in general purpose criminal case file if sealed or no charges filed. CLASS: OPR

Ordinances & Resolutions

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued series. Refers to official records of county's legislative body, principal copies are held by county legislative body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: N/A

DISPOSITION: Transfer any originals to county legislative body, destroy secondary copies. CLASS: OFM

Personnel Files/Records

DESCRIPTION: Files and records for which the office has primary custody. These may include supervisory files, disciplinary records, payroll, attendance records and hiring process documents relating to the particular individual. May include job descriptions, classification documents and performance evaluations. Payroll records held by another office need not be included. May be copies of records held by central county personnel office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years after termination of employment

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Policy & Procedure Directive

DESCRIPTION: Official statements promulgating policies and procedures of the office. It is recommended that previous versions of these documents be retained even when superseded, to document the policy or procedure in effect at any given time in the past. Countywide policy & procedure directives may be held and maintained by other county offices.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Purchase Orders

DESCRIPTION: Formal documentation of official purchases of equipment, supplies, etc.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Receipts

DESCRIPTION: Records of monies received.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OPR

SUPERSEDED

Register

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe alphabetic listing of cases or persons. Generally replaced by SCOMIS Index. May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, assignees, bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropodists, medical, notary, bonds of county officials, optometry, powers of attorney, records of wills and attorneys indices.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, and family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES: Bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropodists, medical and optometry registers.

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives Regional Branch.

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES: Notary register.

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Department of Licensing.

Requisitions

DESCRIPTION: Formal requests for equipment, personnel, supplies, etc.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Revenue Projections

DESCRIPTION: Projections of revenue submitted to county governing body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Search Warrant Records

DESCRIPTION: Those sealed and unsealed files containing search warrant applications, returns, and other data.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file if unsealed, place in general purpose criminal case file if sealed or no charges filed. CLASS: OPR

Security Microfilm (see Journals)

Software Backup Data

DESCRIPTION: Tapes, disks and punch cards providing backup data which is revised and recreated in a regular cycle.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 cycles

DISPOSITION: Recycle backup media.

CLASS: OFM

Special Inquiry Records

DESCRIPTION: Records of proceedings before Special Inquiry Judge. Restricted-access record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Support Ledger

DESCRIPTION: Bound volumes, cards or microfiche showing from whom child support payments are received, dates and to whom funds are disbursed.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Tax Case Files

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. File folder(s) containing all papers filed in a delinquent real estate tax case. The documents in the folder have been entered on the SCOMIS system or a manually prepared docket containing a chronological listing of documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. CLASS: OPR

Tax Warrant Case Files

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. File folder(s) containing all papers filed in a delinquent non-real estate tax case. The documents in the folder have been entered on the SCOMIS system or a manually prepared docket containing a chronological listing of documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. CLASS: OPR

Territorial Case Files

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record. Official record of Washington Territory cases prior to statehood.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility. RCW 36.23.065.

CLASS: OPR

Transcripts of Judgment

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; an index of or copies of judgments filed with the Clerk; not to be confused with transcripts from District Court or abstracts from other Superior Courts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Treasurer's Receipts

DESCRIPTION: Locally determined form for the periodic transmittal of receipts to the County Treasurer. Usually includes BARS fund and revenue numbers along with cumulative total of receipts for period. Should contain verification that monies were transferred to the County Treasurer.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Trust Fund Balance Register

DESCRIPTION: Any periodic record of trust fund balances, usually containing evidence of balance reconciliation.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Trust Fund Ledger

DESCRIPTION: The entire record of trust account debits and credits or deposits and withdrawals.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Unclaimed Property Reports

DESCRIPTION: Annual reports made to the Department of Revenue, listing those monies or items whose owners are unknown or who cannot be located. Original reports of record with Department of Revenue.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Unpublished/Unopened Deposition (see Depositions, Unpublished/Unopened).

Verbatim Report of Proceedings

DESCRIPTION: Written transcript of proceedings or stipulated statement prepared for transmittal to Court of Appeals. The original transcript is docketed in SCOMIS and sent to the Court of Appeals. A case file may contain transcripts of certain proceedings or portions of proceedings and become part of the case file. Transcripts or tapes are sent to the appellate court and are not kept with the Superior Court case file and are not returned from the appellate court.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: N/A

DISPOSITION: Destroy secondary copies; return unpaid original transcripts to reporter or transcriptionist. CLASS: OPR

Vouchers

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of form authorizing or invoicing office or agency for fees owed; principal copy held by County Auditor.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Witness Attendance Record (see Attendance Records)

Witness Cost Bill (see Cost Bill)

Work Orders

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of locally determined forms for requesting services of other county agencies to perform work in or for the court or clerk; principal copy of form held by office/agency performing work.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

SUPERSEDED

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES

As many County Clerks have transferred various discontinued records to State Archives Regional Depositories, the decision was made not to list each individual discontinued record and provide a specific definition for each such record. However, to facilitate locating retention and disposition information for those offices that still have some of these records or which may be in the midst of changing from a separate records format in bound volumes to individual file folders, the following cross-reference listing is provided:

Abstract of Judgment (as a separate record series) — see Abstract of Judgment
Bar Association Records — see Docket, Index, Register
Bond Dockets (as a separate record series) — see Bond Dockets
Book of Levies, see Book of Levies
Cash Register Journals (as a separate record series) — see Cash Register Journals
Chiropracist Records — see Journals, Index, Register
Coroner's Records — see Docket
Day Books — see Day Books
Dental Records — see Register
Drugless Healers — see Index, Register
Execution Docket/Index (as a separate record series) — see Execution Docket/Index, Docket, Index
Fee Book — see Fee Book
Grand Jury Records — see Grand Jury Records
Land Registration Files/Torrens Act (as a separate record series) — see Land Registration Files (Torrens Act)
Letter (as a separate records series) — see Letters of...
Medical Records — see Index, Register
Mothers Petition, Pension — see Mothers Petition, Pension
Midwives Records — see Index, Register
Naturalization Records — see Naturalization Records
Notary Records — see Index, Register
Old Age Assistance Claims — see Old Age Assistance Claims
Optometry Records — see Index, Register
Ordinances and Resolutions — see Ordinances and Resolutions
Osteopath Records — see Index, Register
Secret Journals — see Journals
Tax Case Files (as a separate record series) — see Case Files, Tax Case Files
Tax Warrant Case Files (as a separate record series) — see Case Files, Tax Warrant Case Files
Territorial Records — see Case Files, Territorial Case Files
Transcript of Judgment (as a separate record series) — see Transcript of Judgment

COUNTY CLERK
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

UPDATE REQUEST

- ☐ NEW RECORD Request
- ☐ CHANGE to Existing Record

RECORD (*short, concise name*) _____

DESCRIPTION

SUPERSEDED

- ☐ ORIGINALS held
- ☐ COPIES held
- ☐ DISCONTINUED record, list inclusive dates: _____
- ☐ NEW RECORD (*not listed in current schedule*)

NAME: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE: _____

Mail to: State Archivist
P.O. Box 40238
Olympia, Washington 98504-0238

Disaster Recovery - Emergency Procedures

In addition to following these steps we recommend that the local records custodian:

- Develop a disaster preparedness plan. A manual of suggestions for this plan is available from the State Archives.
- Contact the State Archives Disaster Recovery Team for advice and assistance (206-586-1801) in the event of a disaster that damages public records.

Emergency Procedures

1. After any fire is out, any water pumped out and any rubble cleared away, calmly assess the damage, determine the extent and kinds of damage, and the volume of records damaged.
2. Evaluate and prioritize records for recovery. Records which are still active, necessary for current business and are not duplicated elsewhere should receive attention first.
3. Prepare a logical plan of attack covering removal, restoration and re-establishment of controls.
4. Prepare a damage assessment and control worksheet for each record series damaged. The work sheet should note the record series title, original location of the records, damage incurred, and restoration plan and priority. This record should be maintained and kept as a control throughout the recovery process. This can be done by file cabinet or shelf unit or by other logical grouping.
5. Arrange for a temporary storage area if necessary.
6. Arrange for restoration services if necessary (contact the State Archives disaster recovery team for advice).
7. Remove damaged records in the order in which they were stored. Note original locations on the damage control worksheet.
8. Transfer damaged records to temporary storage or to an area where restoration can begin.
9. Arrange for storage once restoration is complete.

Fire Damage

Closely packed paper burns with difficulty, therefore the damage caused by fire may be more apparent than real.

Salvage procedure:

1. Remove documents from containers.
2. Gently spread papers out to air and inspect the extent of damage.
3. Minimum damage (smoke damage, sooty, lightly charred at edges):
 - a. Allow paper to air in an open space.
 - b. Clean gently with a soft brush.
 - c. Humidify by circulating moist air.
 - d. Refile in clean folders.
 - e. Replace in new or restored cabinets.
4. Moderate damage (edges heavily charred, paper discolored by heat, very dirty, brittle):
 - a. Spread papers out in a very humid, well ventilated area.
 - b. Brush off the worst dust and soot.
 - c. Refile in clean folders or copy and discard originals depending on document value, retention and rate of reference.
5. Badly damaged (badly charred, very dirty, extremely brittle):
 - a. Separate pages.
 - b. Remove surface soot or dirt if possible.
 - c. Copy, microfilm or use infra-red photography if necessary.
 - d. Discard originals.
6. Completely destroyed

Discard. Retain record of records destroyed if they can be identified.

