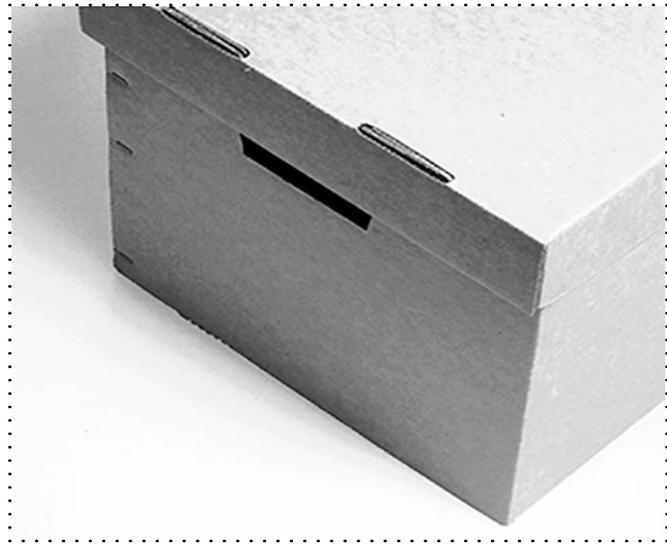


# Records Center Services

## Introduction

Records Center Services, a unit of the State and Local Records Management Division, provides state agencies in the Austin area with cost-effective storage of inactive state records in hard copy (paper), electronic, and microfilm formats. Stack storage for more than 300,000 cubic feet of records is provided in a secure, climate controlled records center facility. Microfilm and disaster recovery backup electronic media are stored in vaults specifically designed to protect those media. These services are provided to state agencies on a cost recovery basis.

While inactive records are stored at the State Records Center, agency staff are provided access to the records as needed. Records are delivered to agencies or, if the requesting agencies prefer, their staff may pick up the records or



*The removal of inactive records from expensive office space to low cost off-site storage is a central strategy in cost effective records management.*



view them on-site in the State Records Center reference area. The State Records Center also offers disaster recovery services, which include storage of computer system backups, rotation of the backup media, and 24-hour emergency availability of disaster recovery materials.

Agency records stored at the State Records Center remain the property of the agency that stores them and access to the records is restricted to the staff of the agency having ownership. Anyone requesting access to stored records through the Public Information Act (Chapter 552, Government Code) is advised to contact the agency that owns the records.

Records stored at the State Records Center are in temporary storage, not "archived." When state records are archived, they are sent to the Archives and Information Services Division of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and become the property of the Commission. See "Final Disposition" (Part IX, *Texas State Records Management Manual*) for additional information.

## *Benefits of Records Center Storage*

Three principle benefits are achieved by storing inactive agency records at the State Records Center:

- Saving space in agency offices for staff needs that are more essential for agency services than maintaining inactive or obsolete records.
- Saving money for the agency and the taxpayers of the State of Texas.
- Providing off-site protection for vital records.

Agencies are encouraged to call the State and Local Records Management Division with any questions regarding services or procedures at the State Records Center. Use of the State Records Center, while not mandatory, is the most cost-effective way to manage the state's inactive records.

## *Eligibility Criteria*

For records to be eligible for stack storage or microfilm vault storage at the State Records Center, the following criteria must be met:

- Information to be stored must qualify as a state record according to the definition in Texas Government Code §441.180.
- Records must be from a state agency in the Austin area.
- Access rate for records must not exceed one access per file drawer (two cubic feet of records) per month.
- Valid records retention requirements must be established and an approved agency records retention schedule must be on file with the State and Local Records Management Division.
- Records must have at least one (1) year of retention time remaining.
- Agency records that are duplicates of records already in storage at the State Records Center will not be accepted for storage unless the organization or arrangement differs from that of the stored records and such organization is necessary to satisfy agency program requirements.
- Records must be organized, packed, indexed, and labeled correctly.



## *Obtaining Approval for Storage*

If the general eligibility criteria for storage services are met, initial approval to store a specific records series must be obtained by preparing the "Records Center Storage Approval Form" (RMD 106) as follows:

- Complete all items according to the instructions on the back of the form.



- Certify agency approval of storage by the signature of the records management officer or agency head on the form.
- Submit the original RMD 106 to the State and Local Records Management Division. Upon approval, a copy of the form is returned to the records management officer with an assigned RMD 106 Approval Number.

A copy of the RMD 106 form may be requested from the agency records management officer or by contacting the State and Local Records Management Division. The form must be typed or the agency may use a computer generated version if approved by the manager of Records Center Services. The RMD 106 is completed only when requesting initial approval to store a records series at the State Records Center or if there are substantial changes that require the form to be superseded by updated information.

