



PROCEDURAL LEAFLET

July 2014

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR ARCHIVISTS AND RECORDS MANAGERS

This leaflet provides sample job descriptions for archivists or records managers. It may assist state and local agencies or historical entities in finding qualified applicants for such positions, based on professional standards prevailing in the national archival and records management communities. While the intention is to encourage professionalization among archivists and records managers, it should be emphasized that these job specifications are merely guidelines, not requirements.

In adapting these job descriptions to their own requirements, agencies should assess the volume and importance of the records they create; their particular record-keeping practices and problems; and the staff, space, time, and funding they have available for records management and preservation. This leaflet will also be more useful if the following points are kept in mind:

- The job descriptions are written as full-time positions, citing the kinds of education and experience generally appropriate for professionally-trained archivists or records managers. Agencies may substitute other types of education or experience. For example, an experienced records clerk with good communications skills might be able to handle most of the duties listed here, even without a degree or formal training. An employee's practical experience can be augmented by additional professional development, such as attending a series of archival or records management workshops.
- Although archival and records management responsibilities are set forth here in separate job descriptions, it is recognized that many agencies cannot afford to hire two people to perform them. Some agency archivists also act as records managers, preserving permanent records at the archives and storing temporary ones until the required retention period has expired. Archivists and records managers usually assess records from different perspectives and have different duties, but one person can—and often does—fill both positions successfully if these differences are kept in mind.
- Even if an agency's resources do not permit one full-time archivist or records manager, these job descriptions may assist anyone undertaking such responsibilities, even on a part-time basis. The same holds true for agencies that still lack a separate archives or records center. The sample job descriptions identify the kinds of knowledge, skills, and duties needed to

perform archival or records management functions. If they assist agencies and historical entities to perform those functions effectively—whether or not they can actually hire an archivist or records manager—it will have served its purpose.

Hiring an archivist or records manager is only one component of an effective agency records management program. Staff of the ADAH Government Services Division can assist state and local agencies in other areas as well. Copies of ADAH records disposition authorities (RDAs) and publications, as well as information on current training opportunities, are available on the department's web site. For further assistance, please contact:

ADAH Government Services Division
P.O. Box 300100, Montgomery, AL 36130-0100
Telephone: (334)242-4452; Fax: (334)353-4321
E-mail: records@archives.alabama.gov
ADAH web site: <http://www.archives.alabama.gov>

ARCHIVIST

Sample Job Description

Definition: Under the general direction of the [supervising official], the archivist plans, organizes, and coordinates the storage, maintenance, and preservation of records in the archives' custody; advises other departments of the [agency/locality] on records preservation; and provides reference assistance to departmental staff and patrons of the archives.

Knowledge and Skills Required for the Position

- Knowledge of the organization, functions, and operation of [state/local] government and of records created in the conduct of government business, including those likely to have archival significance.
- Knowledge of archival principles, terminology, and techniques, including: appraisal, collections development, accessioning and registration, arrangement and description, storage, environmental control, conservation, and reformatting.
- Knowledge of alternative record-keeping formats, including micrographics and electronic record-keeping systems.
- Competence in basic computer operations, such as word processing and database creation.
- Physical ability to lift and handle boxes weighing approximately 50 lbs.
- Ability to utilize archival records for historical/genealogical research; provide reference assistance; and effectively communicate information from the archives' holdings, both orally and in writing, to department staff and other archives patrons.
- Ability to utilize basic principles and practices of archival administration, such as developing policies and procedures, planning and implementing annual budgets, training and supervising staff and volunteers, and advising and coordinating with other departments.

Specific Duties

- Evaluates the records preservation needs of each [agency/county/municipal] department; develops and implements archival standards, policies, and procedures, in consultation with [supervising authority], departmental staff, and staff of the Alabama Department of Archives and History; establishes a records liaison in each [agency/county/municipal] department.