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Water Damage

Mold growth, disintegration, and the bonding of leaves into inseparable mats are the main problems resulting from water damage. QUICK ACTION IS THE KEY to recovery of water damaged records. After 24 hours molding begins and paper fibers begin to bond between leaves or turn into paper pulp.

Salvage procedures:

1. Drain excessive water from records.
2. Remove additional moisture by blotting with an acid-free paper.
3. Separate/spread papers to dry in a warm, dry, well ventilated room.
4. Flatten while still slightly damp.
5. Fumigate to kill mold spores.
6. Clean with a soft brush to remove dead mold spores.
7. Re-folder in clean folders and refile.

Freezing

It is best to have the records deep-frozen immediately, especially if there is a large volume of damaged records (more than a few cubic feet). Arrangements for deep-freezing can be made with most local cold-storage companies.

Freezing will arrest further damage and allow the treatment of small batches of damaged records over a more extensive period of time, and allow for better treatment planning including consideration of freeze-drying techniques.

Freeze-drying: It is far more efficient and possibly more economical to treat large batches of records by freeze-drying than by the hand-drying processes described above. Freeze-drying requires the preliminary process of deep-freezing.

Other Media

A more extensive discourse on the recovery of disaster damaged records, including non-paper media, such as film and magnetic tapes is available in a manual titled **Disaster Preparedness**. It includes detailed instruction on disaster prevention planning and recovery techniques. Your regional archivist has a copy of this manual and can arrange additional training and consultation on this subject with the state conservator.

SUPERSEDED

Appendix B

Records Storage - Problems and Standards

The most serious mistake in the long history of record keeping may have been when information began to be recorded on substances more perishable than the baked clay tablet, which will not tear or burn and which is not a source of food for various vermin. Most modern papers are still considered too perishable, and many of the new record keeping media are even more perishable. The life span of almost all modern recording media is less than one hundred years, with most having a life of less than ten years. Proper care and treatment can substantially extend this life span if the records are worth the cost, and the loss of records from fire and flood can be minimized with reasonable precautions and planning. Poor storage conditions can cause irreparable damage to records still in use, and disasters can quickly obliterate masses of records if recovery techniques are not quickly applied.

This section is intended to identify the primary causes of record deterioration and provide basic standards for the storage and care of temporary records as well as inform court officials and staff about the essential steps and processes of disaster recovery.

Enemies of Records

Heat: Heat affects paper records by increasing the rate of reaction time chemicals within the paper are absorbed by paper. Heat can warp magnetic tapes and disks and can cause the recording emulsions to separate from the carrier bases of all photographic media.

Humidity: Humidity by itself, does not harm most recording media including papers. In fact, without some moisture, paper and some other media, such as film, loses flexibility, becomes brittle and susceptible to damage.

High humidity and heat promote mold growth. Wide variations in humidity can also be damaging, particularly to papers. When the moisture content of paper changes, the individual fibers expand or contract, which stresses the paper hence accelerating the rate of deterioration.

Light: Radiant energy, particularly ultraviolet light, reacts photochemically with impurities in paper such as acids, glues, starch and dyes. The product of this reaction is oxidization of the fibers in the paper causing yellowing, brittleness and weakening of the paper by breaking the molecular chains in the cellulose. Long term exposure to ultraviolet light will cause fading of photographic dyes and almost all writing and printing inks.

Insects and rodents: Books and papers, all organic substances, are subject to attack by many insect pests including silverfish, bookworms, termites, booklice, cockroaches, and firebrats which feed and thrive on cellulose, leather, glues and cloth, of which books and paper records are made. These same record materials are extremely susceptible to rodent damage. Mice, rats and squirrels will shred paper, leather and vellums for nest building purposes and the acids in rodent droppings can damage papers for the reasons that follow.

Acids: Chemicals are introduced to paper during manufacture or later by atmospheric pollutants or contact with acids in storage containers, folders, wood shelving or other paper records. These chemicals react with moisture in or absorbed by the paper. This process, called hydrolysis, produces acids which break down paper fibers, cause brittleness and ultimate disintegration. Hydrolysis is characterized by yellowing (as often observed in newsprint).

There are other enemies of records but these are the main cause of records deterioration regardless of recording media. It follows therefore that both preventive maintenance in storage and recovery of damaged records usually are concerned with these same problems.

Minimum Storage Specifications

- Store records in or on metal file cabinets or shelving, avoid wood cabinets or shelving.
- Maintain a relatively constant temperature in the storage area, preferably between 60 and 70 degrees F.
- Maintain a nearly constant relative humidity, preferably between 45% and 55%.
- Store records in cabinets or on shelving raised 4 to 6 inches above floor level. (Note: many cabinet and shelving systems have this feature already built in). This margin of safety has been shown to be effective against potential damage by standing water caused by fire fighting efforts or minor floods.
- A fire suppression system (water sprinkler), and/or a fire detection and alarm system wired directly to the local fire department.
- Chemical fire extinguishers placed strategically in file storage areas. (Note: chemical fire extinguishers may be preferable to water sprinklers in small file rooms due to water damage that often results from the use of sprinkler systems. Lack of an automatic sprinkler system, however, makes an alarm system to the fire department imperative for suppressing after hour fires).
- An intrusion alarm system to protect against theft and vandalism.

Avoid As Much As Possible

- Exposure of records to sunlight, strong indirect natural light and strong artificial light, particularly fluorescent light
- High temperature and humidity
- Frequent variations in temperature and humidity
- Dust and chemical vapors
- Wood, coal or gas-burning heaters

- Attics; because of their extremes of temperature and generally dusty atmosphere
- Basements, because of their frequently high humidity

There are numerous steps that can be taken to restore deteriorating records and to inhibit further deterioration. If you encounter evidence of records deterioration contact the regional branch of the state archives for advice and assistance or the documents conservator at the main office of the State Archives in Olympia.

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County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court



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*Records Retention Manual
&
General Records
Retention Schedule*

REPLACES 1983 MANUAL

This manual replaces, entirely, the County Clerk Records Retention Manual and General Records Retention Schedule contained therein, published in March of 1983.

Published Under the Authority of the Local Records Committee
State of Washington, Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Archives & Records Management
Olympia, Washington

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Printing & Update History

First Edition. . . . August, 1993

Editions are completely reprinted manuals. Updates are changes made to the then current effective edition and may be in the form of dated pen and ink changes, page additions, page deletions and/or page substitutions. Subsequent editions and updates will contain a printing history and each edition and update will contain a List of Effective Pages, replaced with every update, listing every page by its page number and appropriate revision date.

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The State of Washington
Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Archives & Records Management
Olympia, Washington

August 1993

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK
GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE
AUTHORIZATION**

In accordance with the authority granted to it by RCW 40.14.070 and WAC 414.24.050, the Local Records Committee hereby approves, adopts and publishes the COUNTY CLERK GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE, consisting of the dated pages indicated in the "List of Effective Pages" printed on the reverse hereof, as the recurring disposition schedule for public records within or pertaining to the Office of the County Clerk (Clerk of the Superior Court) of the State of Washington. The COUNTY CLERK GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE constitutes continuing authority for the disposition of public records identified therein which are held by any County Clerk.

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Destruction authorization references for any record or series to be destroyed shall cite the CC- page number and date of the page number on which the record or series appears within the COUNTY CLERK RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE.

Signed in Olympia, Washington,
this the 1st day of September, 1993.

For the Attorney General:

For the State Auditor:

For the State Archivist:

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County Clerk
Records Retention Schedule

List of Effective Pages
August, 1993

First Edition

Page CC-1 through CC-46.....Original 8/93

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Introduction

All government records are important in that government, by its very nature, affects many facets of the life of a community and its citizens. Some records are of passing or very temporary interest to anyone, while others have ongoing effect or may have established a legal or historical precedent.

Numerous statutes, court rules and legal decisions dictate how and in what form many records which come to the County Clerk are to be handled during the course of business. This manual is not intended to govern the handling of these records while they are in daily use. As a local records custodian you are charged to preserve all records within your office as property of the state of Washington.

This manual deals with the *"preserved, stored, transferred, destroyed or disposed of"* portion of RCW 40.14.020. It is through the Local Records Committee via this retention schedule that the state of Washington sets out minimum periods of time that records must be preserved, establishes technical standards for the reproduction and preservation of original records when transferred to alternative storage media, under what conditions they may be transferred to the custody of another and under what conditions they may be destroyed or otherwise disposed. Before transferring any of your records to another or before you consider disposing of any records, original or otherwise, in any manner, you must consult this document.