## *Preparing to Store Hard Copy Records*

Records Center Services staff annually transport in excess of 40,000 cubic feet of boxed records from more than 100 state agencies to the State Records Center. To facilitate this process and improve management controls over the records in storage at the State Records Center, the following standard procedures for preparing records for storage have been established.

- Unless otherwise approved on the RMD 106, all records must be packed in a standard records center storage box (16" x 12-1/2" x 10-1/2") with lift-off lids.
- In estimating the number of boxes needed, figure two boxes per letter size file drawer and two and one-half boxes per legal size file drawer. Contact the manager of Records Center Services for information on how to purchase these boxes, if needed.
- Correct assembly of records storage boxes is necessary to ensure the structural integrity of the box and to protect the contents. For example, all flaps

are designed to be tucked inside to strengthen the bottom and sides of the box. If requested, Records Center Services can provide instructions for assembling boxes.

- Boxes must be new and free of markings except for the agency box number. For boxes used to store records at the agency prior to transfer to the State Records Center, this requirement may be modified as follows:
  - These boxes may be acceptable provided they are free of all printing, markings, paint, and tape on at least one end and one side.
  - Information written on the other end or side of the box must be relevant to the records stored in the boxes.
  - Approval for using these boxes should be obtained prior to submitting the transmittal paperwork.



## *Packing Records*

- Determine how the records will be divided for placement in the records storage boxes. The records series can be divided monthly, quarterly, annually by fiscal or calendar year, or any other logical subdivision, such as by closure date. All the records in a box must be the same records series and eligible for final disposition at the same time.
- When packing records in the storage boxes, keep the records in the original filing arrangement, provided it is a logical and systematic order, whether alphabetical, numerical or chronological. More than 80,000 items are circulated annually from the State Records Center and, for the purpose of returning files to the agency from storage, Records Center Services must be able to quickly and easily locate a file within a box.



- For files in numerical order, place lowest number to the front of each box.
  - For files in alphabetical order, begin with "A" in the first box.
  - For files in chronological order, place them in the box by consecutive dates.
- 
- If agency records are not arranged in a logical order that can be used for retrieving files, they must be put in order before packing boxes. The appropriate order depends on the way the records will be requested by agency staff while they are in storage. For example, if staff will be needing to see files A through D of a particular records series, the records should be arranged in alphabetical order.
  - Place legal size and letter size records upright in the box, as they would be arranged in a file drawer. Leave at least one inch of space at each end of the box so the box can be picked up easily.
  - Place letter size records in the box facing the front end, which has the box number.
  - Place legal size records in the box sideways, facing the left-hand side of the front end of the box.
  - Stack computer printouts and ledgers on the bottom of the box facing the lid. Do not stack paper above handholds.

## *Numbering Boxes*

- Mark each box number one inch high to the left of the handhold as shown in Figure 1 "Stacked Boxes." Do not write any other information on this end of the box.
- Number boxes in consecutive order.

- The box number may include an alpha code (such as, FS for the financial services department) and does not have to start with "1" since boxes for the same records series may have been previously sent to storage. For example, if three boxes of "Vouchers" are sent to storage in September (numbered FS-1, FS-2, FS-3) and two more boxes of "Vouchers" need to be sent in October, these boxes could be numbered FS-4 and FS-5.
- Do not duplicate the same box number on the same transmittal.
- Do not put numbers on the box lids.



## Stacking Boxes for Pick Up

- Stack boxes for each transmittal in one location within the agency.
- Stack boxes in numerical order as shown in Figure 1 "Stacked Boxes." The first box of the

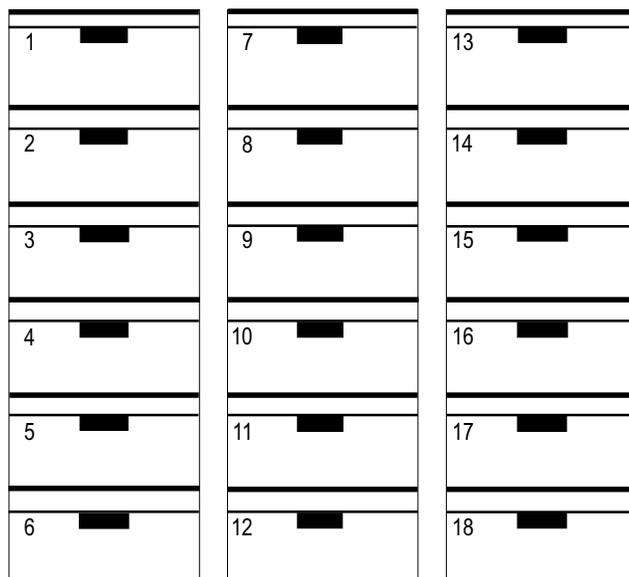


Figure 1. Stacked Boxes



shipment will be *on top of the first stack*, the seventh box will be on top of the second stack, and so on. This is done to improve the efficiency of downloading boxes from the agency to the State Records Center.

