

Department of Forensic Sciences

**Functional Analysis
&
Records Disposition Authority**

**Revision
Presented to the
State Records Commission
April 28, 2010**

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Functional and Organizational Analysis of the Department of Forensic Sciences

Sources of Information

Representatives of the Department of Forensic Sciences

Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 36-18-1 through 36-18-55

Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-20-1 through 41-20-16 (Sunset Law)

Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-22-1 through 41-22-27 (Administrative Procedures Act)

Alabama Administrative Code 370-1-1 through 370-2-1

Alabama Government Manual 1998

Department of Forensic Sciences Audit Report (1999-2001)

Historical Context

The Department of Forensic Sciences was originally established as the Office of State Toxicologist by Legislative Act in 1935. In 1980 the agency, known as the Department of Toxicology and Criminal Investigation, was renamed Department of Forensic Sciences.

Agency Organization

The Department of Forensic Sciences is led by a director who is appointed by the attorney general. The agency operates laboratories in Huntsville, Florence, Birmingham, Jacksonville, Tuscaloosa, Calera, Montgomery, Auburn, Dothan, and Mobile. The main office and laboratory are located in Auburn. The department is organized into seven divisions: toxicology, pathology, trace evidence, handwriting and documents, drug chemistry, firearms and toolmarks, forensic biology, and implied consent.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated function of the department is to investigate unlawful, suspicious, or unnatural deaths and crimes. It is one of the agencies responsible for performing the Law Enforcement and Emergency Powers function of Alabama government. In the performance of its mandated function, the agency may engage in the following subfunctions.

- **Investigating Deaths/Crimes and Supporting Documentation.** The department functions as the scientific arm of law enforcement agencies with duties to assist in investigating deaths, especially those which are unexplained. Crimes investigated are primarily felonies. To assist with its investigations, the agency operates laboratories throughout the state of Alabama. Staff members may visit crime scenes when requested to

remove evidence from the scene. Evidence can be physical such as weapons or more intangible, such as DNA. The department examines evidence and issues a report of its findings to the submitting law enforcement agency and to the appropriate district attorney. The department analyzes body substances such as blood in order to search for evidence of intoxication.

A statewide DNA database is a reliable way to identify repeat and dangerous offenders. The DNA database may assist in the identification of unidentified bodies. Specimens and fingerprints are collected from prisoners who have been convicted of felony offenses by Department of Corrections and transferred to the Department of Forensic Sciences where the data is entered into the DNA database. DNA records are disclosed only to criminal justice agencies in judicial proceedings and for criminal defense purposes. A DNA population statistical database is utilized to gather data for researchers.

- **Certifying/Inspecting.** The agency screens applicants and issues permits to perform chemical analysis of a person's breath for alcohol intoxication. Breath analysis should be performed, after an arrest, in a local area facility. The breath analyzing instruments are inspected at least once a calendar month. The department also issues permits for officers to test for intoxication. The results are recorded by the technical director of the Implied Consent Unit or his/her designee. The department verifies supplies needed for the breath analyzing machines.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the agency's work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support its programmatic areas.

Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating; scheduling; meeting; documenting policy and procedures; reporting; litigating; drafting, promoting, or tracking legislation; publicizing and providing information; managing records; and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances: Activities involved in managing finances may include the following: budgeting (preparing and reviewing the budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accountings for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of an accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

Managing Human Resources: Activities involved in managing human resources may include the following: recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill vacant positions within the agency; providing compensation and benefits to employees; supervising employees (evaluating performance, disciplining, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave); providing training and continuing education for employees; modifying job specifications; and facilitating raises and promotions.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities involved in managing properties, facilities, and resources may include the following: inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing for security and/or insurance for property; and assigning, inspecting, and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis of Record Keeping System and Records Appraisal of the Department of Forensic Sciences

Agency Record Keeping System

The Department of Forensic Sciences operates a hybrid system composed of paper and electronic records.

