23. RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY

This policy will provide all record storage users with information, procedures, and guidelines needed to establish a records management program. The objective of the records program is to provide economy and efficiency in the creation, organization, maintenance, retrieval, use, and disposition of records, assuring that unneeded records will not be created or kept and valuable records will be preserved and available.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all County offices and departments that create, store, or use paper and/or electronic records.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

   A.   Record: A document, book, paper, photograph, sound recording, digital image, digital file or other material.

   B.   Active Records: Records that are referred to on a consistent basis.

   C.   Inactive Records: Records that have little or no reference activity, however, need to be retained.

   D.   Retention Period: Minimum length of time a record should be kept to fulfill administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical needs.

   E.   Record Storage Areas: Physical and electronic storage areas centrally managed by the County where a significant amount of records have been congregated for storage. This is not intended to include small filing areas in individual offices. Rather this refers to areas outside of individual office or department responsibility centrally managed by the County as a service.

   F.   User Responsibilities: All record storage users are responsible for implementing and maintaining an effective and efficient records management program as outlined herein.

   G.   Imaging: The process of creating, indexing and digitally storing an electronic image (E.g.: PDF, TIFF, JPEG, etc.) of a paper document.

   H.   Record Series: A series of records, all of a similar type, usually with similar formatting, information, and retention requirements. (E.g.: immunization records, motor vehicle registrations)

RECORD RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION

A.   <u>Inventory.</u>   It is necessary for all record storage users to conduct and maintain an inventory of each records series managed. The inventory is to include records in individual office or department areas and in centrally managed record storage areas. During the inventory, information about each record series should be documented to provide an accurate description of records stored (including box types/numbers if applicable), location, and retention requirements. (A sample worksheet is found on page 232 in the Iowa County Records Manual. This worksheet may be used in its entirety or as a reference.) The details recorded will assist the record storage user in determining the retention and/or destruction period of the records. The worksheet will also provide a guideline to aid each record storage user in classifying a record as active or inactive.

B.   <u>Scheduled Maintenance.</u>   All record storage users should schedule time once a year to review their active and inactive files. This will enable record storage users to move records into the appropriate storage area and destroy those records which are no longer required to be maintained.

C.   <u>Uniformity of Procedure.</u>   Records that are to be retained in record storage areas should be clearly indexed to enable easy identification. Physical records that are to be destroyed should remain in their original box or placed in a box with the word DESTROY prominently displayed on the box. If a user would like personnel from the Facility & Support Services department to remove material to be destroyed, a work order should be completed and submitted to the FSS department.

PHYSICAL RECORD STORAGE SPACE RULES AND PROCEDURES

A.   <u>Transferring Physical Records into Record Storage Area.</u>   All record storage users shall transfer inactive physical records into the record storage area where they will remain for the duration of their retention period. When transferring physical records to the record storage area, each record storage user should label the box(es) to be transferred. A work order should be submitted to the FSS department to ensure that the material is transferred.

B.   <u>Indexing and Labeling Procedures.</u>   All record storage users shall be responsible for indexing and labeling stored physical records in such a manner so as to provide easy retrieval. Retained physical records shall be labeled in a clear and consistent matter so as to avoid confusion. Labels need to include the office or department, record series name, box number and destroy date (E.g.: "Treasurer's Office; Subsequent Documents 2007; Box #23; Destroy 7/2012"). If the physical records are for permanent storage, indicate that and include the words "Do Not Destroy" in lieu of the destroy date. The label should be written on the outside of the storage box

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so that everyone can easily identify the items stored. Physical records of the same record series and the same retention period should be stored together.

C.   <u>Designation of Storage Areas.</u>   It is the responsibility of each record storage user to ensure that their designated area is clean and easily accessible. Records should be placed in boxes, then shelved or in file cabinets/shelving. Books should be stored on rollers whenever possible. Aisles should not be blocked by the improper storage of records. All record storage users shall prepare a list which will identify the location of their stored records.

D.   <u>Security.</u> All physical record storage areas shall remain locked when not occupied. Offices or departments that allow researchers, abstractors, etc. into record storage areas for searches are responsible to ensure that said individuals respect the security and integrity of said records. At no time, shall a physical record storage area be unattended or left unlocked with free access to the public. Offices and departments are responsible for developing and implementing check-out/in procedures in the event that they wish to allow the temporary removal of records from storage.

<u>RECORD IMAGING AND PAPER REDUCTION</u>

A.   Wherever possible, records should be created, manipulated, maintained and referenced in electronic format. Unless a valid business reason exists, paper records should NOT be created due to the inefficiencies involved. This initiative is supportive of our efforts to be good stewards of our environment and promote "Green Government" in Scott County.

B.   Where paper records are required or already exist, digital imaging should be considered as a means to manage records through the retention period. Factors to consider include the amount of space required for paper records, the frequency of access, the duration of the retention, and the historical value of the paper record. The decision to image a record series is made as a collaboration of the originating office/department, the Information Technology Department (electronic file system and storage provider) and the Facility and Support Services Department (imaging process provider).

C.   If a document series is selected for digital imaging, the standard procedure is to destroy the original records 30 days following a final verification through the digital imaging quality control process. Provisions for other retention beyond that standard shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, the goal of digital imaging remains to eliminate paper records, not to DUPLICATE a paper record with an electronic version.

D.   In some cases (e.g. small series, odd sized records, etc.) the standard digital imaging process may not be practical. In these cases, an office or

department may pursue other means of electronic storage (such as the use of multi-function office machines or large format scanners). The originating department is responsible for creating and maintaining the electronic files or for requesting the assistance of the Information Technology Department to ensure files are properly stored and protected to allow for easy retrieval and to ensure proper back-up and security.

E. File types used for digital imaging and electronic records storage should be appropriate and commensurate to the type of record. For the permanent storage of documents and to ensure document integrity, permanent file-types (PDF, etc.) are recommended over file types that can be manipulated or changed (Word processing files, TIFF, etc.). Consult Information Technology Department for assistance.

RECORD CONFIDENTIALITY

Certain records by law are classified as confidential and are protected by various laws and standards regarding the disclosure and protection of confidential information. It is the intention of this policy to protect said confidentiality by charging each office or department with developing and implementing procedures for maintaining said records in a secure and lawful manner. Facility and Support Services and Information Technology will work with offices and departments to assist with providing for such security and segregation (where warranted) in common, multi-use physical and electronic storage areas. All records storage users are responsible for respecting and protecting the security and confidentiality of ALL County records including those of other offices and departments (where more than one office or department share records storage areas).

SECURITY INFORMATION PROTECTION

The Board of Supervisors has determined that certain confidential information developed and maintained by the county concerning security procedures and emergency preparedness, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to jeopardize employees, visitors, persons or property.

The following information shall be kept confidential unless otherwise ordered by a court, by the lawful custodian of the records, or by another person duly authorized to release such information:

a) Information directly related to vulnerability assessments;
b) Information contained in records relating to security measures such as security and response plans, security codes and combinations, passwords, restricted area passes, keys and security or response procedures;

c) Emergency response protocols;
d) Architectural, engineering or construction diagrams;
e) Information contained in records that if disclosed would significantly increase the vulnerability of critical physical or electronic systems or infrastructures of the County to attack.

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