

County Boards of Registrars



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

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Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of the County Boards of Registrars

Sources of Information

Supervisor of Voter Registration, Office of the Secretary of State
Review Committee of County Registrars
Code of Alabama 1975, Title 17
Act No.2003-313 of the Alabama Legislature
Alabama Government Manual (1994)
Alabama Election Handbook, 7th edition
Handbook for Alabama County Commissioners, 8th edition
Holdings of the Alabama Department of Archives and History for county boards of registrars
Martin, David L. *Alabama's Local Governments*, 3rd edition (1994)
Owen, Thomas McAdory. *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (1921).
Thomas, James D., and William H. Stewart. *Alabama Government and Politics* (1988)

Historical Context

Voter registration was first required in Alabama in 1867 as a result of the United States Reconstruction Act. All male citizens, 21 years of age or older, who had taken the loyalty oath could register to vote for county delegates to participate in the first post-Civil War State Constitutional Convention. The 1867 Convention resulted in the successful passage of the Alabama State Constitution of 1868, which outlined that the legislature should provide from time to time for the registration of qualified electors of the State.” This time period was initially determined to be every two years. (Owen, Vol. II, p. 1191).

The Constitution placed the process of voter registration under the control of the Secretary of State and provided that federal military authorities should closely supervise the process. This method of registration was effective in establishing qualified electors and prohibiting those meeting the disqualifying factors outlined in Article V, Section III of the Alabama Constitution of 1868. The process of voter registration was retained in the post-Reconstruction Constitution of 1875.

In 1893, a legislative act placed the county probate judges in a supervisory position over the voter registration process and placed one governor-appointed county registrar to be in charge of the work (Owen, vol. II, p. 1191). Ten years later, in 1903, the three-member county board of registrars system was implemented to provide further oversight for the voter registration process. Members of the state Board of Appointment, including the Governor, Commissioner of Agriculture, and State Auditor, were each permitted to appoint one member per county. The Governor’s appointee is traditionally chairman, but the chairman has no more authority than other registrars and cannot unilaterally exercise the board’s authority.

The National Voter Registration Act of 1965 protected voters against discriminatory voter registration practices and allowed voters with disabilities to receive Election Day assistance in

reading or selecting candidates on the ballot. This act, combined with state law, requires that boards of registrars not register any person as a qualified elector within ten days prior to an election (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-50). Under the National Voter Registration Act, the board may accept an application within the ten-day limit; however, the applicant is not eligible to vote in that election unless the application was postmarked or received at an agency-based voter registration site by the registration deadline.

In 1989, the State of Alabama began using the computerized Alabama Voter Information Network (ALVIN) to record key fields of voter registration. This system provided standardization of voter information collection, registration, and storage. Under the ALVIN system, voter information such as name, ID number, Social Security Number, mailing address, date of birth, registration date, precinct and district, date last voted, classification as active or inactive voter, and for inactive voters-date and reason for purging. During this period, some counties chose not to implement ALVIN, preferring to utilize their own electronic systems of registration.

Title 17 of the Code of Alabama of 1975 was rewritten in 2002 to respond to the requirements of the federally mandated “Help America Vote Act” (HAVA). This act introduced an updated electronic voter registration system, as well as technological updates to Election Day equipment within the counties. HAVA also redefined the roles of the Secretary of State’s Office, probate judges, and county boards of registrars to be more accountable to the voter. Section 17-2-4 stated that each county voting system must permit the voter to privately verify the votes that they select on the ballot prior to it being counted, notify the voter if they have selected two candidates for the same office, establish a voter education program, and preserve the privacy of the voter and the confidentiality of the ballot (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-2-4). HAVA was fully implemented in 2007.

Agency Organization

Alabama continues to follow the three-member county board of registrars voter registration system that was established in 1903. The Code of Alabama, Section 17-3-2 provides that members of the board of registrars must be “qualified electors, residents of the county, shall have a high school diploma or equivalent, and possess the minimum computer and map reading skills” to be successful. Normally, the registrars serve four-year terms, however, they may be removed by the Secretary of state for due cause. In order to implement existing and future laws pertaining to voter registration, and to maintain the statewide voter registration database, the county boards of registrars receive direction and computer support from the Secretary of State’s Elections Division. The Secretary of State’s office provides the boards with forms, supplies, copies of the Code of Alabama and the *Alabama Election Handbook*, and information on the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 and Help America Vote Act of 2002. Each county judge of probate distributes certified voter lists to the polls on Election Day.

Usually, a board’s office is located in the county courthouse. In counties with more than one courthouse, the board must divide its time equally between the various locations (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-9). The Code of Alabama limits the number of days board members may work each fiscal year. Most counties hold an approved schedule of between 120 and 220 work days. Counties with special exceptions to these working days include: Baldwin, Calhoun, Chilton, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Morgan, and St. Clair, where registrars may serve up to 5 days

per week. Lee, Pike, and Talladega County registrars may serve up to 30 additional days; and the Jefferson County board of registrars operates under local legislation. Working time limits for individual registrars must not affect the total number of days an office is open (Code of Alabama, Section 17-3-8f).

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated duty of the boards of registrars is to administer voter registration in each county. Registrars decide whether to accept or reject voter applications, assign each registered voter to the right precinct, maintain and update voter files, maintain records of the office, visit colleges and high schools to conduct open registration, provide proof of registration to voters, and notify other county boards of new registrations from their counties. The county boards of registrars are among the agencies responsible for carrying out the Regulatory function of Alabama local government.