Paper: The agency maintains most of its records in paper form at all its offices.

Computer Systems: The Department of Forensic Sciences operates a multi-platform network. The department also utilizes Microsoft Office and Lotus software to create and maintain the department's budget.

The department operates and maintains the following computerized law enforcement databases.

(1) Case Management Database-- This is an in-house database system that captures demographical data and results of analyses generated from evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies. Ten of the department's twelve offices utilize this application. It uses the Recital relational database with UNIX operating system. Each of the ten offices has a UNIX server with various terminals and/or personal computers and printers connected via RS 232 cables. The data from these servers is downloaded to the headquarters server on a weekly basis, where it is used to create the department's annual budget, produce monthly and quarterly reports, and obtain federal and state grants. In addition, the data captured from analyzing drug cases is provided to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's subcontractor Research Triangle Institute for the purpose of identifying trends. The data is backed up nightly to the local server and the headquarter's server on a weekly basis. The tapes are stored in a fire safe.

The department is currently in the process of replacing the Case Management System with a Laboratory Information Management System. This is a Windows based central database system with head quarters as the central site. Each office will have a local area network that will be made up of a server, personal computers, printers, and the analytical instruments. Each office will be connected to the central server via T1 lines, which will make up the department's wide area network.

(2) National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Firearms Database – National Integrated Ballistic Information Network Firearms Database is a database driven system designed to increase the effectiveness of forensic firearms examiners in searching open cases involving expended cartridge and bullet files. The database is maintained in the Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery, and Mobile laboratories.

The NIBIN Firearms Database System captures the images of expended bullets and cartridges and stores them for comparison to other images. If a possible match is found, the images are displayed on the screen for further comparison by the examiner.

(3) Implied Consent (DUI) Database- - The Implied Consent Unit (ICU) of the department is tasked with the responsibility of maintaining the department's breath alcohol testing instruments located throughout the state in various law enforcement agencies. The data is regarded as evidence in ongoing criminal investigations and will remain so until all related criminal investigations and judicial matters are settled. The data is routinely backed up on CD-ROM and currently stored in a fire safe at the local agency.

(4) Combined DNA Indexing System (CODIS)- -CODIS is a federally sponsored program by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Its purpose is to create a national information repository where law enforcement professionals can exchange DNA information. It uses the biological evidence recovered from the scene or the victim of a crime to associate a series of criminal acts, one to another, and to identify repeat offenders. In addition, an individual who is convicted of any felony offense, or some misdemeanor offenses, is required by law to submit a DNA specimen to the department.

The department has four laboratories that are part of the CODIS network: Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile. Birmingham is the central CODIS office. The data collected from the satellite offices is uploaded to the site via the FBI WAN. This in turn allows the department to conduct statewide searches for possible matches to the DNA. This allows various law enforcement agencies to cross-reference their DNA information with that of other agencies around the country. This cross-reference process for DNA information has the potential of producing DNA matches and linking previously unrelated cases.

The department also uses digital cameras to document crime scenes as well as autopsies. These images are backed up on a CDR disk.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of the two major categories of records created and/or maintained by the Department of Forensic Sciences: Temporary Records and Permanent Records.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met.

- **Investigation Case Files and Supporting Documentation.** These records are created when an investigation begins. The file contains various reports compiled by the department's laboratories. Case files are created for various crimes such as homicides, drug cases, or any other crime that the department investigates. Also included are DNA reports, notes, and worksheets. The process of litigation and appeal requires the maintenance of these records for an extended period of time. Recommended retention is eighty years due to administrative and legal needs.

