

Geauga County
Automatic Data Processing Board
Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise
Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator

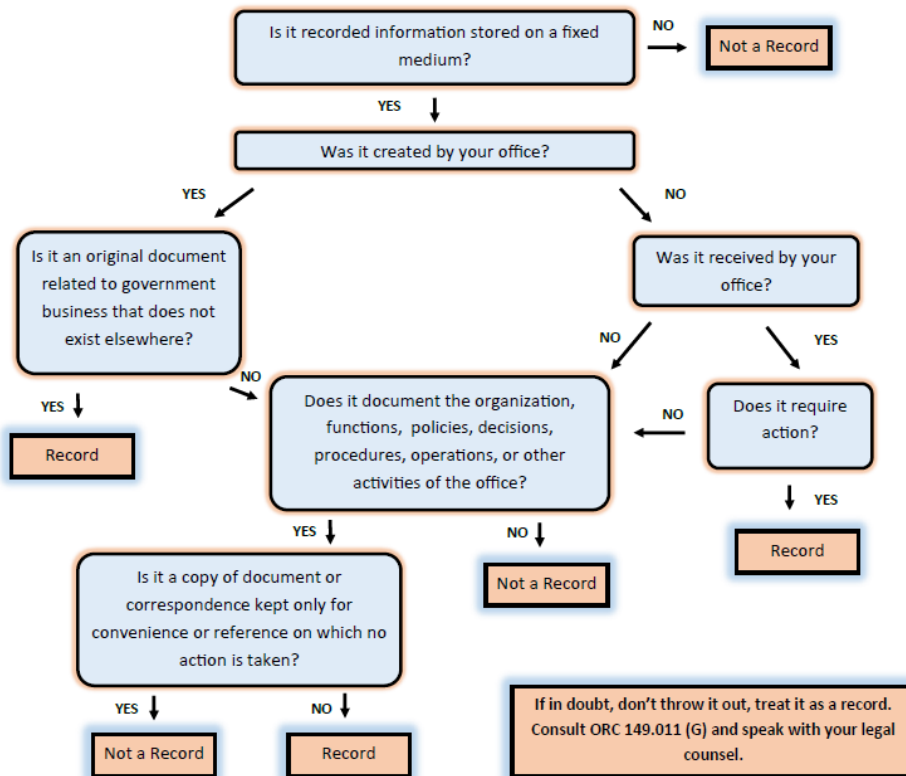


All Employees Records Training

Records

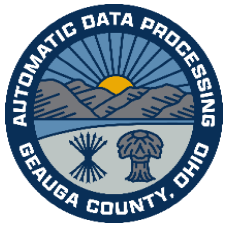
What is a record?

Ohio History Connection, State Archives of Ohio: Is it A Record?



Record: Section 149.011 of the Ohio Revised Code defines a record as:

- a) any document stored on a fixed medium (paper, computer, film, audio/video, etc.) that is
- b) created, received or sent under jurisdiction of a public office, and



Geauga County Automatic Data Processing Board

Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise

Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator



c) serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, and other activities of the office. (If in doubt, don't throw it out!)

Public Record: "Records kept by any public office, including, but not limited to, state, county, city, village, township, and school district units, and records pertaining to the delivery of educational services by an alternative school in this state kept by the nonprofit or for-profit entity operating the alternative school pursuant to section 3313.533 of the Revised Code," (ORC 149.43 (A)(1)).

[ORC 149.43](#) also delineates which records generated and kept by a public office are considered non-public, in the sense that they cannot be requested for view by a member of the public. Some non-public, permanent records become public records after certain time constraints are met. It is recommended that you familiarize yourself with any record types listed in this ORC that your department generates or keeps that are exempt from public records requests.

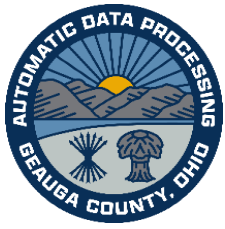
What is a public record request?

Any person can make a public records request. They can be anonymous and from outside of the state. However, in certain scenarios, journalists have greater access to some records and incarcerated individuals have more limited access to some records. In those situations, the identity of the requester matters. ORC 149.43(B)(8) and (9) contain the legal boundaries regarding incarcerated individuals and journalists making public records requests.

The Ohio Attorney General's office has an excellent [tip sheet](#) for responding to public records requests that you can reference if you are unsure how to do so and what the limits and boundaries are. This includes some starting points for records that fall into non-public categories.

Records management

Maintaining records management is the responsibility of everyone in a department, even if you are not the one determining how it is implemented. Some basic questions to keep in mind as you navigate records management:



Geauga County Automatic Data Processing Board

Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise

Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator



-
- Do you know what your records are?
 - Do you know where your records are?
 - Are your records labeled correctly?