In the performance of its mandated function, a county board of registrars may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Promulgating Rules and Regulations.** A board of registrars may establish procedures to ensure that the processing of voter registration forms is done in an orderly manner. Following passage of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, the Office of the Secretary of State was given authority to promulgate administrative rules governing the voter registration process (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-63). As their policies and procedures manual, county boards of registrars use the *Alabama Election Handbook*, published by the Alabama Law Institute with editorial help from the Secretary of State's office.
- **Registering Voters.** The primary mission of the board is voter registration. It takes a majority vote of the board for an application to be accepted and the voter registered. To be a qualified voter, an applicant must be eighteen by the date of the election, be a citizen of the United States, be a resident of the state and county where the application is submitted, not have been declared mentally incompetent by a court, and not have been convicted of any disqualifying felonies. Alabama law requires a person registering to vote to complete an application form. The board may assist if the registrant is incapable of completing the form, either because of an inability to read or write or due to physical limitations. When the application is approved, the board adds the voter to the statewide voter registration system and issues a voter registration identification card. The statewide voter registration system can automatically identify in which precinct the county commission has assigned the voter's residence, as well as the various political districts in which the voter resides (e.g., state House of Representatives, state Senate, U.S. House of Representatives). However, the registrars can manually identify this information and enter it into the statewide voter registration system.
- **Maintaining Registration and Voting Information.** Under both the National Voter Registration Act and Alabama state law, voters remain on the voter list unless their qualifications change. A person may be removed from the voter list only when the board of registrars has evidence that the person is no longer qualified to vote in its jurisdiction. When the registrars determine that a voter is no longer qualified to vote, they flag the voter as "removable" in the statewide voter registration system and maintain the voter's record

for historical and administrative purposes. This subfunction also includes maintaining or redacting voter identification information as required by legislation, such as the recent Voter Identification Act and Domestic Violence Protection Act.

- **Updating Registration Information.** The county boards of registrars currently update voter information in two ways. Qualified voters may complete and sign an update form or a new voter registration form to change their voter registration information. These forms may be completed in the boards' offices; at a polling place on Election Day; or, in the case of a registration form, mailed in by the voter or submitted at an agency-based voter registration site. (The filing system for these forms varies from county to county. Some boards file them with voter applications, while others create a different file for updates. Some boards scan the update form and store it in the statewide voter registration system as an attachment to the voter's record.) The second method of updating voter information is the postcard notification method (outlined below) established by Act 95-769, a 1995 amendment of the Code of Alabama 1975, and codified at Section 17-4-30. Postcards are filed separately from other records and, in some counties, scanned into the statewide voter registration system, so that they can be found quickly if formerly registered voters inquire about their purging from the voter list. Prior to the 1995 legislation, some counties with large populations (such as Montgomery) developed a postcard re-identification system to update their voter files.

- **Purging the Voter Lists.** A board of registrars is required to purge its list of registered voters to ensure that the list remains an accurate reflection of the county electorate (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-3). State election laws also provide a means by which voters whose names have been erroneously removed from the list may be re-registered (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-8). Over the years, Alabama has followed three statutory methods, as well as federal law, in removing voters from the active lists: the traditional disqualification method established in 1907; the 1984 voter re-identification method; and, most recently, the postcard notification method of 1995. The last method incorporates the 1984 voter reidentification method and is currently the one more widely used.

Traditional Disqualification Method. Because the county must confirm that previously registered voters are no longer eligible, the traditional disqualification method relies on official notices. A county board of registrars may remove a voter's name from the rolls upon official notification of death, mental incompetence, conviction of a disqualifying offense; or after written notification (from the voter or from another county or state registration official) that the voter has relocated outside the jurisdiction. Voters may not be purged solely on the basis of non-voting (Code of Alabama, Section 17-4-3).

Postcard Notification Method (1995). The voter file maintenance act of 1995 (cited in the previous subfunction) incorporates most aspects of the traditional disqualification and voter reidentification methods. This process is implemented in a four-year cycle and is designed to be completed in three phases. In the first phase, the board of registrars mails a postcard to each registered voter's address, along with a statement requiring the post office to return—not forward—the

postcard if the addressee is not the current resident. Successful delivery of the initial postcard indicates that the address on file is valid and that no change needs to be made to the voter's record. In the second phase, the board sends forwarding address confirmation notices to any registered voters whose initial postcards were returned as undeliverable. The second postage-paid card asks the voter to return updated registration information. All necessary changes are entered into the statewide voter registration system. Any voter who fails to return the address confirmation postcard is placed in a "suspense" file. If a voter does not vote or update within the next four years, he or she will be eligible for purging from the voter list. In the third phase, at the end of the four-year cycle, the board publishes the list of those voters eligible for purging. Following publication of the potential purge list, the boards purge from the voter list the names of those voters who have not updated their information.

- **Certifying Voter Information.** When registration closes before an election, each county's registrars make all additions, deletions, or other necessary changes to the voter list in the statewide voter registration system. The probate judge then prepares and prints from the statewide voter registration system an alphabetical list of the qualified voters in the county by precincts, districts, or other subdivision as may be appropriate for the pending election (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-2).
- **Reporting Statistical Information.** The board of registrars formerly reported on a monthly and quarterly basis to the state Office of Voter Registration and the Secretary of State. These reports included statistical information on the daily count of registered voters, the daily count of inactive and active voters, and the daily count of all duplicate voter registrations. As of the summer of 2007, the Secretary of State is able to extract this data from the statewide voter registration system. Such information is used by the Secretary of State to develop statistical reports. The county boards may also produce annual transaction reports.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A portion of the work of county boards of registrars includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support their operations. (In some counties, the county commission may perform these activities on the board's behalf.) They include:

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; drafting, promoting, or tracking legislation; publicizing and providing information; managing records; and managing information systems and technology.

