

**Department of Public Health  
Public Health Areas/County Health Departments**

**Records Disposition Authority**

**Revision  
Presented to the  
State Records Commission  
April 26, 2002**



# **Department of Public Health - Public Health Areas/County Health Departments 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 staff of the Alabama Department of Public Health. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the public health areas and county health departments in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the public health areas and county health departments 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 also 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 records created/maintained by the public health areas and county health departments. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and should be discarded.
- # The 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.
- # 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 RDA's of other agencies.
- # Certain 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 stationary, 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 that 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 department 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 public health areas and county health departments and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained by the public health areas and county health departments as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The public health areas and county health departments may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

### **# Promulgating Health Care Standards**

County Policies and Procedures Manuals

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the completion of one audit and release of the audit report after the record is superseded.

Department of Public Health Procedural Memoranda

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

### **# Enforcing Health Care Standards**

Applications for Permits

Disposition: Temporary Record. Permits with no fees: Retain 1 year.

Permits with fees: Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of one audit, whichever is longer.

Alternative On-site Sewage Disposal System Application Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the system is no longer in use.

Notice of Intent to Suspend/Revoke Permits

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Surveys of Private On-site Sewage Disposal Systems

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Site Evaluations for On-site Sewage Disposal Systems (Perk Tests)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Certificates for Installers of On-site Sewage Disposal Systems  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Inspection Reports  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Retail Frozen Dessert Location Forms and Sample Reports  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

Food Bacteriology Section Reports  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

Complaint Forms  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Complaints and Legal Notices of Improper Sewage Disposal  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Investigation Reports of Food-borne and Water-borne Disease Outbreaks  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Reference Bacteriology  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Cholera and Other Vibrio Illness Surveillance Reports  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Recall Check Forms (Official Record of Contacts)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Rabies Exposure Reports  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Official Notices of Violations of Rabies Vaccination Law  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Rabies Violation Citations  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Emergency Orders of the Health Officer  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Unapproved Dump/Open Dump and Unauthorized Dump Files  
Disposition: Retain in office.

Final Subdivision Reports and Approved Subdivision Files  
Disposition: Retain in office.

Vector Control Files  
Disposition: Retain in office.

Bacteriological Test Results of Drinking Water  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

Notifications of Intent to Drill a Well  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

Lab Reports of Fluoride Results of Drinking Water  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

Medical X-Ray Machine Regulation Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 75 years.

Copies of Disaster Plans  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current copy.

## # **Providing Health Care Services**

Categorical Program Patient Records (ca 1940-1982)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Adults: Destroy. Minors: Retain for 22 years.

Categorical Tuberculosis Program Patient Case Files (ca 1940-1982)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Positive TB Patient Case Files and Case Register Cards: Retain for 75 years. Negative TB Patient Case Files and Case Register Cards: Destroy.

Inactive Unified Medical Records (UMRs) (ca 1982-1996)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 28 years.

UMR Temporary Service Cards  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Cards documenting Medical Services excluding immunizations: Retain 28 years. Cards documenting demographic data only: Retain until data is verified.

Inactive Comprehensive Health Records (CHRs) (1996-)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 28 years.

Release/Requests for Confidential Information  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 years.

Important Information Statements and Release Forms/Patient Consent Forms  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

Immunization Records Not Filed in CHR

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

Mantoux Tuberculin Skin Test Cards Not Filed in CHR (Negative only)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 1 year.

Overdue Immunization Listings

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Referrals for Services

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

CHR Registration Master Checklist

Disposition: Temporary Record. ALACLAS: Update as needed. Printout: Retain for useful life.

Patient Encounter Forms

Family Health: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

WIC: Temporary Record. Retain until data entry is verified.

Immunization: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Disease Control: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Community Services - Patient Encounter Form

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Home Health - Patient Encounter Forms

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Inactive Home Health Care Program Patient Case Files and Service Cards

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years.

Positive Hepatitis B Follow up Case Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 years.

Sterilization Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 28 years.