Organizing digital vs physical

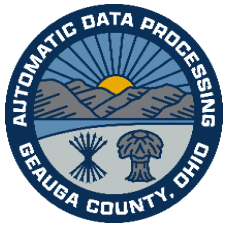
Check with your management on how this is arranged for the office at large, but whenever possible, it is recommended to keep things as simple as possible by organizing digital and physical in the same way. Retention schedules are applied to them equally based on content, therefore they should be organized as such. For example: a physical box holds File Series A, files A – M, and another box holds the same file series, files N – Z. This would translate to a digital file folder titled File Series A, two folders inside it titled Files A – M and Files N – Z, and then within those folders you would have the files themselves.

One important thing to note is that email is a **format**, not a series unto itself. Each email should be evaluated for retention according to individual content. Non-record emails such as personal correspondence and postings from external mailing lists can be deleted at any time. Emails that meet the definition listed above of a record must be scheduled, retained, and disposed of according to the applicable retention schedule. More detailed information on email management can be found with the OhioERC, including a short video training series on email management that can be found [here](#).

Digital Preservation

What is digital preservation?

The organizing and required implementation of digital preservation is the responsibility of your management to determine, however, it is good practice for all employees to have at least some familiarity with the process. [This](#) 8-minute video introduction to digital preservation by the Sunshine State Digital Network is a recommended watch for those who are planning on using digital preservation of any kind.



Geauga County Automatic Data Processing Board Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator



Similarly to physical records, if a digital record is only stored in one location that is damaged or destroyed, the record is gone. Alternatively, if a file is accidentally deleted or the file becomes corrupted, the record is also gone. Digital records are also more prone to accidental or malicious alterations than physical records, due to such changes being easier to hide in digital form than physical. Files being sent as copies via emails can result in confusion as to which version of the file was the “original,” or the original not being updated in favor of a copy and then both existing in different digital locations or formats with potentially conflicting information.

Further information is with your management and with the archives, and is available to review if you want to learn more beyond what is in this manual or what has been implemented in the daily operations for your department.

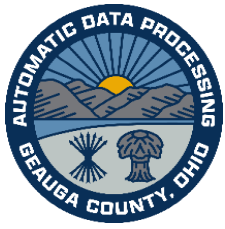
Retention and Disposal

Retention: The length of time a record must be kept because it is needed for ongoing business, to document an action, or for statutory reasons. The retention is recorded on a Records Retention Schedule (RC-2).

Retention Schedules

The General Retention Schedule is used for types of records that are commonly found in most departments. Your individual departmental retention schedule is for a) records that your department generates that do not appear on the general schedule, or b) records that are on the general schedule that you want to keep for a **longer** period of time than is listed on the general schedule. You cannot choose to keep a record listed on the general schedule for a **shorter** period than what is listed on that schedule. In short, the general schedule is the marker for the minimum amount of time you can keep the records that it lists.

Many record types, particularly those that are department-specific, have retention periods set by legislation relating to them. This legislation can change over time, and it is the responsibility of the department to remain abreast of any changes to legislation that might impact their retention schedule. How this looks in practice is the decision of the



Geauga County Automatic Data Processing Board Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator



management team, so be sure to coordinate with them appropriately if you come across legislation you believe changes your retention schedule.

Retention length

- Permanent
- Non-permanent

These are somewhat self-explanatory in name, however each of them has some additional nuance that requires careful administration.

Permanent records must be kept forever on an accessible media type. For decades, this has meant they must be kept either on paper or microfilm. Now, in the advancing technology of today, that definition is broadening by necessity to include digital.

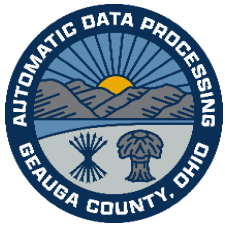
Records have four values that apply to them, which often impact how long records are kept. The four values of records are as follows:

- Administrative – how long does your office need them to do your work?
- Fiscal – are the records needed for an audit?
- Legal – do the records document any rights or obligations?
- Historical – do the records contain important information about people and places?

Retention periods are then expressed in one of three ways:

- In terms of time (three years, permanently, etc)
- In terms of an event or action (retain until case closed, until audit report is released by Auditor of State, etc)
- In terms of both (retain three years after case closed)

They can also be subdivided (retain in office five years, then in storage area/with archives for five more years, etc) but this is not a common choice outside of legislative requirements.



Geauga County
Automatic Data Processing Board
Department of County Archives and Records Enterprise
Charles E. Walder, Chief Administrator



Records disposal

When records have met their retention period, whether a non-permanent record has reached the appropriate criteria or a permanent record has been preserved on a different permanent media type per your retention schedule requirements, they can be disposed. If a record type is not on a retention schedule, it **cannot be destroyed** until it exists on either your department schedule or the general schedule. Talk with your management to ensure you know how they want you to navigate the disposal of any records you are responsible for.

For anything in this manual or the manual provided to directors and records staff, the archives is available for questions and to offer assistance. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are here to help. To that end, please consider taking the quiz linked [here](#) to test your knowledge of the concepts discussed in this training.