- **Validation Data for Controls/Standards.** This record is a collection of worksheets directly validating DNA case work as well as positive controls for the DNA. The DNA record is an objective form of scientific analysis or testing which contains genetic information. Due to legal issues, the recommended retention is twenty years.
- **Implied Consent DUI (Driving Under the Influence) Files.** This is the Driving Under the Influence (DUI) database. DUI cases are separated from the other cases that the department investigates. Originally created as paper, these cases are eventually transferred to CD-ROM. Due to legal and administrative needs, recommended retention is eighty years.
- **Equipment/Instrument Evaluation.** The department conducts an evaluation of new technology as it is released to determine if new technology is desirable for future acquisition. These evaluations are conducted to allow comparison for purchasing the most useful technology. Due to administrative needs, recommended retention is five years after the end of the year in which the records were created.
- **Breath Testing Operator Certification Files.** These are created when an officer is certified to do breath testing for the state. In order to become certified, the applicant must complete a training course and pass an examination in the procedures of breath testing. All permits expire two years after the date listed on the permit. Due to legal and administrative needs, the recommended retention is ten years after the fiscal year in which the permits were issued.
- **Standardized Field Sobriety Test Certification Files.** The sobriety tests are the Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN), One-Leg Stand (OLS), and Walk and Turn (WAT). An officer who successfully completes a 16-hour training session (written and practical examinations) is certified to administer the standardized field sobriety tests. Due to legal and administrative needs, the recommended retention is ten years after the fiscal year in which the permits were issued.

II. Permanent Records. The Government Records Division recommends the following records as permanent.

Investigating Deaths/Crimes

- **Historically Significant Investigation Case Files.** Criteria for historically significant cases are those cases that feature a historically relevant person and/or involve a legal decision that is important to Alabama or the nation as adjudicated by the Alabama and/or United States Supreme Court. Any case that fulfills one of these criteria is considered a historically significant case and all records relative to it are retained permanently. (RDA page 3-2) **(Bibliographic Title: Historical Case Files)**

- **Chemical Test For Intoxication Rules and Regulations.** Chemical testing for intoxication involves the analysis of bodily substances for the presence of alcohol and/or drugs in the body. This section documents the rules and procedures developed by the department to implement the chemical testing for intoxication. (RDA pages 3-2) (**Bibliographic Title: Rules and Regulations**)
- **Meeting Minutes of Chemical Test Advisory Board.** These records document decisions of the board. The board is in charge of the Alabama Chemical Testing Training and Equipment Trust fund. This fund goes to supplying chemical testing equipment to various sections of Alabama. The board is in charge of how the trust fund is allocated as well as promulgating rules and regulations for the chemical tests. These records provide important information and documentation of the board's actions that may not be found elsewhere. (RDA page 3-2) (**Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes**)

Certifying/Inspecting

- The department currently creates no permanent records under this subfunction.

Administering Internal Operations:

- **Annual Reports.** The annual report shows the condition of the Department of Forensic Sciences. These reports summarize activities in all the subfunctions of the Department of Forensic Sciences, including cases, department news, and accomplishments. The annual report is featured on the department's website. (RDA page 3-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Annual Reports**)
- **Publications.** These press releases and reports describe to the public the activities and duties of the department. Also published are reports concerning forensic sciences written by staff members. (RDA page 3-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Publication**)
- **Administrative Files of the Director.** These files contain correspondence and other documentation of the director concerning the activities of the department. (RDA page 3-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Administrative Files**)
- **Newsletters.** The department occasionally publishes newsletters to serve as a communication tool. The newsletter contains information about each division of the department. The newsletter also discusses personnel news including awards that have been received by members of the staff. (RDA page 3-3) (**Bibliographic Title: Newsletters**)

