

Approved:



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4-6-13

DATE

## Resources

**Contact:** Agency Records Officer

### Managing Agency Records

**References:** [RCW 40](#)  
[WAC 434-610](#) through 626  
[WAC 434-640](#) through 677  
[State General Records Retention Schedules](#)  
[State Essential Records Manual](#)

## Managing Agency Records

**Purpose:** To ensure all formats of Puget Sound Partnership's records are managed for their entire lifecycle to achieve:

- Easy access.
- Security.
- Legal and regular disposition.
- Reduced liability.
- Documentation of past performance.

**Application:** This policy applies to all Puget Sound Partnership employees and applicable contractors.

## Definitions

A list of definitions used in this policy is provided on Page 4.

## Executive Director Appoints an Agency Records Officer to Oversee Records Management

The Agency Records Officer is appointed by the Puget Sound Partnership Executive Director (or his/her designee) to develop and oversee a comprehensive records management program as outlined in RCW 40.14.040. This position supervises the agency records management process, and represents the agency in all contacts with the State Archives and the Records Center.

### **Supervisors Ensure Employees Manage Records According to Policies, Standards, and Regulations**

All Puget Sound Partnership employees are custodians of Puget Sound Partnership records and must manage them according to state standards, regulations, and Puget Sound Partnership policy and procedure. This includes **electronically stored information**.

All employees must take Records Management training. When an employee leaves a job, the supervisor takes over managing the records until another employee assumes responsibility. All employees are responsible for keeping records organized and up to date, for segregating records exempt from public disclosure, and for assisting with producing records in the future.

All employees do their part to implement retention schedules and ensure that **active records** are kept, while transitory records are deleted and inactive records are “cycled” out of active office space to central “inactive records” storage through the Records Officer. Staff follows retention schedules, **file plans**, Essential Records Disaster Recovery Plans, and also participates in records inventories and plan updates each year, as needed.

### **Only One Person is Responsible to Keep Complete, Official Files**

To reduce the number of copies kept in the agency, one person will be designated as the Records Management Coordinator responsible for maintaining the complete, official file for specific records. The Records Officer maintains the list of Records Management Coordinators for various records series.

### **Records Officer Sets Standards for Managing PSP Records and Manages Their Disposition**

The Records Officer has the following responsibilities:

- Ensure Puget Sound Partnership complies with records management requirements.
- Develop policies, procedures, and guidance to help staff manage Puget Sound Partnership records in all media throughout their life cycle.
- Provide resources and training to Puget Sound Partnership staff to help them manage their program’s records according to standards and requirements.
- Inventory and appraise Puget Sound Partnership records to ensure legal, fiscal, audit, risk, business and historical values are met, and review yearly.
- Manage Puget Sound Partnership’s retention schedules, and review yearly.
- Develop File Plans and the Essential Records and Disaster Recovery Plan, and review yearly.
- Manage Puget Sound Partnership’s records **disposition** and conversion to other media, as needed.
- Manage inactive paper records stored offsite at the State Records Center.
- Manage Puget Sound Partnership’s inactive electronic records directories for transfer to the Digital Archives.
- Maintain Puget Sound Partnership’s list of Records Management Coordinators.

### **Puget Sound Partnership Records are the Property of the State of Washington**

Original Puget Sound Partnership records must stay in the agency's custody until they are archived or scheduled for disposal. The only exceptions are:

1. When original records are required by the courts.
2. When records are stored at the State Records Center or with the Department of Information Services.
3. When records are sent to the State Printer for duplication and will be returned to the agency.

When originals are required by a court, records will be duplicated so they can be available for Puget Sound Partnership business to continue.

### **Retention Schedules and File Plans Define Procedures to Manage Records Through the Records' Lifecycle**

Retention schedules provide legal authority to archive or dispose of records. If a retention schedule doesn't exist, then the records must be kept until one is approved by the Agency Records Officer. **Retention schedules** are the primary guidance document for every type of record in any media. They are developed by the Agency Records Officer as a result of a records inventory and appraisal.

When the processes for managing some **record series** is a more complex process than a simple retention schedule can provide, a file plan may also be developed as a result of an inventory and appraisal. Plans are developed by the Agency Records Officer in collaboration with agency staff to more formally document the results of an inventory and appraisal and clarify processes to ensure consistency into the future.

### **Staff Use Puget Sound Partnership-Established Systems to Manage Records**

When Puget Sound Partnership establishes systems—electronic or other—for managing certain records, employees must use these systems exclusively to ensure records are managed consistently across the agency.

New systems will be integrated with existing record-keeping systems (paper and electronic) to ensure successful migration and realize a return on investment without duplicating effort.

**Agency Records Management and Retention**

This document contains definitions of terms used in Policy A-500 and any related procedures and/or tasks.

**Active Records** – Records used frequently and stored “in office” according to the program’s or office’s retention schedule.

**Disposition** – Any manner or method of changing the custody, location, or physical state of records as designated by the retention schedule. It includes deletion, destruction, transfer to State Archives or another agency, or permanent conversion to another media, such as microfilming or electronic scanning.

**Document** – The original or any copy of any book, manual, pamphlet, periodical, letter, memorandum, e-mail, fax, telegram, report, record, study, handwritten-note, planner, calendar, diary, Post-It note, map, drawing, working paper, chart, paper, graph, index card, tape, data sheet or data-processing card, or any other written, audio or video recorded, transcribed, taped, filmed, photographed or graphic matter.

**Electronically Stored Information (ESI)** – Information created, manipulated, communicated, stored, and best utilized in digital form, requiring the use of computer hardware and software. It includes but is not limited to the following: data; word processing documents; spreadsheets; presentation documents; graphics; animations; images; e-mail and instant messages (including attachments); audio, video, and audiovisual recordings; voicemail. ESI may be found on any of the following locations: networks; computers and computer systems; servers; archives; backup or disaster recovery systems; discs, CDs, diskettes, drives, tapes, cartridges and other storage media; printers; the Internet; personal digital assistants; handheld wireless devices; cellular telephones; pagers; fax machines; and voicemail systems. This information could be on equipment both owned by Puget Sound Partnership *and* personally owned if used for business purposes.

**File Plans** – Management of some records series may be a more complex process than a simple retention schedule can provide, so a file plan may also be developed as a result of an inventory and appraisal. File plans clarify processes to ensure consistency into the future, describing how the records are created, which offices are responsible for managing them, records protection and disaster recovery measures, retentions schedules, and individual office procedures.

**Record Series** – Any group of related records that is filed and used as a unit and that permits evaluation as a unit for disposition purposes.

**Records** – Any information recorded in any way, regardless of physical form or characteristics, created or sent, organized or received by Puget Sound Partnership in the course of public business. This term includes documents and electronically stored information (ESI).

**Records Management** - The efficient, systematic control of records from their creation to their ultimate archival or disposal (the lifecycle of the records)

**Retention Schedules** – The instrument that provides legal authority to archive or dispose of public records. It designates when records become inactive (reach cut-off), identifies retention periods, and provides legal authority and instructions for how to archive or dispose of records at the end of their lifecycle. They are developed as part of the records inventory and appraisal process to ensure retention covers business needs, legal and fiscal requirements, historical values for the Archives of the State of Washington and protection of vital records for continuity of business.

**Transitory Records** – Records that have no legal, fiscal, audit, historical, or business value. All transitory records are covered by General Schedule 50001.