Managing finances: Activities may include budgeting (preparing and reviewing a budget package, submitting the budget package to the county commission's department of finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget, and reporting on established budget categories); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, accounting for expenditures, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for

the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; assisting in the audit process; investing; and issuing bonds.

Managing human resources: Activities may include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, promoting, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; and disciplining.

Managing properties, facilities, and resources: Activities may include: 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 security for property owned by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis of Record-Keeping Systems and Records Appraisal of the County Boards of Registrars

Agency Record-Keeping System

All county boards of registrars maintain both paper and electronic voter registration records. Electronically created voter registration records are stored in the Alabama Voter Registration and Election Management System (the statewide voter registration system). Presently, many county boards have started the process of scanning their paper-based voter registration “back-files”. The aim is to provide increased accessibility and alleviate some of the paper-based storage of voter registration records within the county offices. As of April 2014, all county boards of registrars may, but are not required to, scan their back-logs and use the electronic copy as their primary, record copy, as long as the record was created after 1972. Most records documenting voter registration prior to 1972 are still considered to be permanent.

Computer Systems. Pursuant to state election law, all boards of registrars enter voter registration data into the statewide voter registration system (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-33). Some counties formerly operated their own computerized voter registration systems, and the State of Alabama previously used Alabama Voter Information Network (ALVIN) to electronically record voter registration. However, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 now requires each state to have a single, uniform nondiscriminatory voter registration database.

The Alabama statewide Voter Registration/Election Management System was designed and is supported by Election Systems & Software, Inc., of Omaha, Nebraska, and is implemented through the Office of the Secretary of State. The primary system is housed in the state’s datacenter in Montgomery. The counties connect to the system via commercial internet providers or state-provided T-1 lines and use state-provided computers, printers, and other equipment.

Paper-based Systems. All boards of registrars in Alabama use computers, but no board relies solely on the computer or plans to do so in the near future. Most boards have numerous filing cabinets full of voter applications, card files of current voters, and files of purged or removed voters (sometimes called the “Dead and Gone Files”). A board may also have bound volumes of voter lists or lists of qualified electors. Many boards are currently scanning the backlog of voter registration forms to provide access electronically.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of records created and maintained by county boards of registrars, listed under their subfunctions. At the end of this records appraisal is a list of **Records No Longer Created** by the boards of registrars that may still be maintained in their offices.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary records should be held for what is considered to be their active life and disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. No temporary records have been added, changed, or appraised since the last RDA revision.

No temporary records were added or reappraised in this edition of the RDA.

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

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

- **Board Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets (1.01).** These records document meetings of the county board of registrars. They include agendas and packet materials reviewed by members prior to meetings. Because a county board’s membership turns over every four years, on average, minutes and related records are essential to provide long-term documentation of board actions, and to assist new registrars in understanding the policy decisions of their predecessors. Not all county boards currently create minutes.
- **Board’s Administrative Files (1.03).** These records include all correspondence regarding policy development: preclearance letters from the Justice Department, Attorney General’s Opinions, accounts of board meetings, and related information. For many boards of registrars, such records are the only means of documenting the activities of previous board members, especially if a board did not create a policies and procedures manual or keep formal minutes. Administrative files provide insight into how the board operated and reacted to various social and political changes within the community. Occasionally, these files may not exist or may have been removed by earlier administrations. Administrative files do not include information produced by other agencies and used by the board purely for reference, such as the *Alabama Election Handbook* or the Code of Alabama. Such reference materials, along with routine correspondence concerning the board’s day-to-day activities, are temporary records covered under “Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency.”
- **Policies and Procedures Manuals (1.04).** A board of registrars has a right to establish reasonable internal procedures to ensure that the processing of voter registration forms is done in an orderly manner. Not all county boards create policies and procedures manuals. Where they do exist, they provide essential long-term documentation of board policies.

Registering Voters

- **Voter Applications (2.01).** These records document initial voter applications and are restricted records under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-52. Under both the National Voter Registration Act and state law, voters remain on the voting list unless their qualifications change, and purged voters may apply for reinstatement upon restoration of their voting rights. Voters may not be purged solely on the basis of non-voting. Because they provide ongoing documentation of voter qualifications, the applications have been appraised as permanent. Voter applications are restricted records under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-52.

The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-33 (formerly Section 17-4-187, as amended in 2002) requires the Secretary of State to maintain a permanent list of all qualified electors. With the implementation of the electronic, statewide Voter Registration/Election Management System (which is appraised as permanent in the Secretary of State’s RDA), it becomes possible to reappraise paper records related to the voter registration and voter update

process as eventually disposable. Voter registration applications and voter update forms created in or after 1978 are now assigned a 25-year retention period after the information has been entered and the applications and update forms scanned into the system. (As approved in an earlier edition of the RDA, incomplete or rejected applications created after 1978 need be retained only two years after receipt/rejection.) Due to their historical importance in documenting Alabama voting patterns before and after the Civil Rights Act of 1965, paper voter registration applications created before 1978 (including incomplete or rejected applications) remain permanent. The Secretary of State, through applicable rule-making authority, has expressed a commitment to promulgate any necessary procedures to implement these changes to the retention periods for voter registration applications and voter update forms.