Contrast with Prior Schedule

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This document is intended to present in a different manner, the information contained in the superseded 1983 **County Clerk Records Retention Manual**. This manual reflects user recommendations that a number of records be combined, that some be deleted and that others be added. This document is arranged alphabetically, only. It was the considered opinion of the drafters that the prior arrangement of items by like groups was difficult to use and that, while many records may be logically grouped as to kind and subject, for ease of reference the data should be presented alphabetically.

Retention Schedule Not All-Inclusive

This document does not list all County Clerk records. Specifically, it does not list many discontinued records, nor can it anticipate all future records. It is intended that this document describe certain kinds of records, which should include many others not specifically listed or bearing an identical title. County Clerks may from time to time feel that they have records which do not fit any of the kinds of records listed here. Those records may need to be added to this general schedule, or, if the record is of an isolated, non-recurring nature, may be the subject of a one-time, local agency schedule approved by the Local Records Committee. Specific guidance concerning those records should be sought from the Secretary of State, the State Archivist, the servicing Regional Facility of the State Archives, from professional associations and other local records custodians. Forms to request the addition of or change to a record appear at the end of this manual.

Summary of Legal Requirements

In Washington, as in most states, statutes regulate the retention and disposition of government records. In Washington, the Public Records Act, RCW 40.14, is the primary statement of public policy regarding the retention and destruction of public records.

Public records defined: The term "public records" applies to any paper, correspondence, form, bound volume, film, magnetic medium, drawing or other document, regardless of form or physical characteristics, that has been created or received by any state or local government agency during the course of public business. RCW 40.14.010

Records as public property: All such public records shall be, and remain, the property of the agency. Outgoing officials and employees must pass such records on to their successors. Furthermore, public records shall be preserved, stored, transferred, destroyed and otherwise managed according to the provisions of RCW 40.14, unless otherwise provided by law.

Custody of public records: Public records must remain in the custody of the agency in which they were originally received or created. They shall not be placed in the custody of any other person or agency, public or private, or released to individuals except for disposition pursuant to law or as otherwise provided by law. RCW 40.14.070

Disposition of public records: Public records may be destroyed or transferred only in accord with the instructions and approval of the state of Washington's Local Records Committee. RCW 40.14.070

Local Records Committee: The Washington State Local Records Committee includes the State Archivist and representatives of the State Auditor and the State Attorney General. This committee has the authority to review and approve the disposition of all local government records. RCW 40.14.070

Local Records Retention Schedule: Local agencies may establish a records control program based on records retention schedules submitted to the Local Records Committee for approval. The Committee may approve, veto, or amend the schedules. Once a records retention schedule is approved by the Committee, the local agency has the authority to dispose of the records listed thereon on a recurring basis until the schedule is either revised or amended. RCW 40.14.070

General Records Retention Schedules: The Washington State Local Records Committee may approve and issue records retention schedules which give authority to local agencies for the disposition of specific types of commonly held records. General records retention schedules provide this authority on a recurring basis until such time as they might be revised or rescinded by the Committee. RCW 40.14.070

Use of microfilm: Microfilm copies of public records, having a degree of completeness and clarity that meets state standards and are officially sanctioned, have the same legal status as the paper originals. RCW 40.20.020, 5.46.010 [See also, "Microfilm" section in this manual.]

Authority to transfer records to the State Archives: Instead of being retained permanently by the agency, records designated as having archival or historical value may be officially transferred to the State Archives or one of its regional facilities. Except as provided in RCW 36.23.070, it is illegal to transfer public records to private persons or organizations or to depositories not designated by the State Archivist. RCW 40.14.070

Methods of records destruction: The primary objective of destruction is to reduce obsolete records to an illegible form. Burning, pulping and shredding are considered to be the most effective methods, the latter two frequently done in conjunction with recycling. It is recommended that local agencies keep a summary log and compile certificates or affidavits recording the date and details of record destruction for future reference. Affidavits or certificates of destruction may be placed in a court's general administration case file, for indexing/docketing and preservation. Records which are to be recycled may be taken to a recycling facility, where their pulping or shredding must be witnessed by the County Clerk or the County Clerk's designee. Any such records shall not be left unattended or unprotected while awaiting recycling. WAC 434.640

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Documenting Records Disposal

Once approval has been given, through a specific local records committee authorization or by way of a general records retention schedule, such as that contained within this manual, and arrangements have been made for the appraisal and transfer of records of potential archival value, the Clerk may proceed with the destruction of non-archival records which have passed their assigned retention period and which have been transferred to an approved alternative storage medium if the retention period is "permanent." The sample formats, on the next two pages, for recording the destruction of records are recommended. Your county may have other, similar forms available through a local records management office.

Affidavit of Records Destruction
S a m p l e

I, _____, acting as an agent of (County Clerk) _____,
hereby witness the destruction of the following public records, according to the
provisions of WAC 414.24.070 & 080.

Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00217-5 to 85-1-00260-4 (Cases 85-1-00218-8 & 85-1-
00221-3 are active, not destroyed); after microfilming, per CC-25 of 8/93.

Destruction executed by: (method) _____

on (date) _____.

Signature of County Clerk or designee: _____

Signature of Agent: _____

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Destruction Log
S a m p l e

Record Series	Inclusive Dates	Disposition Authority	Date Disposed
Cash register daily detail reports	1986 thru 1988	CC-26 of 8/93	11/3/93
Cash register journals	•	•	•
Check registers	•	•	•
Checks, canceled	•	•	•

____ County
Records Management Division

Records Destruction Notice
and Destruction Transmittal

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Complete the following form with the appropriate information.
 2. Each records series title must be typed exactly as it is found on the County Clerk Retention Schedule.
 3. Please type this form and return completed form to Records Management Division.

Department		COUNTY CLERK	Department Head		Date Submitted	
Box No.	Records Series Title/Description			Inclusive Dates	Authorization (Retention Schedule Page/Date)	
S A M P L E						
110	Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00217-5 to 85-1-00260-4 (Active, not destroyed: 85-1-00218-8, 85-1-00221-3)			5/31/85 to 6/24/85	CC-25 / Original 8/93 (Microfilmed)	
111	Case files: Criminal - 85-1-00261-2 to 85-1-00306-6 (Active, not destroyed: 85-1-00266-3)			7/10/85 to 7/23/85	.	
Destruction <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Not approved		Authorized Signatures		Witnessed By		
		Department Head		Date	Method of Destruction	
		Records Manager		Date	Date of Destruction	

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Services and Assistance Provided by The Division of Archives and Records Management

The Washington State Archives is a division of the Office of the Secretary of State. The Division operates under the provisions of Chapter 40.14 RCW, the Public Records Act, which also regulates the disposition of all records generated by state and local government agencies.

Technical Assistance

The Division provides state and local agencies technical assistance in complying with legal requirements and developing systems for managing their records. Services include standards, technical information and consultation on micrographics, filing and information retrieval, essential records protection, disaster preparedness and recovery, records center operations, records retention scheduling, records access and disclosure, records and recording media storage standards.

Microfilm and Document Conservation Services

The Division provides certain records management services on a charge-back basis. These include source document microfilming, film processing and duplication, and conservation of endangered historical documents. In addition the division provides both state and local agencies with security microfilm storage services.

Archives

The Division is also responsible for identifying, storing, preserving and providing public access to state and local government records which have continuing historical value beyond their usefulness to the agencies which created them. The Division has headquarter offices in Olympia which include microfilm services, records center facilities, archives and historical research, and the document conservation lab.

The Washington State Archives Regional System

The Division of Archives and Records Management staffs a system of regional facilities to make its services more directly available to agencies and citizens throughout the state. These operations are managed by senior state archivists skilled in both archival and records management techniques. In addition to their other duties, the archivists will now provide archival and records management assistance to the courts in their regions (see map on reverse). Working through your local records manager, your professional associations, or directly, the archivists will be able to provide you with direct assistance on a broad range of records management problems. Counties served within each regional jurisdiction are indicated on the map which follows.