Archivist Sample Job Description

- Identifies departmental records of historical importance for archival preservation, following records retention guidelines approved by the [State/Local Government] Records Commission. Coordinates the transfer of such records to the archives, in consultation with departmental staff.
- Solicits materials (e.g., letters, scrapbooks, published works, and photographs) relating to the history of the [agency/locality] for loan or donation to the archives.
- Maintains historical records in the archives' custody under proper intellectual control, and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation. Determines the facilities, equipment, supplies, environment, and procedures needed to maintain and preserve archival records.
- Creates and updates inventories and finding aids to records in the archives' custody. Provides public access to records and reference assistance to departmental staff, historical or genealogical researchers, and other archives patrons.
- Administers the operation of the archives. Supervises other employees, volunteers, or laborers as required to complete work. Prepares budget requests, cost estimates, and financial/ narrative reports to [supervising authority] and other [state/local] oversight authorities as directed.

Education and Experience

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in history, political science, government, public administration, or a closely related field, supplemented by at least two graduate courses in archival administration, plus two years of professional-level experience in archival work or records management. Five years of professional-level experience in archival work or records management may be substituted for the archival administration courses.

Preferred Qualifications: Master's degree in history, political science, government, library science, public administration, or a closely related field, including or supplemented by at least two graduate courses in archival administration. Two years of professional-level experience in archival work or records management may be substituted for the archival administration courses.

RECORDS MANAGER

Sample Job Description

Definition: Under the general direction of the [supervising official], the records manager plans, organizes, and coordinates the storage and maintenance of records in agency storage areas; coordinates the disposition of temporary records with their creating offices; and advises other [agency/ county/municipal] departments on records management.

Knowledge and Skills Required for the Position

- Knowledge of the organization, functions, and operation of [state/local] government and of records created in the conduct of government business.
- Knowledge of retention requirements and disposition procedures for records of [state agencies/local government] as established in records disposition authorities (RDAs) approved by the [State/Local Government] Records Commission.
- Knowledge of records management principles, terminology and techniques applying to the appraisal, handling, storage, retrieval, and disposition/preservation of records in paper, microform, and electronic formats.
- Competence in basic computer operations, such as word processing and database creation. Ability to assist [agency/county/municipal] departments in designing/obtaining appropriate and functional information systems.
- Physical ability to lift and handle boxes weighing approximately 50 lbs.
- Ability to utilize basic principles and practices of agency administration, such as developing policies and procedures, planning and implementing annual budgets, training and supervising staff and volunteers, and advising/coordinating with other [county/municipal] departments.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

Specific Duties

- Evaluates the records management needs of [agency/county/municipal] departments; develops and implements records management standards, policies, and procedures, in consultation with [supervising authority], departmental staff, and staff of the Alabama Department of Archives and History; establishes a records management liaison in each [agency/county/municipal] department.
- Identifies records of permanent value in [agency/county/municipal] departments, following records retention guidelines approved by the [State/Local Government] Records Commission. Assists departmental staff in maintaining such records under

Records Manager
Sample Job Description

proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

- Coordinates the storage of departments' inactive temporary records. Maintains records for the periods legally required; carries out the destruction of outdated records, coordinating with department heads and auditing authorities, and following destruction procedures approved by the [State/Local Government] Records Commission.
- Creates and updates inventories to records in storage. Provides public access to records and records retrieval service to staff of originating offices.
- Administers the operation of the records management program. Supervises other employees, volunteers, or temporary laborers as required to complete work. Determines the equipment, supplies, and procedures needed for maintaining records. Prepares cost estimates, budget requests, and financial/narrative reports to [supervising authority] and to other [state/local] oversight authorities as directed.

Education and Experience

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in history, political science, government, public administration, or a closely related field, supplemented by at least two graduate courses in archival administration or information science *or* two years of professional-level experience in archival work or records management.

Preferred Qualifications: Master's degree in history, political science, government, library science, public administration, or a closely related field, including or supplemented by at least two graduate courses in archival administration or information science *or* two years of professional-level experience in archival work or records management.