

## Records Management Service

# Record Retention Schedule

**April 2017**

## When to use the retention schedule

- When **creating records**, this retention schedule will act as a guide to the conditions under which that record should be managed, stored and ultimately disposed of.
- When **designing filing systems**, this retention schedule will give a clear understanding of the legal and business requirement for record keeping,
- When **managing offices**, this retention schedule will give a clear understanding of which records should be transferred to the Modern Records Unit and/or the Herefordshire Record Office, and which records should eventually be destroyed, thus maximizing office space.
- When **destroying records**, this retention schedule will minimize the risk that records are destroyed before they should be, or kept for longer than they need to be kept.

## Records Management

This retention schedule lists the **minimum length of time** to keep the records generated as a result of the service's business processes. This schedule is updated according to:

- Acts of Parliament; Statutory Instruments; Approved Codes of Practice; Current Council practices and financial regulations. (The scheme follows the Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain)

The **retention period is taken from the date of file closure**, and applies to records stored in all media (including paper and electronic versions)

## Using the retention Schedule

Within the schedule, the

- **Storage format** shows the medium in which the record is held.
- **Special processes** show if any changes are made to the class of record throughout its life, such as if it is scanned or microfilmed at a certain point.

- **Retention period** is the **minimum length of time** for which the class of record should be kept, whilst the action is to destroy, archive or review the records once they reach the end of their retention period, and Herefordshire Council has no further business use for them.
- **Reason for retention** includes any legislative or regulatory reason on which the retention period is based.

Adhering to the retention schedule is a requirement of Herefordshire Council's Records Management Policy. There are individual schedules for service areas which give consistent instruction to all staff dealing with records.

## Disposal

When **records** are **destroyed** at the **end of their retention period**, all **backup copies must also be destroyed** as far as possible, in order to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- Except in **cases of investigation** by Police, Internal Audit, or the Audit Commission all **destruction** procedures on the information concerned **must cease immediately** regardless of storage format.
- Equally, no records should be destroyed once they are **known** to be the subject of a **Freedom of Information Act 2000 request**.

Records for **permanent preservation** should be passed to the **Herefordshire Archive Service**.

- Contact the Senior Archivist for information on transfer procedures.
- The Archive Service may choose to keep a sample of certain classes of record for permanent preservation, but this will be agreed beforehand with depositing departments.

## Updates to the schedule

The schedules will be regularly reviewed to incorporate any changes to business practice. If you have any comments or queries regarding this schedule, please contact: [rms@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rms@herefordshire.gov.uk)

| <b>Finance</b>                 | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>  | <b>Action</b> | <b>Reason for Retention</b>                    |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|---------------|--|
| <b>Accounts and Statements</b> | Paper                 | None                     | 2 Years + Current Year   | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Cancelled Cheques</b>       |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Journals</b>                | Electronic            | None                     | 6 Years  | Destroy       |  |
| <b>Asset Management</b>        | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 2 Years + Current Year   | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Leasing</b>                 |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Audit</b>                   | Electronic            | None                     | Retain until the next audit  | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Audit Files</b>             |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Budget</b>                  | Electronic            | None                     | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Monitoring</b>              |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Expenditure</b>             | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 6 Years + Current Year (original copy); 1 Year (copies)                            | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Invoices</b>                |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Petty Cash</b>              | Paper                 | None                     | 2 Years + Current Year   | Destroy       |  |
| <b>Budget</b>                  | Electronic            | None                     | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations    |
| <b>Monitoring</b>              |                       |                          |  |               |  |
| <b>Funding Bids</b>            | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | European Programme funded projects have different retention requirements applied – | Destroy       | Regulations relating to the European Programme |
| <b>European Grant Claims</b>   |                       |                          |  |               |  |