CENTRAL:

c/o History Department
Central Washington University
Ellensburg, Washington 98926
(509) 963-2136 or SCAN 453-2136
FAX (509) 963-1753 or SCAN 453-1753
TIMOTHY ECKERT

NORTHWEST:

Washington State Archives
Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington 98225-9123
(206) 650-3125 or SCAN 532-3125
FAX (206) 650-3323 or SCAN 532-3323
JAMES MOORE

PUGET SOUND:

Sunset Activity Center
1809 South 140th Street
Seattle, Washington 98168-3710
(206) 764-4276 or SCAN 443-4276
MICHAEL SAUNDERS

EASTERN:

JFK Library N1584
Eastern Washington University
Cheney, Washington 99004-2495
(509) 359-6900 or SCAN 353-6900
FAX (509) 359-6456 or SCAN 353-6456
RICHARD HOBBS

SOUTHWEST:

1120 Washington Street SE
Olympia Washington, 98504-0238
(206) 753-1684 or SCAN 234-1684
WAYNE LAWSON

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Special Service Telephone Numbers

In addition to the services of the regional archivists the division has specialists available in several fields. The following telephone numbers may be useful:

Microfilm Services (206) 586-6232 or SCAN 321-6232

Document Conservation Services (206) 753-1801 or SCAN 234-1801

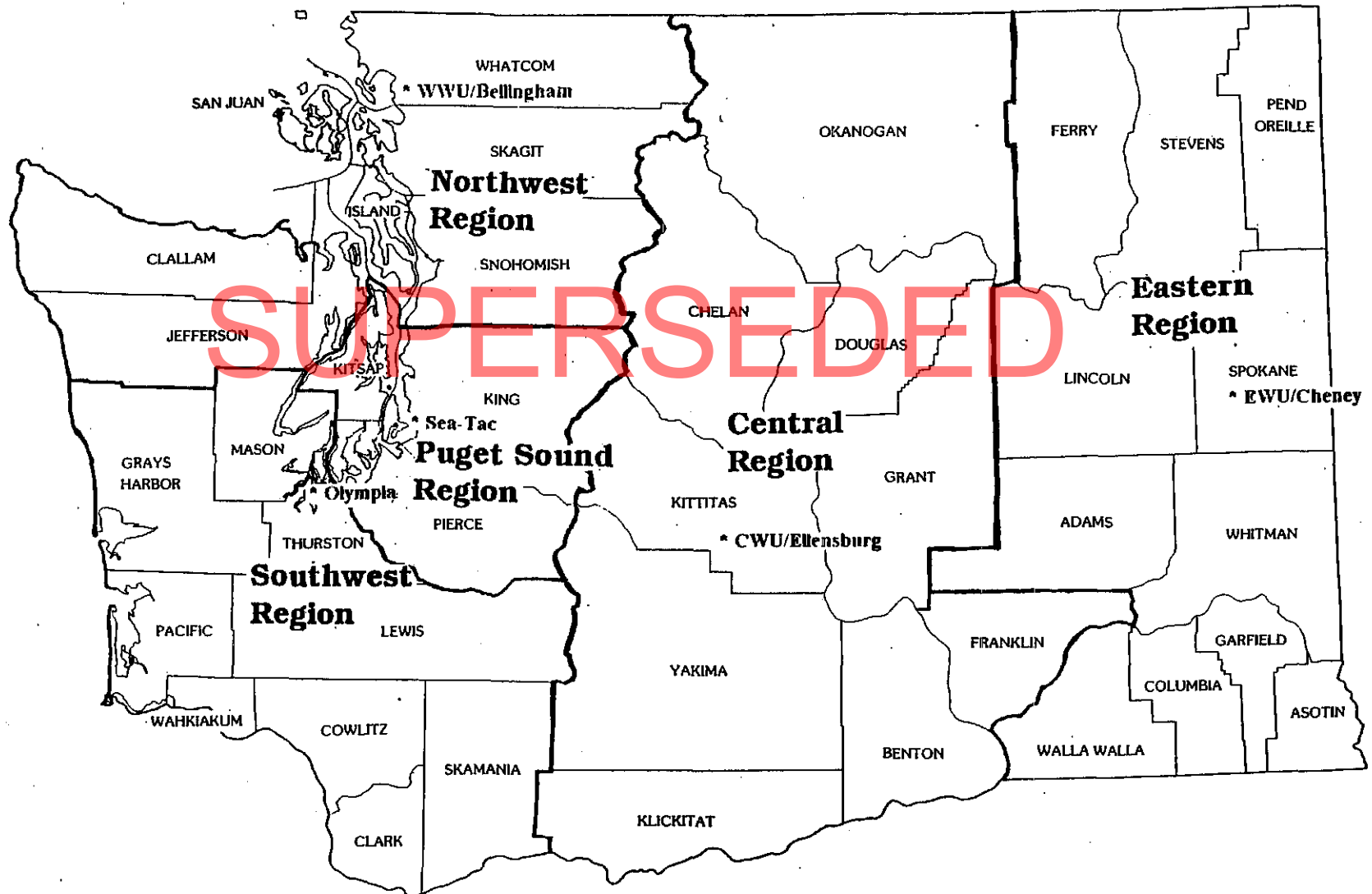
State or Deputy Archivist (206) 753-5485 or SCAN 234-5485

Archival Research (206) 586-1492 or SCAN 321-1492

Records Disaster Recovery Hotline (206) 753-1801 or SCAN 234-1801

Note: After hours, weekends and holidays, calling the -1801 number will provide you with an emergency referral number that will put you in contact with the disaster recovery assistance coordinator.

Washington State Regional Archives System



Transfer of Records to State Archives Regional Facility

Only a few of the "Disposition" listings in this document direct that records be transferred to a Regional Archives Facility. However, potentially every record is a candidate for transfer. Most of the listings direct the County Clerk to "destroy, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium." Before destroying any records, the County Clerk should have consulted the Regional Archivist in order to ascertain which records may be destroyed and which may be transferred to the custody of the Regional Archives Facility. The criteria for appraising and transferring historically important records will vary and the County Clerk should seek such appraisal and transfer guidance from the Regional Archivist.

"Approved Alternative Storage Medium"

Many of the "disposition" listings in this document direct the County Clerk to destroy the record "after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium." Any approved alternative storage medium includes microfilming and any other storage technology approved by the Secretary of State, Division of Archives and Records Management. No record should be destroyed or transferred to the Regional Archives Facility until the microfilm or other approved alternative storage medium has been checked for completeness of content and quality. Appropriate WAC and RCW provisions may govern standards and methods to be employed and the State Archives, Regional Facility, should be consulted before employing any alternative storage medium.

Microfilm

Its Use and Abuse

Microfilm is a powerful records management tool. Unfortunately, its use is often abused. Microfilm should never be used simply to reduce the volume of records of temporary value.

Before launching a costly microfilm system a complete cost benefit and systems analysis study should be conducted, preferably by someone other than a prospective vendor. If a specialist is not available for this purpose then at least request more than one vendor analysis and proposal.

Legal Status of Microfilm

Chapter 5.46.010 provides that photographic reproductions, including microfilm and enlargements thereof are admissible as evidence. Chapter 40.20 provides that public agencies may cause records to be reproduced on film, including microfilm, providing that the reproducing material be of permanent material and accurately reproduce the original; and further providing that the State Archivist approve such material for state records use and that the State Auditor approve such material for local government.

State Archivist's Certification

The office of the State Archivist maintains a certification program for those local governments which wish to establish local microfilm facilities. It is important that County Clerks assure that an agency which is to microfilm public records has been certified by the State Archivist and meets those standards described in the following section.

Microfilm Standards

The State Archives will determine if a proposed microfilm service or system will meet state microfilm standards and will also advise you of any other apparent weaknesses in the proposal. In advance of any consideration of microfilm you should obtain a copy of the *Washington State Standards for Microfilm* and advise prospective equipment and service vendors of their need to meet those standards. The standards manual is available upon request from the State Archives.

Microfilm Services

Because of quality control, technical problems and higher investment costs inherent in the use of in-house microfilm systems the use of contracted microfilm services as opposed to purchasing camera systems may be advantageous. The decision should be based on a cost benefit analysis that considers both options.

Microfilming services can be obtained from the Division of Archives Microfilm Services Bureau or from commercial microfilm service bureaus certified by the State Archivist. A list of certified service bureaus is available from the State Microfilm Service Bureau.

State Microfilm Service Bureau

The Division of Archives Microfilm Service Bureau offers a full range of services for 16, 35, and 105MM microfilm systems. These include source document microfilming, film development and inspection, diazo and silver film duplicating, film cleaning and unitizing. In addition the Bureau will provide systems and cost benefit analyses, and cost estimates on request.

Security Microfilm Storage

A valid method of protecting public records is to geographically disperse multiple copies of those records. Microfilm is regarded as one of the most durable and compact methods of storing copies of original records and for dispersing the "original" silver halide film negative and diazo working copies. The Division of Archives provides security storage of microfilm for local government and has traditionally stored the silver halide negative film of all microfilmed records for the County Clerks. Because of the volume of security film stored by the Division of Archives, a controlled and documented transfer of microfilm from agencies to archival custody is necessary. A manual titled *Security Microfilm Storage* setting down the transfer and custody requirements is available from the State Archives.

Microfilm Quality Control

Use the original silver halide negative film for security only; do not jacketize it into "microfiche" or use it as a work copy. Jacketing destroys the integrity of the roll and hence the legality of the images.

Use a diazo copy as a work copy or for jacketizing, as it is less subject to abrasion.

Use guide sheets at beginning and ending of roll, file break targets on all roll film.

Use the standard resolution test target. Require that density and resolution readings be posted on all film containers. Ensure that density, resolution and other film standards are met. Inspect all film produced and reject film that does not meet standards.