- Stack boxes six high or less to prevent crushing of bottom boxes.
- The agency contact person will be called by Records Center Services to schedule the pick up of the boxes. Be sure the contact person is available at the scheduled time, as there may be questions that have to be resolved or the boxes cannot be picked up.

## *Sending Records Transmittal*

After receiving the approved RMD 106 and packing the boxes for storage, prepare a "Transmittal of State Records" (Form RMD 101) for each shipment of records. The transmittal may be submitted to the State and Local Records Management Division by either of two methods:

- 1) Electronic Transmission of RMD 101.

If the agency has an e-mail connection via the Internet, the transmittal for storage of records should be sent electronically. Guidelines for using the e-mail RMD 101 system may be obtained by addressing an e-mail message to the following:

edt101@tsl.state.tx.us

- In the message, include the word HELP101. Any combination of upper/lower case letters will work. Instructions will then be returned through the e-mail system.
- An electronic RMD 101 may be used for storage only. To send hard copy records for microfilming, a paper transmittal must be completed.

## 2) Submission of Paper RMD 101

For agencies without the capacity for electronic transmission, a paper RMD 101 must be prepared as follows:

- The form must be typed; handwritten forms are not accepted.
- Complete all items according to the instructions on the back of the form. If the number of boxes is more than will fit on one page, use a “Transmittal of State Records, Continuation Page” (Form RMD 101C).
- List only the first and last file in each storage box on the RMD 101.
- Box numbers on the RMD 101 must agree with numbers on the boxes.
- Send the completed form via interagency mail to:

State and Local Records Management Division  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission  
1201 Brazos  
Austin TX 78701

- Keep a copy of the RMD 101 in a suspense file with the agency’s itemized list of files in each box until the records have been picked up for storage and a final copy of the RMD 101 has been received. The agency records management officer is sent a final copy of the RMD 101 with the SRC Access Codes included. These codes will need to be referenced whenever staff request a record from storage.

There are detailed instructions on the back of the form for completing the information in all fields. A copy of the RMD 101 and RMD 101C may be requested from the agency records management officer or by contacting the State and Local Records Management Division.





After submitting the RMD 101, the agency is responsible for maintaining an itemized list of all files in each box. If staff need to request the return of a file from storage, they must be able to identify the box in which it is located.

## *Accessioning Records*

After reviewing the RMD 101 received from the agency, Records Center Services staff:

- Assign each box a unique SRC Access Code.
- Call the contact person listed on the RMD 101 to schedule an approximate time to pick up the records.
- Pick up the records at the agency and deliver a copy of the RMD 101 with the SRC Access Code for each box listed.
- Check the records into storage, which includes:
  - Verifying the RMD 101 information for the boxes being picked up.
  - Correcting information on the RMD 101, if needed.
  - Sending a final copy of the RMD 101 to the agency records management officer.
- File the RMD 101 in the master index of State Records Center holdings.

Records center staff will not accept a shipment of records if:

- The boxes are not packed properly.
- The numbers on the box do not match the box numbers on the RMD 101.

- The files in the boxes do not match the first and last file names on the RMD 101.
- The boxes are over-stuffed.
- The boxes are numbered on both ends.
- The boxes have been used before unless approval was obtained prior to submitting the RMD 101.



If a shipment of records cannot be picked up because packing requirements have not been met, Records Center Services will call the agency's contact person, describe the problems and suggest solutions. After the agency resolves problems with the packing, Records Center Services will reschedule pick up of the boxes.

If the agency does not resolve these problems within 30 days after the agency's RMD 101 is approved, the RMD 101 is voided and the agency will need to submit a new RMD 101 to store those boxes.

## *Storing Other Records Media*

*Microforms*—for storage of roll microfilm, microfiche, computer output microfilm, etc., use the same storage approval and transmittal methods as for hard copy records.

*Electronic media*—for magnetic tapes, diskettes, optical disks, etc., use the same forms as for hard copy records if the electronic media is to be accessioned as regular stack storage rather than for disaster recovery purposes.

## *Sending Records for Filming*

For hard copy records being sent to the State Records Center for filming, the following procedures apply:

- Use the paper RMD 101 as a microfilm work order to send the hard copy for filming. Complete Sections II and III of the RMD 101.



