

MANAGING DISTRICT RECORDS

BEST PRACTICES

Records management is the systematic control of records throughout its lifecycle.

Records are the District's information assets. All staff who create, receive, and use records in the course of their job are responsible for ensuring records are managed appropriately. Principals and department heads have overall responsibility for the management of records generated by the activities within their campus or work location areas.

RECORDS LIFECYCLE BEST PRACTICES

The lifecycle of records are inclusive of the following:

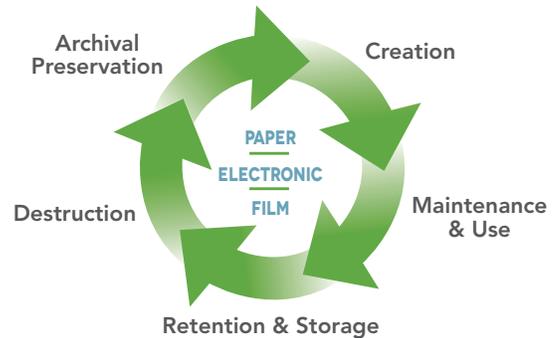
1. Creation -- Records should be created where they are needed to support business activities or to provide information or evidence about activities, transactions or decisions. Creating records should be based on business needs, relevant regulatory or legislative requirements, and internal and external accountability expectations.

2. Maintenance & Use -- Whether paper or electronic, all records must be organized logically so that they can be easily and speedily retrieved. At the point of creation or receipt, records should be incorporated into a file plan – alphabetic, numeric, chronological, or subject. All team members who have responsibility for filing records should be aware of their appropriate filing location.

3. Retention & Storage -- Retaining records for the approved retention period ensures compliance with statutory regulations. The retention schedule describes the official retention period for each type of record at the District. Records should not be maintained after the official retention period – see #4 below. In-active records stored on-site at the campus must be kept in a lockable cabinet or secure storage area with restricted access.

4. Destruction – Timely destruction of records that have reached the end of their retention period will reduce future audit and litigation risks as well as eliminate unnecessary storage expense. Once the retention period has been met, the record can be disposed by shredding if confidential, recycling if it is not confidential, or transferred to the District Records Center if it has permanent legal, fiscal, administrative, or historical value. For auditing purposes, a disposition log or destruction authorization form needs to be completed.

RECORDS LIFE CYCLE



5. Archival Preservation – The District Records Center maintains records of permanent or long-term value. A thorough review of records prior to storage or destruction will ensure that historically significant or records of permanent value are retained.

STEPS TO CLEAN OUT AND GET CONTROL OF RECORDS

1. Utilize two resources -- the records retention schedule and destruction authorization form.
2. Inventory your records to determine what needs to be maintained and which records are eligible for destruction.
3. Recycle or destroy all eligible records based on the retention schedule. Complete the destruction authorization form and submit for review by Records Management Customer Service.
4. Box records that must be retained for retention and store in a secure location on the campus.
5. Repeat steps 1-5 on annual basis.

In summary, routinely purging records benefits by reducing the number of files in the office, facilitates the retrieval of information as there are fewer files to search, avoids last minute crash programs to clean out office or storage areas, and ensures compliance with records retention schedules.

CONTACT INFO / REFERENCES

- RecordsManagement@houstonisd.org
- Customer Service 713-556-6055
- <http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/31913>
 - Retention Schedules and Forms
 - Federal & State Guidelines