



# 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*
<b>TOTAL VOLUME OF RECORDS DESTROYED</b>		

\* 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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