- ▶ If the microfilm will be stored at the State Records Center, submit a RMD 106 for approval of the microfilm storage. After filming, a RMD 101 listing the microfilm reels or microfiche in storage and their respective SRC Access Codes, will be mailed to the records management officer.
- ▶ If the microfilm is not to be stored at the State Records Center, a RMD 106 is not needed.

## *Disaster Recovery Services*

For disaster recovery vault storage of electronic media backups:

- ▶ Approval for disaster recovery services is obtained by submitting a "Disaster Recovery Service Approval Form" (RMD 110) to the manager of Records Center Services.
- ▶ The RMD 113 is submitted once to establish service and it is the agency's responsibility to update the form whenever there are changes in agency staff authorized to access the media.
- ▶ Transmittal of electronic media containers is done on a "Disaster Recovery Transmittal" (Form RMD 109).
- ▶ Transmittals are picked up with the boxes. They do not need to be sent to the State Records Center for approval prior to pick up.
- ▶ If the agency requires access to electronic media backups, the entire container is returned to the agency. Records center staff do not remove anything from these containers.
- ▶ Agency records management officers are provided with copies of instructions for accessing disaster recovery materials after normal working hours. Procedures have been developed to ensure that only authorized agency staff listed on the RMD 113 have access to the disaster recovery materials.

- Off-site storage of disaster recovery backups is recommended for all agencies that have automated systems and maintain vital records on these systems. If the electronic vital records have retention periods of 10 years or more, off-site storage is required by the state *Electronic Records Standards and Procedures* (13 TAC §6.95).



## Retrieving Stored Records

The key to retrieving an agency's record is the SRC Access Codes listed on the final RMD 101 sent to the agency records management officer. There are SRC Access Codes for all records an agency has in storage. It is the agency's responsibility to control staff accessibility to the SRC Access Codes listed on the RMD 101.

By following the guidelines below, agency staff can quickly retrieve information needed from the State Records Center.

Several options are available for requesting records from storage.

- One or more files may be returned to the agency.
- If only one or two documents are needed, they can be faxed to the agency.
- If agency staff are not certain which files are needed from a box, or if several files are needed from the same box, the entire box may be requested.
- If agency staff need to research numerous files, the records may be viewed at the State Records Center rather than having the boxes returned to agency offices.



Requests for retrieval of records may be made by one of the following ways:

- If 25 or fewer records are being requested, call Records Center Services at 454-2751, fax the request to 459-6872, or mail the request via interagency mail to:

State and Local Records Management Division  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission  
1201 Brazos  
Austin TX 78701

- If more than 25 records are being requested, a written request must be mailed or faxed.

Should an emergency arise and records are needed immediately, Records Center Services will work with the agency to expedite access to the records.

## *Identify the Requester*

When requesting a record, Records Center Services staff need to know the following about the requester:

- Name.
- Agency.
- Division, department, unit.
- Building name and room number.
- Telephone number and extension.

## *Describe the Record*

When requesting a record, Records Center Services staff need to know the following about the record:

- SRC Access Code from the RMD 101.

- Any identifying information on the label of the folder or on the item.
- Date of record.
- Records series title (for example Purchase Vouchers, Diagnostic Reports, General Ledger).
- Storage medium:
  - Hard copy
  - Microform
  - Magnetic tape
  - Diskette
  - Optical disk
  - Other media (specify)



## *Specify Original or Copy*

When requesting a record, the Records Center Services staff need to be notified whether agency staff require the original record or a copy.

If a copy is acceptable, Records Center Services will make one copy for a state agency at no charge. Additional copies for governmental entities or private organizations will be charged according to the Texas State Library's published cost schedule.

Records Center Services reserves the right to provide the original in lieu of a copy, depending on the size and volume of the file and the staff time required for copying.

## *Choose Type of Access*

Agency staff may choose to pick up a record from storage, view the record in person at the State Records Center, or have it delivered to the agency.



If 25 or fewer records are requested before 10 a.m., they will be available for viewing, pick up, or delivery after 1 p.m. the same day. If requested after 10 a.m., they will be available after 8 a.m. the next day.

Higher volume requests are handled on a first come, first served basis, and Records Center Services will contact the agency when the records are available.

## *Access Options*

- To view records in person at the State Records Center, the requester must:
  - Present a letter from the records management officer or agency head authorizing access to the records and specifying whether the records may be viewed only, or also copied.
  - Show identification to Records Center Services staff before viewing the records.
  - Sign a "State and Local Records Management Division Delivery Receipt" when the records are delivered to his/her custody, and upon completion of the review, receive a receipt confirming that the records have been returned to the custody of the State Records Center.
  