Inactive WIC File Cards (Green Cards)

Disposition: Place in CHR.

WIC Program Complaint Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

WIC Program Waiting Lists

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

WIC Applicant Logs

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

WIC Cycle Report of Operations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

WIC Special Formula Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

Food Instrument Summaries, Registers, and Inventory Logs

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

Food Instrument Receipts

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

Verifications of Missing Food Instruments

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

WIC Over Issuance Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

WIC Status Update Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

Food Instrument Redemption Date Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 ½ years.

WIC Program Participant Master and Suspense Lists

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 ½ years.

WIC Program Enrollment Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

WIC Vendor Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Screening Schedules

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 1 year.

Clinic Sign-In Sheets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Copies of Disease Case Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.



Rabies Test Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Reports of Animal Bites and Rabies Quarantine Orders

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Certificates of Rabies Vaccination

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after date of issue.

Laboratory Test Tracking Logs

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after last entry in volume or page.

Document Tracking Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year or until all documents returned, whichever is longer.

Alabama Clinic Level Automation System (ALACLAS)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain data for same retention period as related clinical records.

Home Care Information System (HCIS)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain data for same retention period as related Home Health records.

## # **Providing Public Health Information and Education**

Local Programmatic Informational/Educational Materials

Disposition: Retain one copy for reference.

Area/County Department Newsletters

Disposition: Retain one copy for reference.

## # **Filing Vital Records and Providing Health Statistics**

Applications for Copies of Vital Records

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

Copies Issued Logs (ADPH-HS-18 or alternate format)

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

Copies of Local/Deputy Registrar Appointment Letters

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until appointment expires.

Registers of Births/Deaths

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for retention.

General Indexes to Birth and Death Certificates

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for retention.

Condensed Records of Births and Deaths (no longer created)

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for destruction.

Midwife Records

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for retention.

Bedside Birth Books

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for retention.

Summary Cards of Birth/Deaths/Stillbirths

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for destruction.

Monthly Reports of Vital Events

Disposition: Transfer to Center for Health Statistics for destruction.

Death Certificate Rosters (ADPH-HS-61 or alternate)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Burial Transit Permits

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years from issue.

Receipts of Body for Burial in Alabama

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years from issue.

Notices of Disinterment/Disinterment Permits

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years from issue.

## # **Administering Internal Operations**

### **General Administrative:**

A-3 Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of one audit, whichever is longer.

General Correspondence and Informational Requests of Departmental Programs

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Motor Voter Records--Acceptance/Declination to Register

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 24 months.

Administrative Correspondence of the County Health Officer/Area Health Administrator  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Appointment Logs for Health Department Services (Also ALACLAS Appointment Data)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years.

Appointment Waiting Time Monitoring System Project Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Policies, Procedures and Reference Materials From State and Federal Agencies  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Department of Public Health Program Procedural and Other Manuals  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current copy.

Reference Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Professional Association and Organization Materials  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Professional Meetings and Workshop Materials  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Printing Service Request Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until receipt of printed material.

Printing Negatives and Plates  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until obsolete.

Audiovisual Materials  
In-service training films  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until obsolete.

General information films and films on public health topics  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until obsolete.

County Health Department Safety Checklists  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

**Serving as secretary:**  
MEETING MINUTES OF THE COUNTY BOARDS OF HEALTH  
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Staff Meeting Minutes

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

**Managing Records:**

Records documenting the implementation of the agency's approved RDA including copies of transmittals for records transferred to the State Record Center, records transferred to ADAH, and the agency's annual reports to the State Records Commission

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the creation of the record.

Copies of approved RDA

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current copy.

**Reporting:**

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AREA/COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER/COUNTY DEPARTMENT

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

**Managing information systems and technology:**

Backup Tapes

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain off-site in a temperature controlled facility. Daily Backup tapes should be reused on a weekly basis.