- **Website.** The department has a website at: www.adfs.state.al.us. Information on the web includes a list of missing person, unidentified persons, and information about the department such as newsletters. Information about child and baby safety is also included. The disposition statement calls for retaining a “snap shot” of complete website information annually or as often as significant changes are made to the site. (RDA page 3-4) **(Bibliographic Title: Web Site.)**
- **Speeches/Photographs.** These records document what the department says to the public in speeches, official activities of the department, and major events where the department is present. (RDA page 3-5) **(Bibliographic Title: Speeches/ Photographs)**
- **Department Planning Files.** These records are created for strategic planning purposes. The plans show how the department plans to implement its mandate and are necessary to document how the department plans, how the plans are created, and the resulting actions. (RDA page 3-5) **(Bibliographic Title: Planning Files)**
- **Laboratory Director and Executive Council Staff Meeting Files.**
- **Inventory Lists.** The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-16-8[1] requires that “. . . All [state agency] property managers shall keep at all times in their files a copy of all inventories submitted to the Property Inventory Control Division, and the copies shall be subject to examination by any and all state auditors or employees of the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts.” These files need to be maintained in the agency’s office. (RDA pg. 3-8)

Permanent Records List

Department of Forensic Sciences

Investigating Deaths/Crimes

1. Historically Significant Case Files
2. Chemical Test for Intoxication Rules and Regulations
3. Meeting Minutes of the Chemical Test Advisory Board

Administering Internal Operations

1. Annual Reports
2. Publications
3. Administrative Files of the Director
4. Newsletters
5. Website
6. Speeches/Photographs
7. Department Planning Files
8. Laboratory Director and Executive Council Staff Meeting Files
9. Inventory Lists*

*indicates records that ADAH anticipates will remain in the care and custody of the creating agency. ADAH staff members are available to work with agency staff in determining the best location and storage conditions for the long-term care and maintenance of permanent records.

Department of Forensic Sciences Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the State Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-13-5 and 41-13-20 through 21. It was compiled by the Government Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Department of Forensic Sciences. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Department of Forensic Sciences in carrying out its mandated functions and activities. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Department of Forensic Sciences to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and made available to members of the public. Records must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the ADAH Government Records Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

- This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules governing the retention of the Department of Forensic Sciences' records. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and should be discarded.
- The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.
- Some temporary records listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction of this RDA represent duplicate copies of records listed for long-term or permanent retention in the RDAs of other agencies.
- Certain other records and records-related materials need not be retained as records under the disposition requirements in this RDA. Such materials include: (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document government activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become

obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value, copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about agency social activities. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Department of Forensic Sciences and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained by the agency as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

■ Investigating Deaths/Crimes

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT INVESTIGATION CASE FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

IMPLIED CONSENT CHEMICAL TEST FOR INTOXICATION RULES AND REGULATIONS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

MEETING MINUTES OF THE IMPLIED CONSENT CHEMICAL TEST ADVISORY BOARD

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Firearms Database

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Case Management Database

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Investigation Case Files and Supporting Documentation

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 80 years after creation.

Combined DNA Indexing System (CODIS)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Chemical Test for Implied Consent Standard Operations Procedure

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

■ **Certifying/Inspecting**

Implied Consent DUI (Driving Under the Influence) Database
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Implied Consent DUI (Driving Under the Influence) Subject Test Data Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 80 years after creation.

Implied Consent Equipment/Instrument Evaluation
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the end of the year in which the records were created.

Implied Consent Equipment/Instrument Inventory Log
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which these records were created.

Implied Consent Breath Alcohol Instrument Certification Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after creation.

Implied Consent Breath Testing Operator Certification Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the fiscal year in which the permits were issued.

Implied Consent Standardized Field Sobriety Test Certification Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the fiscal year in which the permits were issued.

■ **Administering Internal Operations**

Managing the Agency:

ANNUAL REPORTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

PUBLICATIONS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ADMINISTRATIVE FILES OF THE DIRECTOR

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

NEWSLETTERS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

WEB SITE

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. RETAIN A "SNAP SHOT" OF COMPLETE WEB SITE INFORMATION ANNUALLY OR AS OFTEN AS SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ARE MADE TO THE SITE.

SPEECHES/PHOTOGRAPHS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

DEPARTMENT PLANNING FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

LABORATORY DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STAFF MEETING FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Department Internal Administrative Policy and Procedure Manuals

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years after superseded.