Maintaining Registration and Voting Information

- **Voter Identification Act Implementation Records (3.01).** Under Act 2011-673 of the Alabama legislature (the Voter Identification Act, now codified as Section 17-9-30 of the Code of Alabama), the Secretary of State's office creates photo ID cards in its office and sends out mobile units to create photo ID cards for voters who do not have other forms of photographic identification. County boards of registrars also produce photo ID cards. To receive a photo ID, voters must be able to provide a birth certificate; marriage license; or other form of identification that either has a photo of the voter, but is not one considered acceptable at the polls, or contains the voter's full legal name and date of birth. Because the cards have no expiration date, and must be undated when a voter's address changes, application forms and identification materials collected for them must be considered permanent.
- **Affidavits Certifying Voters as Victims of Domestic Violence (3.02).** Under Act 2014-221, now codified as Code of Alabama Section 17-4-33(b)(2), voter registration applicants and registered voters may submit an affidavit, certifying that they are victims of domestic violence. In such cases, the voter's name is entered into the statewide voter registration database; but his or her address is redacted from all "public" voter registration documents, such as voter lists provided to political party chairs. Domestic violence affidavits are restricted records. As part of the original applications, and because they may be needed for verification in case of voter address or status changes, they are appraised as permanent.

Updating Registration Information

- **Update Forms Submitted by Voters (4.04).** Qualified voters may complete an update form to notify the board of any changes in their name, residence, or mailing address. Preferably, voters should contact the board whenever the voter has a change in name or in residential or mailing address and complete a form or send a letter identifying all pertinent changes. However, a voter may also complete an update form at the polls on Election Day. Information from the form is entered into the statewide voter registration system and/or updated on the voter registration cards discussed in Item 3.01. Because they provide on-going documentation of voter qualifications, the update forms are appraised as permanent. Like voter applications, they are restricted records.

Records under this title have been reappraised similarly to other titles relating to voter registration (See RDA 2.01, 4.04, 4.06, and 5.02). Records created prior to 1978 will remain permanent records; however, records created in or after 1978 now hold a 25-year retention after entry or scanning into the statewide electronic voter registration database.

- **Records Documenting Restoration of Voting Rights (4.06).** These records document the restoration of an individual's voting rights after removal of the disqualifying factor (e.g., mental incompetency or criminal conviction). Notification may come from legal sources, such as the Board of Pardons and Paroles or a local probate judge, or from the individual directly. These records provide ongoing documentation of eligibility to vote and are used to update both the voter's registration card and information in the statewide voter registration system.

Records under this title have been reappraised similarly to other titles relating to voter registration (See RDA 2.01, 4.04, 4.06, and 5.02). Records created prior to 1978 will remain permanent records; however, records created in or after 1978 now hold a 25-year retention after entry or scanning into the statewide electronic voter registration database.

Purging the Voter Lists

- **Purge Lists (5.02).** These records, compiled from the suspense files (item 5.03), document the removal of ineligible voters from the voter lists. Information in them includes the voter's name and precinct (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-10). As required by Section 117-4-12 of the Code of Alabama 1975, the board's records, including the voter's record in the statewide voter registration system, must document the reason for purging the voter from the voter list (e.g., death, or departure from the state). The purge list is one of the few open public records that provides documentation of boards of registrars' activities. Although county boards formerly created this record annually, since the new legislation of 1995 purge lists have been compiled every four years.

Records under this title have been reappraised similarly to other titles relating to voter registration (See RDA 2.01, 4.04, 4.06, and 5.02). Records created prior to 1978 will remain permanent records; however, records created in or after 1978 now hold a 25-year retention after entry or scanning into the statewide electronic voter registration database.

Certifying Voter Information

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is contained in the statewide voter registration system's database, which includes records of all registered voters disqualified from voting by the county boards of registrars, and the reasons why. The statewide voter registration system is a permanent record under the Secretary of State's RDA.

Reporting Statistical Information

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in records maintained by the Secretary of State. They will be transferred to the Alabama Department of Archives and History under that agency's RDA.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

- **Board of Registrars History Records (8.06).** These records document the history of the county board of registrars and may include scrapbooks, ledgers or volumes, speeches, or newspaper clipping files pertaining to important events or issues.
- **Publicity and Informational Materials (8.07).** These are printed materials intended to publicize the activities policies, and procedures of the county boards of registrars. They may address such responsibilities as registration procedures and the different methods and locations for registration. In addition to providing useful information, they document the office's efforts to communicate with local citizens.
- **Web and Social Media Sites (8.09).** Some boards of registrars have developed websites and social media sites to respond to public inquiries and provide information on voter registration procedures. In order to document this record over time, the disposition calls for a complete copy of the sites to be preserved annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

- **Audit Reports (9.07).** These records document a board of registrars' overall financial condition, and the findings of the Examiners of Public Accounts, during each audit period (normally one fiscal year). Audit reports are the primary means of documenting long-term fiscal accountability. They include information on current accounting procedures, bookkeeping problems, compliance with state and federal regulations, and record-keeping practices.
- **Grant Project Final Narrative Reports (9.08c).** County boards of registrars may be the recipients of state or federal grants. Most documentation associated with these grants is short-term accounting material. The final narrative report, however, summarizes the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished. They therefore have permanent evidentiary value in documenting important projects.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

- **Employee Handbooks (10.02).** Employee handbooks provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other board policies and procedures. They serve as evidence of compliance with state and federal hiring practices and may be used in personnel-related litigation.
- **Employee Newsletters (10.03).** Employee newsletters offer a narrative of the board's employment policies, employee programs and benefits, and information on individual employees. Along with employee handbooks, they provide the primary documentation of human resources management.

