



Records Management 4: Records Destruction

University Archives

Destruction Information

- When records have fulfilled their retention period, non-permanent records may be destroyed.
- Shredding is the preferred method of destruction.
- The destruction of all records must be documented in the event of a dispute, lawsuit, investigation, subpoena, summons, or other legal or formal process.

Disposing of Records

- Purge records that are beyond the approved retention period.
- Complete a Records Destruction Certificate as evidence that records were disposed in accordance with the Records Retention Schedule.
- The Records Destruction Certificate is a permanent record and must be filed in a safe place or forwarded to the University Archives.

Disposing of Records cont.

- Electronic records must be treated as paper records and are subject to retention guidelines.
- Records involved in litigation, criminal or civil investigation, or audit should be placed on hold and not destroyed until the investigation is resolved.

Destruction by Consignment

- Records sent out on consignment require a certificate of destruction from the vendor.
 - These certificates rarely indicate the type and volume of records destroyed. In this instance, complete a university Records Destruction Certificate and attach it to the consigned copy.

Completing the Certificate of Destruction

- Indicate the series to be destroyed and include the following:
 - The date range of the records
 - An estimate of the volume (in linear feet, number of file folders, boxes or electronic files)
 - How and why the records were destroyed.
 - Sign and date the form.
 - File in a permanent folder or forward to the University Archivist.



Records Destruction Certificate

COLLEGE/ADMINISTRATIVE DEPT. _____

SERIES/TITLE OF RECORDS	Inclusive Dates	Estimated Volume*
TOTAL VOLUME OF RECORDS DESTROYED		

* Volume of paper records is estimated in linear feet to the nearest whole number. Volume of digital records may be stated by the estimated memory volume it consumes.

I hereby certify that the records described above have been: (check one)

Destroyed per retention schedule guidelines.
Digitized and originals destroyed.

Method of Destruction:

Shredding In-house Outside Agency (attach agency destruction certificate)
Demagnetizing Other: (please specify)

Departmental Custodian _____

Destruction Date _____

Document Imaging

- If you plan on digitizing paper records to reduce storage or to have quick access to needed documents, fill out a Certificate of Destruction.
 - Note on the form that the original records were scanned and shredded and that they were replaced by surrogate records.

Disposing Electronic Records

- When you hit “delete” the record is not gone
 - Only the pointer to the file is removed
 - The file area is marked for reuse
- Window’s Recycle Bin can reestablish a deleted file. Make sure you clean out this folder periodically.
- Courts have ruled that forensic methods will not be used for discovery orders if records were deleted per the Records Retention policy and a Certificate of Destruction was executed.

Consult the Archivist for guidance

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