Label each film container with the name of the originating organization, film roll number, date of film production, and identifying information about the contents of the roll, such as a records series title, inclusive file numbers and span dates.

Use acid-neutral film containers for storage of all film.

When filming or contracting for microfilming or other reproduction services, require compliance with the Washington State standards for the production and use of microfilm. Copies of those standards are available from the Division of Archives and Records Management.

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Machine Readable Records

Modern organizations are rapidly automating their information systems. An increasing proportion of their records are computerized, resulting in a growing body of electronic or machine readable records. Machine readable records are defined as records which require the use of a computer in order for human beings to read them. They are public records under the Public Records Act and subject to the same legal requirements as any other records.

Machine readable records possess different characteristics than conventional records, and different techniques are required to manage them. The medium is or may be fragile and short lived. Magnetic tapes and disks and optical disks have a life expectancy of ten years or fewer. Specific hardware and software are needed to regenerate the information. Because of the rapidly changing technology this hardware and software may not be available in just a very few years. Since machine readable records are not directly readable by humans, they must be "documented." Documentation includes identification of the originators of the file, purposes and descriptions of programs and software, "codebooks" containing the meaning of the codes or abbreviations used, and interior and exterior labels.

Machine readable records do offer many advantages. They can be manipulated rapidly, sorted, aggregated and listed in all sorts of combinations. For these reasons they may be far more valuable than conventional files containing the same information. They can be translated rapidly from one medium to another, and from one location to another. Unlike paper, magnetic media may be used and reused many times.

Large central mainframe or minicomputer systems generally maintain their records on tapes. The majority of these tapes are used for processing and backup. The life cycle of these tapes is short. Backup magnetic media are described in the *County Clerk Retention Schedule*, herein.

Master files containing the data itself, for some kinds of records, are described in the general schedule and are chiefly limited, at the present, to office administration, SCOMIS and accounting records. Court reporter notes may now be principally created and stored magnetically, but those electronic records are subject to the same retention and destruction requirements as notes stored on any other medium. Any such machine readable records must either be preserved on such media for the required life cycle of the information (record series) or the information converted into another medium such as hard copy printout, or better, computer output microfilm.

A basic principle to be followed in the decision to employ electronic media for records under your control is that records retention and archival considerations must be addressed at the very beginning of the system design. These considerations may be considered along with the other data administration constraints such as privacy, security, public disclosure, accuracy and consistency. Since electronic media are very perishable, we no longer have the luxury of waiting, as we did for conventional records, until the information has waited out its life on records center shelves, to determine its ultimate archival or other destiny. Nor are we able to worry later about how to retrieve electronic data, as retrieval considerations and internal as well as external labels must be incorporated at the time of creation of the electronic record. All of these considerations must be addressed at the design stage of an electronic application.

An increasing percentage of machine readable records is no longer created on centralized mainframe environments, but on personal computers, local area networks, word processing systems, etc. The "floppy disk" or "stiff" removable disk is the normal electronic media. In general, floppy disks should be considered as convenience copies. Correspondence, spread sheets, small data bases or other material should be printed regularly and filed as conventional records. If magnetic disks are to be used for long term storage, designate specific disks for this purpose and regularly copy records to them from the working disks or hard disks. The working disks can be used and reused indefinitely.

The following procedures are suggested for managing machine readable records:

1. Determine the life cycle of the electronic record data at the design or development stage of the electronic application.
2. Use the general records retention schedule for authority for disposing of processing and backup tapes or other electronic media.
3. Whenever possible, satisfy retention requirements by outputting the electronic data onto paper printouts or microfilm. The most cost effective method of outputting large files is by computer output microfilm (COM).
4. When machine readable data must be preserved on magnetic media for long periods, consider converting it to a hardware and software independent form so that it can be regenerated on any computer, using a simple program. For example, a data base file may be converted to a "flat file" (a simple two-dimensional matrix of rows and columns) in ASCII and stored on open reel tape or other electronic/magnetic media.
5. Magnetic **working copy** floppy disks created by word processing, personal computers or other office automation networks or systems should clearly be labeled as such and differentiated from **archival copies** which must be stored and managed under specific and strict controls. **Archival copies** should be "write-protected" to prevent alteration or inadvertent deletion or erasure of the data.

Archival or Historically Valuable Records

RCW 40.14.070 requires that records having historical or archival value be either transferred to the state archives or retained by the office of record, in accord with standards established by the state archivist.

Some County Clerk records, especially some case files, may have historical values which extend beyond their legal, financial or administrative uses. Identifying case files which may have historical or precedent-setting value is substantially the job of the County Clerk. Newsworthy cases may become candidates for preservation, as might cases which are appealed and whose ultimate disposition may set some legal precedent. Other candidates for case file preservation may be new causes of action or those involving new or changed legislation or procedures.

The process of identifying County Clerk records for transfer to the Regional Facility and for identifying archival and historically valuable records is one of collaboration between the regional archivist and the County Clerk. County Clerks are urged to confer with the regional archivist for suggestions and direction regarding the identification of records having historical or archival value and before transferring any records to the regional facility.

Disaster Recovery - Emergency Procedures

Contrary to popular belief, there is a great deal that can be done to recover records damaged in most disasters. The key is acting rapidly and being prepared. **Appendix A** contains an outline of basic steps that should be taken to recover disaster damaged paper records.

Records Storage - Problems and Standards

For common sense and technical considerations regarding the storage of records, refer to **Appendix B**.

SUPERSEDED

**County Clerk
and
Clerk of the Superior Court**

General Records Retention Schedule

SUPERSEDED

SUPERSEDED

Records Retention Schedule

Format of Listings

Types of records are listed alphabetically. Listing includes:

DESCRIPTION: Describes the record or type of record and may include the name of sample records of the kind described. The description may include a common successor to a discontinued record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Lists the minimum length of time the original record must be kept. The County Clerk may keep records longer and for as long as she/he sees fit. County Clerks are also reminded that the measure of the time a record must be kept, the period described in this schedule, may depend on and only start counting from a benchmark "clock starting" criteria, such as the entry of a final judgment in a case. For example, court reporter notes for a civil case must be kept for six years from termination of the case, whether by a judgment, an appeal mandate, a dismissal, etc.

DISPOSITION: Describes the disposition of the record after the "period" to retain the original record has expired. Some of the records contain RCW cites for specific disposition authority.

CLASSIFICATION: Records are classified as OPR, official public records, or OFM, office files and memoranda, defined in RCW 40.14.010. The designations are broad categories which carry different retention periods and disposition criteria reflected in the Period and Disposition entries for those records. Generally, OPR items in the County Clerk offices are to be retained permanently while OFM items may be destroyed after stated intervals. OFM records include not only those records which are of only temporary utility or value, but also those records which are copies of records for which another office has the principal, official, original or primary copy and the responsibility to preserve that copy. To the extent possible, the description portion of the listings reflect which other office has or should have the primary copy of a document also held by the County Clerk.

Permanent Retention Records Which Cannot be Microfilmed: It is sometimes the case that the County Clerk will receive for filing an audio or video tape (or another item which cannot be microfilmed) as part of a court file or other record for which the minimum retention period is listed as permanent. This schedule does not address the apparent contradiction in having a perishable medium, such as magnetic tape, as part of a permanent record. At the time of this writing (Autumn of 1992), a state court rule is being proposed which will resolve such problems. In the meantime County Clerks should retain such materials unless local court rules or specific court orders provide alternative procedures.

SUPERSEDED

Abandoned or Unclaimed Property Reports

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of *Report of Unclaimed or Abandoned Property* sent to the Department of Revenue or unclaimed and undeliverable restitution transmitted in accordance with RCW 7.68.290. Reference to surrender to Department of Revenue should be recorded in case file. Does not include exhibits.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Abstract of Judgment

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. Official documentation of Superior Court proceedings and filings. May include sealed documents, published depositions and exhibits.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Account Reconciliation Records

DESCRIPTION: Locally prepared report indicating reconciliation of bank statements with check registers and/or account ledgers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Accounting Correspondence

DESCRIPTION: Accounting related correspondence not included in case file or other record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Administrative Working Files

DESCRIPTION: Usually topical files containing correspondence and data relating to the particular topic. Usually involves procedure, policy, personnel and management information.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 2 years

DISPOSITION: It is recommended that working files remain in the office as long as the topic of the file is effective and for so long as it is or may be important to preserve a history of the topic.

CLASS: OFM

Annual Report to OAC

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of a formal annual statistical report to Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC).

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until publication in OAC's annual report

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Annual Reports

DESCRIPTION: Any report, whether required or optional, issued by the office which provides an official review of the previous year's activities.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Arbitration Files

DESCRIPTION: Any data pertaining to a county's mandatory arbitration, to the extent that the data within the arbitration file are not made a part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until time for filing appeal from arbitration award has expired.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Attendance Record

DESCRIPTION: Office record of juror daily attendance, mileage and reimbursable expenses, used to prepare cost bill for juror payments.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

WITNESS DESCRIPTION: Office record of witness daily attendance, mileage and reimbursable expenses, used to prepare cost bill for witness payments.