Routine Correspondence

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Mailing Lists

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Administrative Reference Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Printouts of Acknowledgment from the Secretary of State Relating to Notices of Meetings Posted by State Agencies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Records documenting the implementation of the agency's approved RDA (copies of transmittal forms to Archives or the State Records Center, evidence of obsolete records destroyed, and annual reports to the State Records Commission)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Copy of RDA

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the RDA is superseded.

System documentation (hardware/software manuals and diskettes, warranties)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain documentation of former system 3 years after the end of the

fiscal year in which the former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to a new system.

State and Federal Civil Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after final adjudication of the files.

Visitor/Service Personnel Log-In Sheets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Memorandum of Understanding

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years after termination of agreement.

Personnel Quality Records (Quality System, not State Personnel Records)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years after separation of the employee from ADFS.

Quality System Records - General

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years.

Quality System Records - Validation Records for Analytical Procedures

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years after superseded.

Quality System Records - Criteria Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Quality System Records - Evidence Inventory

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Managing Finances:

Records documenting the preparation of a budget request package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records of original entry or routine accounting transactions such as journals, registers, and ledgers; and records of funds deposited outside the state treasury, including bank statements, deposit slips,

and cancelled checks

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business and other related materials, such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Contractual records established for the purpose of services or personal property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the contract.

Records documenting the bid process, including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the bids were opened.

Agency Audit Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6-years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Accreditation Audit Reports (quality control records)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 15 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Federal Grants

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years following the date of submission of the final expenditure report.

State Grants

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years following the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Board of Adjustment Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after settlement.

Managing Human Resources:

Job Recruitment Materials

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Application Materials

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Position Classification Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after reclassification of the position.

Records documenting payroll (e.g. pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (including Form 941)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of year in which the records were created.

Records documenting employee hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting sick leave donations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records of final accumulative leave status (cumulative leave)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

Records documenting an employee's work history - generally maintained as a case file

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of an employee from the agency.

Employee Medical Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of an employee from the agency.

Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files (applications and correspondence)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program.

Records documenting the State Employee Injury Compensation Trust Fund (SEICTF) Claims

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Employee Administrative Hearing Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Section/Division Personnel Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after separation of an employee from the agency.

Weekly Activity Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Records Documenting agency provision of training and professional development

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Internal Personnel Investigation Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

Proficiency Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after record has been created.

Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources:

INVENTORY LISTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in Office. (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-16 - 8[1]).

Agency Copies of Transfer of State Property Forms (SD-1)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Property Inventory Cards and/or Computer Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Receipts of Responsibility for Property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

Records documenting the lease or rental of office or warehouse space for the department

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the lease.

Records documenting the use, maintenance, ownership, insurance and disposition of vehicles owned by the agency.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the vehicle was removed from the property inventory.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-21, “no state officer or agency head shall cause any state record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining approval of the State Records Commission.” This Records Disposition Authority constitutes authorization by the State Records Commission for the disposition of the records of the Department of Forensic Sciences (hereafter referred to as the agency) as stipulated in this document.

One condition of this authorization is that the agency submit an annual Records Disposition Authority (RDA) Implementation Report on agency records management activities, including documentation of records destruction, to the State Records Commission in January of each year. In addition, the agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program through the following activities:

- The agency should designate a records liaison, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.
- Permanent records in the agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.
- Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis--for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the state Sunset Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.
- The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency maintains records solely in electronic format, it should employ an electronic records management system that is capable of tying retention and disposition instructions to records in the system and of purging temporary records when their retention periods expire. The agency is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure its records’ preservation and accessibility for the periods legally required.

- Electronic mail contain permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA's requirements, the division should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.
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- The staff of the State Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Records Division archivists are available to instruct the agency staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the agency in implementing its records management program.

The State Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority (revision) on April 28, 2010.

Edwin C. Bridges, Chairman, by Tracey Berezansky
State Records Commission

Date

Receipt acknowledged

Michael F. Sparks, Director
Department of Forensic Sciences

Date