- **Training Records—Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications (10.07a).** These records document the board’s overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or other publications. Like other administrative policies and procedures, they are appraised as permanent. Documentation of training standards may also be needed to demonstrate that employees received adequate training in the performance of their job responsibilities.

III. Records No Longer Created. The following record was formerly created by county boards of registrars but is no longer created.

- **Voter Registration Written Examinations, 1901-1967 (12.01).** Formerly, county boards of registrars could require applicants to complete a written examination as a means of determining if they were qualified to vote. Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-122, examinations were maintained as restricted records. Following the Voting Rights Act of 1965, most counties stopped requiring them; none was created after the Twenty-sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1971. While these records are historically significant, only completed examinations from Montgomery, Jefferson, and Dallas Counties will be identified for preservation in the RDA. ADAH already holds Montgomery County’s examinations; Jefferson and Dallas Counties may transfer theirs to the department. In the future, ADAH may develop a sampling mechanism to limit the number of restricted records it maintains. Other county boards of registrars should keep a blank sample copy of the voter registration examination on file for future public access, or deposit these records with a local library, archives, or historical society.
- **Poll Tax Records (12.02).** Although poll tax records were first compiled ca. 1870, the constitutional convention of 1901 required the tax collector of each county to submit to the probate judge an alphabetical list of all persons who had paid the poll tax (Code of Alabama, 1958 Recompiled, Section 51-247). Some counties maintained their lists as bound volumes and others with card files. Information in the records varied by county, but it often included the taxpayer’s name, address, voting district and beat, race, sex, birth date, date first poll tax was due, dates poll tax was paid, and payment number. Some later cards also contained Social Security numbers. These were not restricted records. Poll tax records help to document racial, economic, and gender discrimination in Alabama for the first six decades of the twentieth century and are therefore appraised as permanent. They were discontinued in 1966. Today, the records may be under the custody of either the judge of probate or the county board of registrars.

County Boards of Registrars Permanent Records List

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

1. Board Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets (1.01)
2. Board Administrative Files (1.03)
3. Policies and Procedures Manuals (1.04)

Registering Voters

1. Voter Applications, created prior to 1978 (2.01)

Maintaining Registration and Voting Information

1. Voter Identification Act Implementation Records (3.01)
2. Affidavits Certifying Voters as Victims of Domestic Violence (3.02)

Updating Registration Information

1. Update Forms Submitted by Voters, created prior to 1978 (4.04)
2. Records Documenting Restoration of Voting Rights, created prior to 1978 (4.06)

Purging the Voter Lists

1. Purge Lists, created prior to 1978 (5.02)

Certifying Voter Information

1. Lists of Registered Voters (6.01)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

1. Board of Registrars History Records (8.06)
2. Publicity and Information Materials (8.07)
3. Web and Social Media Sites (8.09)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

1. Audit Reports (9.07)
2. Grant Project Final Narrative Reports (9.08c)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

1. Employee Handbooks (10.02)

2. Employee Newsletters (10.03)
3. Training Records—Training Standards, Policies, Procedures, and Publications (10.07a)

Records No Longer Created

1. Voter Registration Written Examinations, 1901-1967 (Montgomery, Jefferson, and Dallas Counties) (12.01)
2. Poll Tax Records (12.02)

County Boards of Registrars Records Disposition Authority

This records disposition authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Services Commission under authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through -24. It was compiled by the Government Services Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Alabama Secretary of State's office and county boards of registrars. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the county boards in carrying out their mandated function and subfunctions. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the boards to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their office. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successors in office and made available to members of the public. Records must also be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 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 Services Division at (334) 242-4452, or at records@archives.alabama.gov.

Explanation of Records Requirements

- This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of records created by county boards of registrars. Copies of superseded schedules, or previous versions of this RDA, are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records created by county boards of registrars. It does not require the creation of any record not normally created in the conduct of business, although the creation of certain records may be required by the board's administrative procedures, work responsibilities, audit requirements, or legislative mandates. Individual boards of registrars may not necessarily create all the records listed below.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, 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.
- Certain other record-related materials that do not materially document the work of an agency may be disposed of under 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; and (2) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes that may include, but are not limited to: telephone call-back messages; drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value; copies of materials sent for informational purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business; and internal

communications about departmental social activities. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction. Other items that may be disposed of without documentation of destruction include: (1) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document activities; and (2) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus printed materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the county boards of registrars and lists records created and/or maintained by the boards in carrying out those subfunctions. County boards of registrars may submit requests to add or revise specific records disposition requirements to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

1. Promulgating Rules and Regulations

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.01	Board Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document the development of policies and procedures at meetings of the county board of registrars. They include agendas and packet materials reviewed by members prior to meetings.	PERMANENT
1.02	Recordings of Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim of meetings of the county board of registrars. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.	Retain until minutes are approved.
1.03	Board's Administrative Files. These records include all correspondence regarding policy development: preclearance letters from the Justice Department, Attorney General's Opinions, accounts of board meetings, and related information. They do not include information produced by other agencies and used by the board purely for reference (item 8.01) or routine correspondence (item 8.02).	PERMANENT
1.04	Policies and Procedures Manuals. These records summarize the board's policies and procedures for processing voter registration forms and other operations.	PERMANENT