MINIMUM WITNESS PERIOD: Until placed in case file.

WITNESS RECORD DISPOSITION: Place in case file or any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Automatic Account Reconciliation Records

DESCRIPTION: Any automatically prepared reconciliation of bank statements, check registers and/or account ledgers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Bank Statements

DESCRIPTION: Includes canceled checks and record of debits and credits for daily and investment accounts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Bond Dockets

DESCRIPTION: May be a discontinued record; replaced by SCOMIS docket entry; hard copy in case file. May have been bound volumes containing the original or copies of bonds filed by administrators, guardians and executors as security copies of bonds in case files. See also "Official Bond Register" for county officials' bonds.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Book of Levies

DESCRIPTION: May be a discontinued record; Probably included post-judgment execution documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Budget

DESCRIPTION: The office copy of the officially adopted budget, submitted to executive and/or legislative branch of county government.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded by new budget

DISPOSITION: Destroy **CLASS:** OFM

Budget & Estimated Revenue Projections

DESCRIPTION: The office copy of projections of revenue and expenditures submitted to county governing body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy **CLASS:** OFM

Case files

DESCRIPTION: Official documentation of Superior Court proceedings and filings. May include sealed documents, published depositions and exhibits.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender after 1978, tax warrant, tax case, territorial, territorial district court case files. See, also, "Tax Case Files," "Tax Warrant Case Files," "Territorial Case Files" and "Territorial District Court Case Files." Access to files or individual documents may be restricted by court order.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender prior to 1978, family court case files.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Some may be archival or historically valuable; contact regional archivist before destruction. Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. Before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. **CLASS:** OPR

Cash Book

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; locally maintained list of receipts and/or disbursements, which may be replaced by Receipt Reporting System (RRS) record of receipts and/or disbursements.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Cash Register Adjustments Summary

DESCRIPTION: Any record reflecting details of any adjustments made to any automated or manual accounting records. Includes Receipt Reporting System (RRS) and any successor system's report reflecting all cash register adjustments made for each accounting day. If all adjustments are included in Journal Detail Report, this record may be deleted and only the Journal Detail Report retained.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Backup Diskettes

DESCRIPTION: Daily backups of automated accounting computer, includes Receipt Reporting System and successor systems.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 cycles

DISPOSITION: Reuse

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Daily Detail Reports

DESCRIPTION: Record of every detail of every transaction for each accounting day. May include Receipt Reporting System-generated reports, its successor system or other similarly maintained records.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Cash Register Journals

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by Receipt Reporting System (RRS) Journal Detail Report. Any other periodic non-RRS daily financial transaction recapitulation.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

SUPERSEDED

Cash Register Revenue Account Distribution Summary

DESCRIPTION: Any daily or other regularly compiled summary reflecting the distribution of receipts into revenue reporting codes, including BARS/ARMS standard Washington revenue codes and any successor or local revenue distribution method. Includes Receipt Reporting System (RRS) or successor system report reflecting distribution of receipts into various county and state funds, by revenue code. This record must be preserved as a separate record as long as individual counties have the ability to alter the BARS/ARMS distribution tables.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Cash Register Tapes

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of receipts given to payers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years.

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Check Registers

DESCRIPTION: Ledger showing deposits and withdrawals in Clerk's or other checking and/or investment accounts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy.

CLASS: OFM

Checks, canceled

DESCRIPTION: Clerk's bank checks returned by bank once negotiated by payee.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Clerk's Minute Book

DESCRIPTION: Separate collection of clerk's notes of proceedings if not originally placed in case file. May be minutes recorded on court calendars, bound and retained without transfer to case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Contracts

DESCRIPTION: Written statement of terms of agreement between office and another office, agency or individual; AKA: Agreements

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year after termination

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Correspondence, general (See Administrative Working Files)

Cost Bill

JUROR COST BILL DESCRIPTION: Any records used to compute payments owed to jurors. Includes per diem, mileage and any other reimbursable expenses.

MINIMUM JUROR COST BILL PERIOD: 3 years

JUROR COST BILL DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

WITNESS COST BILL DESCRIPTION: That claim for witness fees, mileage, per diem and any other reimbursable expenses, approved by the court.

MINIMUM WITNESS COST BILL PERIOD: Until placed in case file or transferred to any approved alternative storage medium.

WITNESS COST BILL DISPOSITION: Place in case file or any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Court Calendars

DESCRIPTION: Schedule of proceedings held in Superior Court. If used for Clerk's minutes, see "Clerk's Minutes" record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 month

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Court Reporter/Recorder Notes/Tapes/Diskettes

DESCRIPTION: Paper record or approved electronic storage of record of court proceedings, including audio and video records.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD, CIVIL: Termination of case + 6 years.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD, CRIMINAL: Termination of case + 15 years.

DISPOSITION: Destroy per RCW 36.23.070.

CLASS: OPR

Daily Microfilm, Daily Recordings (see Journals)

Day Books

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; locally maintained unofficial diary.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OFM

SUPERSEDED

Deposit Slips

DESCRIPTION: Record of bank or savings institution deposit transactions

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Depositions, Unpublished/Unopened

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record as of 9/89.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment.

DISPOSITION: Release or destroy.

Dike District Files

DESCRIPTION: May be filed in Civil files series. Court orders establishing Dike Districts, compensation for lands and appointment of Commissioners.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Diking & Drainage District Journals

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; chronological listing of documents and events pertaining to a particular Dike or Drainage District.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility, after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OFM

Docket

DESCRIPTION: Variously used to describe alphabetic or numerical listing of cases, chronology of events within particular cases and the schedule of cases heard during a particular span of time. Generally replaced by SCOMIS index and docketing. See, also, "Court Calendars." May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, coroners, civil appeals, civil, bond, criminal appeal and trial dockets. Access to files or documents may be restricted by court order.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

DISCONTINUED DOCKET SERIES: Coroners, bar dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Not applicable.

Employment Applications

DESCRIPTION: Written record of professional and biographical data submitted by job applicants. Original applications may be held by central personnel office within county.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 90 days from hire date; however, application of person hired becomes part of employee's permanent record, may be held by central personnel office.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Execution Docket/Index

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; replaced by SCOMIS docket entry; hard copy in case file. Chronological and/or alphabetic listing of judgments and post-judgment documents and events.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Exhibits

CIVIL EXHIBITS DESCRIPTION: May include unpublished depositions and civil exhibits marked but not offered, marked but rejected and those admitted, transcripts and exhibits included in appeals from lower courts and administrative agencies. Does not include published depositions, as they are part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION CIVIL PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment.

CRIMINAL EXHIBITS DESCRIPTION: May include unpublished depositions and criminal exhibits marked but not offered, marked but rejected and those admitted. Does not include published depositions, as they are part of the case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION CRIMINAL PERIOD: 60 days with court order or 6 years after final judgment. RCW 36.23.070

CIVIL & CRIMINAL EXHIBITS DISPOSITION: Release or destroy. RCW 36.23.070, 63.40.010.

CLASS: OPR

Fee Book

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record. Locally maintained list of receipts and/or disbursements; replaced by RRS Journal Detail Report and/or check registers.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Fee Transmittals

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of or summary of periodic financial transactions transmitted to County Treasurer; principal transmittal held by County Treasurer.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Grand Jury Records

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; records pertaining to matters before any grand jury, may be sealed or unsealed.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Index

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe alphabetic listing of cases or persons. Generally replaced by SCOMIS index. May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, assignees, bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropractors, medical, notary, bonds of county officials, optometry, powers of attorney, records of wills and attorneys indices.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

DISCONTINUED INDEX SERIES: Bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropractors, medical and optometry.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

DISCONTINUED INDEX SERIES: Notary

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Not applicable

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Department of Licensing.

Job Descriptions

DESCRIPTION: Official published description of duties and required skills/education for a specific staff position within a county office or offices. Official, current and superseded job descriptions may/should be retained by a central personnel office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Journals

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe chronological listing of documents and events in particular cases. Generally replaced by SCOMIS docket. May be open and/or restricted-access records. Also includes "daily microfilm" or "security microfilm" of documents as the "journal" required of RCW 36.23.030.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant and tax case journals.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, and family court case journals.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Juror Attendance Record (see Attendance Records)

Juror Cost Bill (see Cost Bill)

Jury List

MASTER LIST DESCRIPTION: List of all persons eligible to serve as jurors who have been randomly selected for the jury pool.

MINIMUM RETENTION MASTER LIST PERIOD: Until superseded

TERM LIST DESCRIPTION: List of all prospective jurors for a particular jury term, randomly selected from the jury master list. AKA "venire."

MINIMUM RETENTION TERM LIST PERIOD: Until end of term.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Land Registration Files (Torrens Act)

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; may be replaced by civil case file; folder(s) containing all papers filed in a land registration/torrens case.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OPR

Letters of ()

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file or destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. **CLASS:** OFM

Microfilm, Daily or "Security" (see Journals)

Monthly Report to OAC

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of monthly statistical report to Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC).