|   |                    |      |  |         |   |
|---|--------------------|------|--|---------|---|
| <b>Other Externally funded grant claims</b> | Paper/Electronic   | None | funder requirements are set out in a specific schedule for such projects.<br><br>Other externally funded grant schemes have different retention requirements these schemes are registered in a specific schedule | Destroy | Specific to the Funder's requirements       |
| <b>Income</b>                               |                    |      |  |         |   |
| <b>Bank Paying-in Slips</b>                 | Paper              | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy | Herefordshire Council financial regulations |
| <b>Credit Notes</b>                         | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy |   |
| <b>Instructions to Raise Invoices</b>       | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy |   |
| <b>Receipt Books</b>                        | Paper              | None | 2 Years + Current Year   | Destroy |   |
| <b>Payroll</b>                              |                    |      |  |         |   |
| <b>Timesheets</b>                           | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy | Herefordshire Council financial regulations |
| <b>Travel Claims</b>                        | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy |   |
| <b>Reconciliation</b>                       | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current Year   | Destroy | Herefordshire Council                       |

|  |                    |      |                           |         |  |
|--|--------------------|------|---------------------------|---------|--|
| <b>Taxation</b><br>National Taxation<br>VAT Claims | Paper / Electronic | None | 6 Years + Current<br>Year | Destroy | Herefordshire Council<br>financial regulations |
|--|--------------------|------|---------------------------|---------|--|

| <b>Health and Safety</b>   | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>    | <b>Action</b> | <b>Reason for Retention</b>   |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|---|
| Accidents and Incidents<br>- Accident and Incident<br>Monitoring<br>- Accident Forms | Paper                 | None                     | 30 Years after<br>accident | Destroy       | Health and Safety at<br>Work Act 1974 and its<br>associated Regulations |

| <b>Human Resources</b>   | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>   | <b>Action</b> | <b>Reason for Retention</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Absence Reporting<br>Sickness Absence  | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 6 Years after absence   | Destroy       | Operational                 |
| Personnel Files <Name and ID>  | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 12 Years after<br>termination of service<br>(25 Years in the case<br>of staff working directly<br>with children or<br>vulnerable people). | Destroy       | Operational                 |
| Personnel Files <Name and ID><br>Annual Leave                                  | Electronic            | None                     | 1 Year after the leave<br>year recorded   | Destroy       | Operational                 |
| Personnel Files <Name and ID><br>Recruitment<br>(unsuccessful<br>applications) | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 6 Months after<br>interview   | Destroy       | Equalities Act              |

| <b>Management</b>                              | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Reason for Retention</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Business Plans (corporate)</b>              | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | Permanent   | Send one copy to Archives Service;<br>Destroy other copies once plan has been renewed and after any administrative use for it has ceased | Common practice             |
| <b>Complaints</b>                              | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 6 Years after resolution of complaint   | Destroy  | Operational                 |
| <b>Correspondence</b>                          | Paper / Electronic    | None                     | 6 Years after resolution of correspondence<br>(2 Years for routine enquiries)   | Destroy  | Operational                 |
| <b>Meetings<br/>(original sets of minutes)</b> | Electronic            | None                     | 2 Years + current year for routine meetings where no key decisions are made;<br>6 Years for meetings where key decisions affecting the section are made;<br>Retain until decision is changed or revoked for strategic and policy decisions affecting services | Destroy  | Operational                 |

|                                |            |      |           |  |                 |
|--------------------------------|------------|------|-----------|--|-----------------|
| <b>Policies and Procedures</b> | Electronic | None | Permanent | Send one copy to Archive Service;<br>Destroy other copies once policy or procedures have been renewed and after any administrative use for it has ceased | Common practice |
|--------------------------------|------------|------|-----------|--|-----------------|

| <b>Procurement</b>                           | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>   | <b>Action</b> | <b>Reason for Retention</b>                 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| <b>Contracts</b>                             | Paper                 | None                     | 6 Years (12 Years if signed under seal) after completion of contract work | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations |
| <b>Purchase Orders</b><br><b>Copy Orders</b> | Paper                 | None                     | 2 Years + current year  | Destroy       | Herefordshire Council financial regulations |
| <b>Delivery Notes</b>                        | Paper                 | None                     | 2 Years + current year  | Destroy       |   |

| <b>Property</b>                 | <b>Storage Format</b> | <b>Special Processes</b> | <b>Retention Period</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Reason for Retention</b>  |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Property Management File</b> | Paper                 | None                     | Retain as long as the building is owned or rented by the Council | Pass on to next owner if transferred, or destroy if building is demolished | Operational, guided by Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its associated Regulations |