2. Registering Voters

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
2.01	<p>Voter Applications. These records document initial voter applications. Under both the National Voter Registration Act and state law, voters remain on the voting list unless their qualifications change, and purged voters may apply for reinstatement upon restoration of their voting rights. <u>Note:</u> These are restricted records under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-52.</p>	
a.	<p>Records created before 1978 (including incomplete or rejected applications)</p>	PERMANENT
b.	<p>Records created in or after 1978</p> <p><u>Disposition:</u> Retain 25 years after information is entered and/or applications are scanned into the statewide Voter Registration/Election Management System. <u>Exception:</u> Retain incomplete or rejected applications 2 years after receipt/rejection.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The Secretary of State, through applicable rulemaking authority, has expressed a commitment to promulgate any necessary procedures to implement these changes to the retention periods for voter registration applications and voter update forms.</p>	
2.02	<p>Registration Logs and Summaries/Entry Ledgers/Transmittal Forms. These records include various logs, ledgers, summaries, and transmittal forms used to track and analyze voter registration in each county. Information may include alphabetical periodic listings of new voter registrants, voter registration numbers, and related information, as well as transmittal forms used in compiling voter registrations. They may include records used to report “motor voter” registration information.</p>	Retain 5 years after final entry.
2.03	<p>District and Precinct Maps. These maps are used in determining voter applicants’ precincts and districts. They are copies of maps retained permanently by the county commission.</p>	Retain until superseded.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
2.04	Notices of Rejected Applications. These records document the rejection of voter registration applications, including the reason(s) why the application was refused.	Retain 6 months unless rejection is appealed; then retain until notice of final judgment is received.
2.05	Notices of Decision in Appeals of Rejected Applications. These records document the adjudication of appeals filed pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-3-55, including final judgments.	Retain 2 years after notice of final judgment is received.

3. Maintaining Registration and Voting Information

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3.01	Voter Identification Act Implementation Records. Code of Alabama Section 17-9-30 requires Alabama voters to show a photo ID at the polls. Voters who lack other photo IDs can obtain photo ID cards from the Secretary of State’s office or from their county board of registrars. These records include application forms and other identifying information (such as birth certificates or marriage licenses) provided by voters to obtain photo ID cards. Because the cards have no expiration date and must be updated when a voter’s address changes, the application forms and identifying information are appraised as permanent.	PERMANENT
3.02	Affidavits Certifying Voters as Victims of Domestic Violence. Under Code of Alabama Section 17-4-33(b)(2), voter registration applicants may submit an affidavit certifying that they are victims of domestic violence. In such cases, the voter’s address is redacted from all “public” voter registration documents, such as voter lists provided to political party chairs. Like voter registration applications, these are restricted records.	PERMANENT

4. Updating Registration Information

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
4.01	<p>Election Poll Lists. These records are used by poll workers to record which registered voters actually vote in county and municipal elections. After the election, they are forwarded to the boards of registrars for updating voter history files.</p> <p><u>Disposition:</u> Retain until voter history files/cards/statewide voter registration system are updated; then return lists to the probate judge or municipal clerk (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-9-15).</p>	
4.02	<p>Voter File Maintenance Postcards. These records are used in the postcard notification method of updating voter files to identify people who have moved to a new address in or out of the county. They include both the original, post cards that could not be forwarded, and the second, forwarded cards requesting updated voter information. Information received on the card is entered into the computer system and/or updated on the voter history cards.</p>	Retain 6 years.
4.03	<p>Source Documentation. These records aid the board in updating its voter files. They include reports, such as vital statistics reports on deaths in the county, mental incompetency reports, public safety reports, E-911 addresses, and felony reports.</p>	Retain 4 years.
4.04	<p>Update Forms Submitted by Voters. These forms are used by qualified voters to notify the board of any change in their name, residence, or mailing address. Information from the form is entered into the statewide voter registration system's computer and/or updated on the voter registration cards. Like voter applications, these are restricted records.</p>	
	<p>a. Records created before 1978</p>	PERMANENT
	<p>b. Records created in or after 1978</p>	Retain 25 years after entry into statewide voter registration database.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
4.04	<u>Note</u> : The Secretary of State, through applicable rulemaking authority, has expressed a commitment to promulgate any necessary procedures to implement these changes to the retention periods for voter registration applications and voter update forms.	
4.05	Cancellation Notices. These notices serve to inform a county board of registrars that a voter in the county has moved to another state. They may be sent from jurisdictions in other states directly to the boards of registrars or to the Secretary of State’s office, which then forwards them to the appropriate county.	Retain 2 years.
4.06	Records Documenting Restoration of Voting Rights. These records document the restoration of an individual’s voting rights after removal of the disqualifying factor (e.g., mental incompetency or criminal conviction). Notification may come from legal sources, such as the Board of Pardons and Paroles or a local probate judge, or from the individual directly.	
	a. Records created before 1978	PERMANENT
	b. Records created in or after 1978	Retain 25 years after entry into statewide voter registration database.
	<u>Note</u> : The Secretary of State, through applicable rulemaking authority, has expressed a commitment to promulgate any necessary procedures to implement these changes to the retention periods for voter registration applications and voter update forms.	

5. Purging Voter Lists

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.01	Inactive Voter Documentation. These records document the placement of persons on inactive voter status, based on non-response to the second mailing in the postcard notification system or when a voter has not voted during a four-year period (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 17-4-9 and 17-4-30[b]).	Retain 4 years.
5.02	Purge Lists. These records, compiled from the suspense file (5.03), document the removal of ineligible voters from the voter lists. Information in them includes the voter's name, and precinct (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 17-4-30[d]).	PERMANENT
	a. Records created before 1978	Retain 25 years after entry into statewide voter registration database.
	b. Records created in or after 1978	
	<u>Note:</u> The Secretary of State, through applicable rulemaking authority, has expressed a commitment to promulgate any necessary procedures to implement these changes to the retention periods for voter registration applications and voter update forms.	
5.03	Suspense File. These records, maintained in the statewide voter registration system, document the placement of voters into the suspense file, based on non-response to the second mailing in the postcard notification system (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-33). Voters remain in the suspense file until they vote, file an update form with the board of registrars, or are purged from the voter list.	Retain until final disposition of suspense status per state law.