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until publication in Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC)'s annual report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Mother's Petition/Pension

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

Naturalization Records

DESCRIPTION: Various types of naturalization-related records, including declarations of intentions, delayed birth files, naturalization affidavits, notifications of application for admission to U.S. citizenship, orders fixing naturalization terms, petitions & records, petitions, receipts for certificates of citizenship, record of final decrees of citizenship and record of petitions dockets. May be discontinued.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

Oaths: Bailiff, Court Reporter, Court Commissioner, & Others

DESCRIPTION: Oaths signed as part of position. Similar to oaths signed by deputies to other elected officials. May be a part of a miscellaneous SCOMIS (civil) file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year after termination

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Official Bond Files

DESCRIPTION: File containing official bonds of county officials; may include junior taxing district officials' bonds; Clerk's bond is recorded in County Auditor's Office and filed in Treasurer's Office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Old Age Assistance Claims

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record. Records containing chronological listing of documents pertaining to requests for financial assistance for elderly persons.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility.

CLASS: OPR

One-Party Consent Files

DESCRIPTION: Those sealed and unsealed wiretap records and reviews of wiretaps, to the extent that they are not made a part of a case file.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file if unsealed, place in general purpose criminal case file if sealed or no charges filed.

CLASS: OPR

Ordinances & Resolutions

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued series. Refers to official records of county's legislative body, principal copies are held by county legislative body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: N/A

DISPOSITION: Transfer any originals to county legislative body, destroy secondary copies.

CLASS: OFM

Personnel Files/Records

DESCRIPTION: Files and records for which the office has primary custody. These may include supervisory files, disciplinary records, payroll, attendance records and hiring process documents relating to the particular individual. May include job descriptions, classification documents and performance evaluations. Payroll records held by another office need not be included. May be copies of records held by central county personnel office.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years after termination of employment

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Policy & Procedure Directive

DESCRIPTION: Official statements promulgating policies and procedures of the office. It is recommended that previous versions of these documents be retained even when superseded, to document the policy or procedure in effect at any given time in the past. Countywide policy & procedure directives may be held and maintained by other county offices.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until superseded

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Purchase Orders

DESCRIPTION: Formal documentation of official purchases of equipment, supplies, etc.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Receipts

DESCRIPTION: Records of monies received.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Register

DESCRIPTION: Various used to describe alphabetic listing of cases or persons. Generally replaced by SCOMIS index. May be open and/or restricted-access records.

PUBLIC ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Adult criminal, civil, domestic, probate, juvenile offender filed on or after July 1, 1978, judgment or execution, tax warrant, tax, assignees, bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropodists, medical, notary, bonds of county officials, optometry, powers of attorney, records of wills and attorneys indices.

RESTRICTED-ACCESS RECORDS INCLUDE: Paternity, adoption, involuntary (mental) commitment, juvenile dependency/termination of parental rights, juvenile offender filed on or before June 30, 1978, and family court dockets.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES: Bar, dental, midwives, drugless healers, osteopaths, chiropodists, medical and optometry registers.

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives Regional Branch.

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES: Notary register.

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Department of Licensing.

Requisitions

DESCRIPTION: Formal requests for equipment, personnel, supplies, etc.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Revenue Projections

DESCRIPTION: Projections of revenue submitted to county governing body.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 1 year

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Search Warrant Records

DESCRIPTION: Those sealed and unsealed files containing search warrant applications, returns, and other data.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Place in case file if unsealed, place in general purpose criminal case file if sealed or no charges filed. CLASS: OPR

Security Microfilm (see Journals)

Software Backup Data

DESCRIPTION: Tapes, disks and punch cards providing backup data which is revised and recreated in a regular cycle.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 cycles

DISPOSITION: Recycle backup media.

CLASS: OFM

Special Inquiry Records

DESCRIPTION: Records of proceedings before Special Inquiry Judge. Restricted-access record.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Support Ledger

DESCRIPTION: Bound volumes, cards or microfiche showing from whom child support payments are received, dates and to whom funds are disbursed.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium. CLASS: OPR

Tax Case Files

DESCRIPTION: ~~May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. File folder(s) containing all papers filed in a delinquent real estate tax case. The documents in the folder have been entered on the SCOMIS system or a manually prepared docket containing a chronological listing of documents and events.~~

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. CLASS: OPR

Tax Warrant Case Files

DESCRIPTION: ~~May be discontinued record; replaced by civil case file. File folder(s) containing all papers filed in a delinquent non-real estate tax case. The documents in the folder have been entered on the SCOMIS system or a manually prepared docket containing a chronological listing of documents and events.~~

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document. RCW 36.23.065. CLASS: OPR

Territorial Case Files

DESCRIPTION: Discontinued record. Official record of Washington Territory cases prior to statehood.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Transfer to State Archives, Regional Facility. RCW 36.23.065.

CLASS: OPR

Transcripts of Judgment

DESCRIPTION: May be discontinued record; an index of or copies of judgments filed with the Clerk; not to be confused with transcripts from District Court or abstracts from other Superior Courts.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to approved alternative storage medium has been verified; before transfer it is recommended that SCOMIS "copy case" (if any) be printed and placed in case file as the first viewable document.

CLASS: OPR

Treasurer's Receipts

DESCRIPTION: Locally determined form for the periodic transmittal of receipts to the County Treasurer. Usually includes BARS fund and revenue numbers along with cumulative total of receipts for period. Should contain verification that monies were transferred to the County Treasurer.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Trust Fund Balance Register

DESCRIPTION: Any periodic record of trust fund balances, usually containing evidence of balance reconciliation.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OFM

Trust Fund Ledger

DESCRIPTION: The entire record of trust account debits and credits or deposits and withdrawals.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Permanent

DISPOSITION: Destroy after transfer to any approved alternative storage medium.

CLASS: OPR

Unclaimed Property Reports

DESCRIPTION: Annual reports made to the Department of Revenue, listing those monies or items whose owners are unknown or who cannot be located. Original reports of record with Department of Revenue.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: 3 years

DISPOSITION: Destroy

CLASS: OPR

Unpublished/Unopened Deposition (see Depositions, Unpublished/Unopened).

Verbatim Report of Proceedings

DESCRIPTION: Written transcript of proceedings or stipulated statement prepared for transmittal to Court of Appeals. The original transcript is docketed in SCOMIS and sent to the Court of Appeals. A case file may contain transcripts of certain proceedings or portions of proceedings and become part of the case file. Transcripts or tapes are sent to the appellate court and are not kept with the Superior Court case file and are not returned from the appellate court.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: N/A

DISPOSITION: Destroy secondary copies; return unpaid original transcripts to reporter or transcriptionist. CLASS: OPR

Vouchers

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of form authorizing or invoicing office or agency for fees owed; principal copy held by County Auditor.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

Witness Attendance Record (see Attendance Records)

Witness Cost Bill (see Cost Bill)

Work Orders

DESCRIPTION: Office copy of locally determined forms for requesting services of other county agencies to perform work in or for the court or clerk; principal copy of form held by office/agency performing work.

MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD: Until completion of State Auditor's Examination Report.

DISPOSITION: Destroy CLASS: OFM

SUPERSEDED

DISCONTINUED RECORDS SERIES

As many County Clerks have transferred various discontinued records to State Archives Regional Depositories, the decision was made not to list each individual discontinued record and provide a specific definition for each such record. However, to facilitate locating retention and disposition information for those offices that still have some of these records or which may be in the midst of changing from a separate records format in bound volumes to individual file folders, the following cross-reference listing is provided:

Abstract of Judgment (as a separate record series) — see Abstract of Judgment
Bar Association Records — see Docket, Index, Register
Bond Dockets (as a separate record series) — see Bond Dockets
Book of Levies, see Book of Levies
Cash Register Journals (as a separate record series) — see Cash Register Journals
Chiropodist Records — see Journals, Index, Register
Coroner's Records — see Docket
Day Books — see Day Books
Dental Records — see Register
Drugless Healers — see Index, Register
Execution Docket/Index (as a separate record series) — see Execution Docket/Index, Docket, Index
Fee Book — see Fee Book
Grand Jury Records — see Grand Jury Records
Land Registration Files/Torrens Act (as a separate record series) — see Land Registration Files (Torrens Act)
Letter (as a separate records series) — see Letters of...
Medical Records — see Index, Register
Mothers Petition, Pension — see Mothers Petition, Pension
Midwives Records — see Index, Register
Naturalization Records — see Naturalization Records
Notary Records — see Index, Register
Old Age Assistance Claims — see Old Age Assistance Claims
Optometry Records — see Index, Register
Ordinances and Resolutions — see Ordinances and Resolutions
Osteopath Records — see Index, Register
Secret Journals — see Journals
Tax Case Files (as a separate record series) — see Case Files, Tax Case Files
Tax Warrant Case Files (as a separate record series) — see Case Files, Tax Warrant Case Files
Territorial Records — see Case Files, Territorial Case Files
Transcript of Judgment (as a separate record series) — see Transcript of Judgment

COUNTY CLERK
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

UPDATE REQUEST

- ☐ NEW RECORD Request
- ☐ CHANGE to Existing Record

RECORD (*short, concise name*) _____

DESCRIPTION

SUPERSEDED

- ☐ ORIGINALS held
- ☐ COPIES held
- ☐ DISCONTINUED record, list inclusive dates: _____
- ☐ NEW RECORD (*not listed in current schedule*)

NAME: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE: _____

Mail to: State Archivist
P.O. Box 40238
Olympia, Washington 98504-0238

Disaster Recovery - Emergency Procedures

In addition to following these steps we recommend that the local records custodian:

- Develop a disaster preparedness plan. A manual of suggestions for this plan is available from the State Archives.
- Contact the State Archives Disaster Recovery Team for advice and assistance (206-586-1801) in the event of a disaster that damages public records.