- To pick up the record in person at the State Records Center, the requester must:
  - Present a letter from the records management officer or agency head authorizing the requester to pick up the records.
  - Show identification to Records Center Services staff before taking custody of the records.
  - Sign a "State and Local Records Management Division Delivery Receipt" showing that the record has been delivered to the temporary custody of agency staff.

- Keep the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt in a suspense file until the record is returned to the State Records Center.
- When the State Records Center is called to pick up the records, give the receipt number on the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt.
- Destroy the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt when the record is returned to the State Records Center, and file the yellow copy as proof that the record has been returned to storage.



- To have a record delivered, the requester must:
  - Sign a “State and Local Records Management Division Delivery Receipt” showing that the records has been delivered to the temporary custody of agency staff.
  - Keep the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt in a suspense file until the record is returned to the State Records Center.
  - When the State Records Center is called to pick up the records, give them the receipt number on the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt.
  - Destroy the pink copy of the Delivery Receipt when the record is returned to the State Records Center, and file the yellow copy as proof that the record has been returned to the storage.

## *Check Out Period*

A record to be returned to storage after use by agency staff will be checked out to the requester for 30 days. If the record needs to be kept at the agency longer than 30 days, the agency contact person should call the State Records Center to extend the time period or to request a permanent transfer back to the agency. To request the permanent transfer of an entire box of records back to the agency, contact Records Center Services to initiate the transfer.



To maintain file integrity, records should be returned to storage as soon as possible or the State Records Center should be notified that the record is "Not To Be Returned" (NTBR). Should agency staff decide that a record needs to be returned to storage after it has been designated "NTBR" and removed from the storage index, the record will be processed as a new entry or "interfile."

## *Returning Received Items (Refiles)*

Agency staff may return an item to storage by calling the State Records Center at 454-2751 and providing the Delivery Receipt number for each record to be returned.

When there are several records listed on the same Delivery Receipt, all records must be returned at the same time unless partial return is authorized by Records Center Services prior to the pick up.

Records to be returned ("refiles") are picked up on regularly scheduled deliveries to agencies.

## *Adding Records to Stored Boxes*

If the agency needs to send a file/document to be added to a box of records already in storage, these can be picked up by Records Center Services as interfiles. The SRC Access Code for the box must be written on the item to be interfiled. This number can be found on the RMD 101 used to transfer the box to storage.

Any group of interfiles that has more than 25 items must be put in numerical order by the SRC Access Code before being picked up for storage.

## *Replacing a Stored Reel of Microfilm*

If an agency wants a stored reel of microfilm replaced by a later reel (for example, if the records are refiled), the agency must notify the State and Local Records Management Division in writing and the previously stored reel will be permanently transferred back to the agency.

## *Records Disposal*

State agencies are required by law (Texas Government Code §441.187) to request authorization from the State Auditor and the Director and Librarian of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to destroy obsolete records. This applies to all state records, regardless of where they are maintained.

An agency's approved "Records Retention Schedule" (Form SLR 105) accompanied by a "Certification and Approval" (SLR 105C) form, which has been signed by the State Auditor and the Director and Librarian, grants the agency the necessary authority to dispose of records as specified on the schedule.

If an agency does not yet have an approved retention schedule, the agency must submit a "Request for Authority to Dispose of State Records" (RMD 102).

For records stored at the State Records Center, staff review the storage indexes on a periodic basis to identify records that have reached the end of their retention period. Based on this review, Records Center Services staff generate a disposal authorization request that is sent to the agency records management officer. Attached to the disposal authorization request are all the RMD 101s which list the agency's boxes eligible for final disposition. Final disposition of state records may be destruction, archival review, transfer to State Archives, or return to the agency.

All boxes accessioned for storage on a single RMD 101 are processed for final disposition at the same time and must have a disposal date within the same calendar year or fiscal year (if the disposal date is based on fiscal year end). If an agency wants boxes in storage to be destroyed on a monthly basis, the boxes for each month must be listed on a separate RMD 101 and the agency must submit written authorization allowing monthly disposition of the records by the State Records Center.





After authorization for final disposition has been received from the agency, Records Center Services will schedule the agency's records for final disposition in accordance with staff resources. To verify when a specific group of records has been destroyed, the records management officer may call the manager of Records Center Services at 454-2705 x163.

*Comments or complaints regarding the programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission may be addressed to:*

*Director and Librarian  
PO Box 12927  
Austin TX 78711-2927  
512-463-5460; FAX 512-463-5436*

*Copies of this publication are available in alternative format on request.*

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<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/SLRM/SLRMhome.html>*