6. Certifying Voter Information

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.01	Lists of Registered Voters. These records provide a current copy of the qualified elector list for the county, open and subject to public inspection. Under Attorney General's Opinion 80-343, this list may contain only each voter's name and voting precinct.	Retain until superseded.

7. Reporting Statistical Information

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
7.01	Voter Registration Statistical Reports. These reports are copies of those submitted to the Secretary of State to document voter registration activity in each county. They include daily, monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports and provide statistical information on voters' race and gender, as well as on total voting activity.	Retain 1 year.

8. Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.01	Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the county boards of registrars; they are collected and used only as reference sources of information. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Code of Alabama, Alabama Election Handbookb. Other reference materials	Retain until superseded. Retain for useful life.
8.02	Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of the board's business, rather than policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact.	Retain 3 years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.03	Board of Registrars' History Records. These records may include scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, ledgers, photographs, videotapes, or volumes containing historical information about the office.	PERMANENT
8.04	Publicity and Informational Materials. These records may include news releases, newsletters, brochures, periodicals, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements about the office or the voter registration process.	PERMANENT
8.05	Records Management Documentation	
	a. Records documenting implementation of the board's approved RDA. These records include records management plans, records inventories, finding aids, and indexes.	Retain until superseded.
	b. Copy of approved RDA. The RDA contains legal requirements for the disposition of the board's records.	Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the RDA was superseded.
	c. Local government records deposit agreements. These records are formal agreements executed by the board so that a local records repository (library, archives, or historical society) may accept physical custody of long-term records. They include inventories of records sent to the repository. (<u>Note:</u> Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For more information, contact ADAH.)	Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.
	d. Destruction notices. These records document the legal destruction of disposable records.	Retain 2 years following audit.
	e. Records request forms. The board may ask visitors wishing to examine records to complete an identification form before providing access. Information in such forms may include visitor's name and contact information, date and time of request, records requested, reason for request, and staff comments.	Retain 2 years following audit or until any resulting litigation is concluded.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.06	Computer Systems Documentation. These files include handbooks for the statewide voter registration system. They may also include outdated manuals for the defunct ALVIN system or county board computer systems.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Alabama Voter Registration and Election Management System handbooks. b. Other system documentation (including ALVIN manuals) <u>Disposition:</u> Retain former system documentation 2 years after the audit period in which the former hardware and software no longer exist anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system. 	Retain until superseded.
8.07	Web and Social Media Sites. Web and social media sites may be developed by the boards of registrars to provide information to the public, such as voter registration procedures and hours of operation.	PERMANENT Preserve a complete copy of website and social media sites annually, or as often as significant changes are made.
8.08	Telephone Logs and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.	Retain for useful life.
8.09	Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for board personnel.	Retain for useful life.

9. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

(Note: Some records listed here may be maintained for the board by the county commission.)

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.01	Budgeting Records. These records document the preparation of a budget request package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting of program performance.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.02	Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products; they may include purchase orders, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.03	Accounting Records. These are records of original entry, such as journals, registers, ledgers, cash books, and records of deposits of funds. They may include canceled checks, check stubs, deposit slips and other banking records, receipts, and vouchers.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.04	Travel Records. These records document requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business, as well as related materials such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.05	Bid Files. These records document the bid process, including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses.	Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-16-54).
9.06	Vendor Verifications of Employees' Legal Immigration Status. These records document enforcement of Section 9 of Act 2011-535 of the Alabama legislature, commonly known as the Immigration Act. They consist of affidavits and/or E-Verify Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) stipulating that active or prospective vendors do not knowingly employ illegal immigrants.	Retain 3 years after last contact with vendor.
9.07	Contracts. These records document contracts for services or personal property.	Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract.
9.08	Audit Reports. These records are annual audits of the board conducted by the Examiners of Public Accounts.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.09	Grant Project Files. These records document the board’s application for and conduct of grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources. Disposition is as follows:	
	a. Financial reports, interim narrative reports, and correspondence. These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful grant applications.	Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.
	b. Subsidiary financial records. These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports. (See federal Rule 1354.)	Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.
	c. Final narrative report. Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.	PERMANENT

10. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

(Note: Some records listed here, or additional personnel or payroll records pertaining to board of registrars employees, may be maintained by the county personnel office or commission.)

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10.01	Requests for Professional/Support Staff Positions. These records document requests for personnel submitted by the board of registrars and subsequent reviewing and/or approval by the county commission.	Retain 2 years following audit.
10.02	Employee Handbooks. These handbooks are created by county boards of registrars to explain internal operations and procedures to new employees.	PERMANENT
10.03	Employee Newsletters. Internal newsletters are created by county boards of registrars to communicate office news and important events to employees.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10.04	Employee Personnel Files. These records document an employee's work history with the board of registrars. They are generally maintained as case files and may include records of continuing education, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, and background checks.	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
10.05	Employee Work Schedules. These records document employees' daily and weekly work schedules.	Retain 2 years following audit.
10.06	Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of board of registrars' personnel, both generally and for individual employees.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets). These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees. 	Retain 2 years following audit.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Employee cumulative leave/attendance records. These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees. 	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Employee sick leave donation records. These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by board employees. 	Retain 2 years following audit.
10.07	Training Records. These records document the board of registrars' provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources. Disposition is as follows:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications. These records document the board's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications. <u>Note:</u> Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed. 	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10.07	b. Training administrative files. These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.	Retain for useful life.

11. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

(Note: Some records listed here may be maintained by the county commission).

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
11.01	Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay of the board on an annual basis.	Retain 2 years following audit
11.02	Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document office property temporarily in the use or possession of an employee.	Retain until return of item to the property manager.
11.03	Facilities/Buildings Security Records. These records document the carrying out of security measures and procedures by the board of registrars in its buildings and facilities. They may include visitor's logs or sign-in sheets, alarm system logs, recordings of security monitoring or response, and any other records documenting security staff's response to alarms or emergencies.	
	a. Security monitoring or response readings	Retain 30 days, or until final disposition of any criminal cases or litigation for which recordings provide evidence.
	b. All other records	Retain 3 years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
11.04	Facilities/Buildings Inspection Files and Reports. These records document inspection of the board's facilities to comply with standards, rules, and codes affecting the health and safety of the occupants.	Retain 2 years following audit.
11.05	Building Maintenance Work Orders. These records routine maintenance of board facilities and property.	Retain 1 year.
11.06	Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance Files. These records document routine maintenance on the board's vehicles and equipment.	Retain 2 years following audit.
11.07	Motor Pool Vehicle Records. These records document reservations and use of county motor pool vehicles by board personnel and gasoline usage by motor pool vehicles.	Retain 2 years following audit.
11.08	Employee Parking Records. These records document employee use of county parking facilities. They may include permit applications, cards, and permits.	Retain 2 years following audit, or 2 years if no fee is charged.

12. Records No Longer Created

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
12.01	Voter Registration Written Examinations, 1901-1967. These records were examinations required of applicants to determine whether they were qualified to vote. They were maintained as restricted records (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-4-122). Following the federal Voting Rights Act (1965) and the Twenty-sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1971), these records were no longer created.	
	a. Records from Montgomery, Jefferson, and Dallas Counties	PERMANENT Transfer to the Alabama Department of Archives and History or to a local archives.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
12.01	b. Records from Other Counties <u>Disposition:</u> Retain a blank sample copy of the examination in the office. Completed examinations may be deposited with a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records disposition agreement.	
12.02	Poll Tax Records. These were alphabetical lists of all individuals who paid the poll tax. Until 1966, they were required by law to be compiled by the probate office. The records were produced in both bound and card file formats. Information may include: taxpayer's name, address, voting district and beat, race, sex, birth date, date first poll tax was due, dates poll tax was paid, and payment number. Later records may also include Social Security numbers. These records may be found in the custody of the board of registrars.	PERMANENT Records may be transferred to a county or university archives under the terms of a Local Records Deposit Agreement.
12.03	Voter Registration Cards and/or Files. In order to update registration lists, reassign precincts, and certify lists of registered voters formerly used locally designed cards on each registered voter to back up the statewide voter registration system. Voter information was written on the card when an original application was received, and changes in address or precinct were likewise noted. Voter registration cards also documented voting activity. They were restricted records. The Secretary of State's Office no longer requires county boards of registrars to create these records.	May be destroyed at the board's discretion after information has been entered in statewide voter registration database.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the County Boards of Registrars Records Disposition Authority

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official shall cause any . . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Services Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record. (For more information, see the ADAH procedural leaflet *Records Destruction Procedures for Local Governments*.)

Recommendations

In addition to authorizing a procedure for legally destroying outdated temporary records of the county boards of registrars, the Local Government Records Commission urges each board to establish a quality record-keeping program that will meet its legal and public service needs. Such a program should include the following activities.

- The board of registrars should designate a records officer who will be responsible for ensuring the regular implementation of this RDA, maintaining records in compliance with national and state standards, and coordinating the destruction of disposable records.
- Permanent records in the board’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 office-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 board 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. The board should maintain its electronic records in compliance with procedures established for the Alabama Voter Registration and Election Management System.
- Electronic mail may 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 board should preferably employ an electronic records management

system capable of sorting e-mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

- Microforms of permanent records should conform to quality standards set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Association for Image and Information Management (AIIM) and may be examined for compliance by Government Services Division staff prior to destruction of the original records. According to the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-44, no microfilmed record may be legally destroyed “until the microfilm copy has been processed and checked with the original for accuracy.” Government Services Division staff may examine agency microfilm for compliance prior to destruction of the original records.
- The board should notify the ADAH Government Services Division if a new records officer is appointed or if other significant changes occur in its records storage conditions or records management procedures. It may also contact the division to request revision of this RDA. Normally, RDA revisions will be submitted to the Local Government Records Commission every two years. ADAH Government Services Division staff will notify the boards of registrars of any commission-approved changes in record-keeping requirements that apply to the boards on a statewide basis.
- The staff of the Local Government Records Commission may examine the condition of permanent records maintained in the custody of the county boards of registrars and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Services Division archivists are available to train board staff in RDA implementation or otherwise assist the boards in implementing their records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this Records Disposition Authority on April 22, 2015.

Steve Murray, Chairman
Local Government Records Commission

Date

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention policies and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

Signature

Date

_____, Chairman

_____ County Board of Registrars

Signature

Date

_____, Member

_____ County Board of Registrars

Signature

Date

_____, Member

_____ County Board of Registrars