Emergency Procedures

1. After any fire is out, any water pumped out and any rubble cleared away, calmly assess the damage, determine the extent and kinds of damage, and the volume of records damaged.
2. Evaluate and prioritize records for recovery. Records which are still active, necessary for current business and are not duplicated elsewhere should receive attention first.
3. Prepare a logical plan of attack covering removal, restoration and re-establishment of controls.
4. Prepare a damage assessment and control worksheet for each record series damaged. The work sheet should note the record series title, original location of the records, damage incurred, and restoration plan and priority. This record should be maintained and kept as a control throughout the recovery process. This can be done by file cabinet or shelf unit or by other logical grouping.
5. Arrange for a temporary storage area if necessary.
6. Arrange for restoration services if necessary (contact the State Archives disaster recovery team for advice).
7. Remove damaged records in the order in which they were stored. Note original locations on the damage control worksheet.
8. Transfer damaged records to temporary storage or to an area where restoration can begin.
9. Arrange for storage once restoration is complete.

Fire Damage

Closely packed paper burns with difficulty, therefore the damage caused by fire may be more apparent than real.

Salvage procedure:

1. Remove documents from containers.
2. Gently spread papers out to air and inspect the extent of damage.
3. Minimum damage (smoke damage, sooty, lightly charred at edges):
 - a. Allow paper to air in an open space.
 - b. Clean gently with a soft brush.
 - c. Humidify by circulating moist air.
 - d. Refile in clean folders.
 - e. Replace in new or restored cabinets.
4. Moderate damage (edges heavily charred, paper discolored by heat, very dirty, brittle):
 - a. Spread papers out in a very humid, well ventilated area.
 - b. Brush off the worst dust and soot.
 - c. Refile in clean folders or copy and discard originals depending on document value, retention and rate of reference.
5. Badly damaged (badly charred, very dirty, extremely brittle):
 - a. Separate pages.
 - b. Remove surface soot or dirt if possible.
 - c. Copy, microfilm or use infra-red photography if necessary.
 - d. Discard originals.
6. Completely destroyed

Discard. Retain record of records destroyed if they can be identified.

SUPERSEDED

Water Damage

Mold growth, disintegration, and the bonding of leaves into inseparable mats are the main problems resulting from water damage. **QUICK ACTION IS THE KEY** to recovery of water damaged records. After 24 hours molding begins and paper fibers begin to bond between leaves or turn into paper pulp.

Salvage procedures:

1. Drain excessive water from records.
2. Remove additional moisture by blotting with an acid-free paper.
3. Separate/spread papers to dry in a warm, dry, well ventilated room.
4. Flatten while still slightly damp.
5. Fumigate to kill mold spores.
6. Clean with a soft brush to remove dead mold spores.
7. Re-folder in clean folders and refile.

Freezing

It is best to have the records deep-frozen immediately, especially if there is a large volume of damaged records (more than a few cubic feet). Arrangements for deep-freezing can be made with most local cold-storage companies.

Freezing will arrest further damage and allow the treatment of small batches of damaged records over a more extensive period of time, and allow for better treatment planning including consideration of freeze-drying techniques.

Freeze-drying: It is far more efficient and possibly more economical to treat large batches of records by freeze-drying than by the hand-drying processes described above. Freeze-drying requires the preliminary process of deep-freezing.

Other Media

A more extensive discourse on the recovery of disaster damaged records, including non-paper media, such as film and magnetic tapes is available in a manual titled **Disaster Preparedness**. It includes detailed instruction on disaster prevention planning and recovery techniques. Your regional archivist has a copy of this manual and can arrange additional training and consultation on this subject with the state conservator.

SUPERSEDED

Appendix B

Records Storage - Problems and Standards

The most serious mistake in the long history of record keeping may have been when information began to be recorded on substances more perishable than the baked clay tablet, which will not tear or burn and which is not a source of food for various vermin. Most modern papers are still considered too perishable, and many of the new record keeping media are even more perishable. The life span of almost all modern recording media is less than one hundred years, with most having a life of less than ten years. Proper care and treatment can substantially extend this life span if the records are worth the cost, and the loss of records from fire and flood can be minimized with reasonable precautions and planning. Poor storage conditions can cause irreparable damage to records still in use, and disasters can quickly obliterate masses of records if recovery techniques are not quickly applied.

This section is intended to identify the primary causes of record deterioration and provide basic standards for the storage and care of temporary records as well as inform court officials and staff about the essential steps and processes of disaster recovery.

Enemies of Records

Heat: Heat affects paper records by increasing the rate of reaction time chemicals within the paper are absorbed by paper. Heat can warp magnetic tapes and disks and can cause the recording emulsions to separate from the carrier bases of all photographic media.

Humidity: Humidity by itself, does not harm most recording media including papers. In fact, without some moisture, paper and some other media, such as film, loses flexibility, becomes brittle and susceptible to damage.

High humidity and heat promote mold growth. Wide variations in humidity can also be damaging, particularly to papers. When the moisture content of paper changes, the individual fibers expand or contract, which stresses the paper hence accelerating the rate of deterioration.

Light: Radiant energy, particularly ultraviolet light, reacts photochemically with impurities in paper such as acids, glues, starch and dyes. The product of this reaction is oxidization of the fibers in the paper causing yellowing, brittleness and weakening of the paper by breaking the molecular chains in the cellulose. Long term exposure to ultraviolet light will cause fading of photographic dyes and almost all writing and printing inks.

Insects and rodents: Books and papers, all organic substances, are subject to attack by many insect pests including silverfish, bookworms, termites, booklice, cockroaches, and firebrats which feed and thrive on cellulose, leather, glues and cloth, of which books and paper records are made. These same record materials are extremely susceptible to rodent damage. Mice, rats and squirrels will shred paper, leather and vellums for nest building purposes and the acids in rodent droppings can damage papers for the reasons that follow.

Acids: Chemicals are introduced to paper during manufacture or later by atmospheric pollutants or contact with acids in storage containers, folders, wood shelving or other paper records. These chemicals react with moisture in or absorbed by the paper. This process, called hydrolysis, produces acids which break down paper fibers, cause brittleness and ultimate disintegration. Hydrolysis is characterized by yellowing (as often observed in newsprint).

There are other enemies of records but these are the main cause of records deterioration regardless of recording media. It follows therefore that both preventive maintenance in storage and recovery of damaged records usually are concerned with these same problems.

Minimum Storage Specifications

- Store records in or on metal file cabinets or shelving, avoid wood cabinets or shelving.
- Maintain a relatively constant temperature in the storage area, preferably between 60 and 70 degrees F.
- Maintain a nearly constant relative humidity, preferably between 45% and 55%.
- Store records in cabinets or on shelving raised 4 to 6 inches above floor level. (Note: many cabinet and shelving systems have this feature already built in). This margin of safety has been shown to be effective against potential damage by standing water caused by fire fighting efforts or minor floods.
- A fire suppression system (water sprinkler), and/or a fire detection and alarm system wired directly to the local fire department.
- Chemical fire extinguishers placed strategically in file storage areas. (Note: chemical fire extinguishers may be preferable to water sprinklers in small file rooms due to water damage that often results from the use of sprinkler systems. Lack of an automatic sprinkler system, however, makes an alarm system to the fire department imperative for suppressing after hour fires).
- An intrusion alarm system to protect against theft and vandalism.

Avoid As Much As Possible

- Exposure of records to sunlight, strong indirect natural light and strong artificial light, particularly fluorescent light
- High temperature and humidity
- Frequent variations in temperature and humidity
- Dust and chemical vapors
- Wood, coal or gas-burning heaters

- Attics; because of their extremes of temperature and generally dusty atmosphere
- Basements, because of their frequently high humidity

There are numerous steps that can be taken to restore deteriorating records and to inhibit further deterioration. If you encounter evidence of records deterioration contact the regional branch of the state archives for advice and assistance or the documents conservator at the main office of the State Archives in Olympia.

SUPERSEDED

SUPERSEDED