Policy on Records Management and Retention

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the need for orderly management and retrieval of all official records and a documented records retention and destruction schedule congruent with all state and federal laws and related regulations. All official records, including but not limited to paper, microform, electronic, or any other media will be retained for the minimum periods stated in the institutional Records Retention Schedule as approved by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas State Auditor's Office in compliance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 441. After a specified period of time, official records must be disposed of in a manner that is consistent with, and systematically carried out in accordance with, prescribed records and information management guidelines and procedures.

Duplicate files, copies, library materials, and stocks of obsolete forms or pamphlets originally intended for distribution are not considered to be official records or record copies. Duplicates or non-record convenience copies should be destroyed when they cease to be useful and should never be kept longer than the official record copy.

Records Retention Schedule

The UT Dallas Records Retention Schedule provides a list of official records for each department on campus and prescribes the periods of authorized retention. The schedule may be revised periodically to include a newly created record series, to change retention periods, or to delete a record series no longer useful. Appropriate approval procedures must be followed and completed before any revisions become effective.

All records are to be kept for the minimum periods listed in the Records Retention Schedule. Notwithstanding such minimum retention periods, all records must be maintained until all required audits are completed and should be retained beyond the listed retention periods where there is a probability of litigation either involving records or requiring their use.

Documents may be maintained for the prescribed minimum retention periods in microform if the microform reproduction is accomplished pursuant to a procedure that complies with Texas Government Code Section 441.188; Texas Administrative Code Title 13, Chapter 6, Subchapter B, Sections 6.21-6.35.

Official records kept only in electronic format must be identified in the Records Retention Schedule and must comply with Texas Government Code Section 441.189; 13 Texas Administrative Code Sections 6.91-6.98.

Vital Records should be identified in the Records Retention Schedule and protected in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 441.183. State law defines a vital state record as any state record necessary to the resumption or continuation of state agency operations in an emergency or disaster; the recreation of the legal and financial status of the agency; or the protection and fulfillment of obligation to the people of the state.

Archival documents should be identified in the Records Retention Schedule and maintained in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 441.181. An archival state record is any state record that is retained permanently for lasting historical value and is used for research and reference by university offices and the general public. Archival or historical records are to be preserved in the archives of the institution.

Destruction of State Records

No state records may be destroyed without permission from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission as outlined in Texas Government Code Section 441.187; 13 Texas Administrative Code Title 13, Chapter 6,
Subchapter A, Section 6.7. The Texas State Library has two established methods for obtaining legal authority to destroy state records. Procedures differ for records listed on an approved Records Retention Schedule and any records not listed.

A state record may not be destroyed if any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, open records request, administrative review, or other action involving the record is initiated before the expiration of the retention period for the record set in the approved institutional Records Retention Schedule. If no action as described above has been taken, records may be destroyed in accordance with the approved retention periods shown in the Records Retention Schedule. Prior to disposal of official records, all state and institutional records and information management regulations and policies must be followed. Any state record listed in the Records Retention Schedule not subject to any of the actions identified that has reached its retention period must be listed on a Request for Disposal of State Records form and submitted to the Records Management Officer (RMO) or their designee. No records can be disposed of before an approved form has been signed by the RMO and returned to the initiating department or unit.

Storage of State Records

UT Dallas may adopt rules establishing standards and procedures for the protection, maintenance, and storage of official records as outlined in Texas Government Code Section 441.190. There are two methods in which state records can be stored at UT Dallas: The department can store records that have not yet reached their respective retention period within their own facilities, servers, or driver, or the department can request storage for their records from the RMO.

Coordination with UT System Administration Records Management Officer

State law requires each state agency to appoint a RMO to act as the agency's representative in all issues of records and information management policy, responsibility, and statutory compliance pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 441.184.

The RMO at UT System Administration serves as the liaison between the Texas State Library Archives Commission and the UT System component institutions and provides a clearinghouse for collection of institutional Records Retention Schedules to be submitted to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission for approval and recertification in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 441.185; 13 Texas Administrative Code Sections 6.1-6.10. In addition to coordinating the UT System records retention programs, the UT System RMO is available to assist component staff members who are assigned records and information management responsibilities.

Related Links

UT Dallas Records Retention Schedule

Policy History

- Issued: 2000-02-07
- Editorial Amendments: 2019-02-19
- Revised: 2019-09-16
Policy Links

- Permalink for this policy: https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdbp3001
- Link to PDF version: https://policy.utdallas.edu/pdf/utdbp3001
- Link to printable version: https://policy.utdallas.edu/print/utdbp3001