

Disposal of Additional Records

Background

On June 6, 2002 and June 16, 2003, the Legislative Assembly approved changes to the format of records schedules and the process for the disposal of additional records in the Saskatchewan Government. Prior to this, all government institutions had to obtain written authorization from the Provincial Archivist to dispose of additional records. With recent changes, this authorization is no longer required, providing the official record is included in the Administrative Records Management System 2006 (ARMS 2006) or an approved Operational Records System (ORS) and the government institution has in place **approved internal policies and procedures** for managing retention and disposal of additional records.

Additional records are **copies** of an official record where the official record is a record retained by a government institution to satisfy legal, financial and other long-term requirements. The official record can be the original and the only copy of a record, microfilm, electronic or any replacement copy of a record. The additional records designation allows government departments to dispose of unnecessary copies of records once the official record is identified and verified. For example, when a government agency decides to change the format for certain records (e.g. from paper to electronic, etc.), source documents can be disposed of as additional records providing the new format for the official record is acceptable by the law.

Official Records are subject to the disposal procedures as per *The Archives Act, 2004* and must be disposed of or transferred to the Archives using the procedures outlined in the Saskatchewan Records Management Guidelines.

Summary

Approved policies and procedures for the disposal of additional records should outline responsibilities of records managers, staff members, executives and include steps documenting records disposal. Based on internal policies and procedures, individual branches/sections will determine for how long additional records are to be kept and how to dispose of them. It is recommended that the disposal policies and procedures be approved by senior management and applied uniformly throughout the organization. A copy of the approved policy and procedures should be forwarded to Saskatchewan Archives Board. Please note that documented records management procedures, including procedures for the disposal of additional records, are necessary to satisfy certain requirements in *The Archives Act, 2004* and *The Saskatchewan Evidence Act*, and may be required to comply with *The Electronic Documents Act*.

Disposal Policies and Procedures for Additional Records

The following are recommendations regarding the establishment of administrative procedures and disposal policies for additional records.

ADDITIONAL RECORD DISPOSAL POLICIES – REQUIREMENTS and CONDITIONS

- The official record must, if it is administrative in nature, be related to ARMS 2006 or, if operational in nature, to a current, approved Operational Records System.
- Additional records must contain information identical to that of the official record.
- The official record should exist in the branch responsible for carrying out the functions.
- The branch, unit, etc. responsible for retaining the official record must be determined and clearly identified prior to the disposal of additional records.
- Disposal documentation must be retained by the department or branch.
- Disposal documentation should include the description of additional records to be destroyed (e.g. records titles, inclusive dates for the records, relevant ARMS 2006 or ORS numbers, etc.). Disposal documentation must also identify the official record (title, dates, medium, etc.) and the official record keeper (e.g. branch, unit, etc.), date of disposal of records, method of disposal, witness's signatures, etc.
- Physical disposal of additional records can take place only after verification of the quality, integrity, accessibility, and completeness of the official record.

ADDITIONAL RECORD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

- Determine administrative responsibilities
 - who is accountable for disposal of additional records (e.g. the directors of branches, records managers, etc.)?
 - who gives final approval for disposal (i.e. who is the Designated Records Officer (DRO))?
 - who retains records documenting disposal of additional records (e.g. centralized - records management co-ordinator, decentralized – branches)?
 - who is notified regarding disposal?
 - who conducts the physical disposal (branches, records management, etc.)?
- Establish procedures for:
 - identifying and verifying official records

- determining when additional records are eligible for disposal
- approving disposal of additional records (DRO)
- consultation with staff members, senior executives and office solicitor
- physical disposal of additional records
- documenting the disposal process
- retaining disposal documentation

DISPOSAL OF SOURCE RECORDS

If a branch or department decides to change format of certain records to microfilm or to electronic images, it may dispose of source records under the additional records designation providing the imaged official record is verified and complete. The disposal process of the source documents must be thoroughly documented. According to *The Standard on Microfilm and Electronic Images as Documentary Evidence (CAN/CGSB-72.11-93)*, a microfilm or electronic image is acceptable as evidence in a court of law, only if proof is presented that the source documents were destroyed. Refer to the standard for further information regarding microfilming/imaging requirements.