HCIS Monthly printouts

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

**Budgeting:**

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 current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Spending Plan Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Budget Allotment and Summary Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

**Purchasing:**

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

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

**Accounting:**

Records of original entry - journals, registers, and ledgers [including daily entry of fees for licensing, registration, opinions, copies, fines, and investigations] - and funds deposited outside the State Treasury

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Bank Statements, Deposit Receipts, and Canceled Checks

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Field Vouchers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Reconciliation Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Fund Status Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Cost Center/Cost Accounting Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Ledger Cards

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Periodic Financial Management Statements and Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Consolidated Statements of Revenues and Expenditures

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Expenditure and Receipt Transaction Registers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Day Sheets and Recapitulation of Day Sheets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit,

whichever is longer.

#### A-3 Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

#### Material Receipts

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

#### **Billing:**

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Financial Records (including receipts, registers, summary files, reconciliations, reports, vendor records)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 ½ years.

#### Home Health Service Financial Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years or until settlement of any claims due, whichever is last.

Medicaid/Medicare Financial Records (including explanation of payment reports, billing reports, mismatched reports, reimbursement rosters, etc.)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

#### **Processing federal funds:**

Records documenting the application for, award of, receipt of, disbursement of and reporting of expenditure of federal funds.

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

Records documenting the purchase of nonexpendable property/equipment with federal funds.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after final disposition of property.

#### **Auditing:**

##### Audit Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years or until completion of two successive audits, whichever is longer.

##### Audit Standards Manuals

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current copy.

##### County Health Department Internal Audit Files

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

Program Review and Evaluation Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years.

**Traveling:**

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

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Travel Itineraries

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Contracting:**

Contractual records established for the purchase of services or personal property

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

**Bidding:**

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

Disposition: Retain in office. (Code of Alabama 41-16-20 through 24)

**Compensating staff:**

Records documenting salary and wages

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Employee Daily Activity/Time Reports (other than those specifically mentioned below)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 4 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Environmental Daily Activity Reporting System (EDARS)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Update as needed.

Environmental Daily Activity Reporting System (EDARS) Worksheets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Weekly Work Record

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

Cost Center Reports (Timesheet Summaries)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer.

#### Personnel Cost Distributions Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. End-of-Year Report: Retain current plus 3 years or until completion of audit, whichever is longer. All Other Reports: Retain for useful life.

Records documenting annual cumulative leave statements.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Record of final leave status.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain record of individual employees' cumulative leave 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

#### **Benefitting staff:**

Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after tax year.

Records documenting the administration of the unemployment compensation program

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after creation.

#### **Supervising staff:**

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

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

Records documenting cumulative leave

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

Records documenting the employee appeal to the Personnel Board of formal reprimands, demotions, transfers, or terminations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

#### **Leasing/Renting:**

Records documenting the lease or rental of warehouse, storage, or office space by the department.

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

#### **Inventorying:**

Inventory Cards for Supplies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Vaccine Stock Inventory

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.



## Approval of Records Disposition Authority

By signing this agreement the Department of Public Health acknowledges its responsibilities for the proper management of its records and agrees to abide by the implementation guidelines listed below.

- # The Department of Public Health agrees that the public health area clerical director position will serve as the records officer. This position will be responsible for ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the department, for coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, for maintaining centralized control files on the disposition of department records, and for ensuring the regular implementation of the Department of Public Health's approved RDA.
- # The Department of Public Health agrees to develop procedures for regular implementation, to document the destruction of the records, and to submit a report to the State Records Commission in April of each year.
- # Despite the provisions of this authorization, no records should be destroyed that are necessary for agency compliance with the requirements of the state Sunset Act, agency audit, any legal notice or subpoena, or the reasonable precautions in anticipation of possible investigatory actions.
- # Permanent records, while in the custody of the Department of Public Health, should be maintained in a secure environment, in a usable order, and under environmental conditions that will ensure their continued preservation.
- # The Department of Public Health agrees to allow the State Records Commission, its staff, and the Examiners of Public Accounts to examine into the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the department and to inspect documentation on the destruction of public records.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Donald E. Williamson, M.D.  
State Health Officer  
Department of Public Health

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Edwin C. Bridges, Chairman  
State Records Commission