



**King County**

**Executive signature:**

Dow Constant

**Date signed:**

8.12.19

## **I. Purpose**

This policy provides the framework to ensure that King County's records are effectively and efficiently managed throughout their lifecycle in accordance with records management law, regulations, and best practices. This policy also establishes responsibilities for fulfillment of these requirements, as well as outlining accountability measures to ensure compliance.

**Applicability and Audience** This policy applies to all King County offices, departments, officials, employees, boards, commissions, committees, and the members of the boards, commissions or committees, volunteers, or similar entities as well as contractors and grantees, all of whom have legal obligations under the authorities stated in section 4.0, regardless of whether they are also subject to any other records management policy.

## **II. Definitions**

**Agency Records Officer:** "Agency Records Officers" are the individuals appointed by the Agency Director to work with the King County Records Management Program to establish and implement records management best practices within their agency.

**Archival Records:** "Archival Records" are records designated in a records retention schedule and/or appraised by the County Archivist as having enduring historical value and/or a research use beyond the use for which the record was created.

**Electronic Records:** "Electronic Record" means any record that exists in an electronic format on analog or digital media. Examples include but are not limited to: email messages and attachments, audio/video recordings, electronic documents, digital images and databases.

**Enterprise Content Management System, Content Manager (CM):** "Enterprise Content Management System, Content Manager (CM)" is an electronic information system used to manage the inventory of inactive physical records stored at the King County Records Center; a repository in which the County's inactive electronic records are collected, organized and categorized to facilitate their preservation, retrieval, use and legal disposition; and may be used to manage active electronic records from the point of their creation.

**Inactive Records:** A record that has reached its cutoff date and is no longer needed to conduct current business but must be retained until the end of its retention period.

**King County Archives:** "King County Archives" is the repository operated by King County where archival records are collected, preserved and made accessible to the public. The King County Archives is designated as the official repository of the County's archival records, (King County Code 2.12.035). Records transferred to the King County Archives become the property of the King County Archives.

**King County Records Center:** "King County Records Center" is the official repository of King County's inactive physical records. It is a facility operated by King County with responsibility for the controlled storage of inactive records and the disposition of records at the end of their retention period. Records stored in the Records Center remain in the legal custody of the agency that created or received them.

**King County Records Management Program:** "King County Records Management Program" is the program responsible for providing tools, resources and education needed to implement mandated records management law, regulations, procedures, and best practices countywide. The King County Records Management Program serves all offices, departments, boards, commissions, committees or similar entities of the County.

**Records Retention Schedules:** "Records Retention Schedules" outline the management, preservation and disposition of public records and provide the authorization for county agencies to legally dispose of their records at the end of their life cycle.

### **III. Policy**

A. All records created or received in the course of County business are and remain the property of King County.

B. Each department shall appoint an Agency Records Officer to implement records management best practices within their agency.

C. Each Agency Records Officer shall develop and provide oversight for the records management program within the agency.

D. The Agency Records Officer shall ensure that records management practices adhere to the most current version of the Records Management Manual available via the internet from the executive department responsible for archives and records management functions, unless granted an exception by the King County Public Records Committee for legitimate business reasons.

E. Each department shall properly file and organize all records created or received in the course of business regardless of format.

F. Compliance with records retention schedules is mandatory on the part of all departments and employees.

G. Each department shall properly dispose of inactive physical and electronic records in accordance with approved legal records retention schedules and related County policies and procedures.

H. No records shall be disposed of or removed from County custody without proper authorization.

I. No records shall be destroyed that are necessary for compliance with the Public Records Act, audit, investigation and/or legal action while the subject of any public records request, audit, investigation and/or legal action.

J. No record with a disposition designation of Archival – Permanent Transfer or Archival - Appraisal Required shall be destroyed without prior appraisal and approval by the King County Archivist.

K. The enterprise content management system, Content Manager (CM), shall serve as the official repository of King County's inactive electronic records, unless granted an exception by the King County Public Records Committee for legitimate business reasons.

L. Each department shall use the King County Records Center for storage of inactive physical records, unless granted an exception by the King County Public Records Committee for legitimate business reasons.

M. Each department shall use the King County Archives as the official repository for King County's Archival Records, unless granted an exception by the King County Public Records Committee upon recommendation of the County Archivist.

N. The King County Records Management Program shall develop records retention schedules for County agencies in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations and best practices.

O. King County employees shall create and maintain records that document the conduct of business in their offices.

P. The Agency Records Officer shall lead, plan and manage the records management program in his or her department and report at least quarterly to the department director the status of that department's compliance with records management mandates.

#### **IV. Implementation Plan**

- A. This policy becomes effective for all King County offices, departments, officials, employees, boards, commissions, committees, and the members of the boards, commissions or committees, volunteers, or similar entities as well as contractors and grantees, all of whom have legal obligations under the authorities stated in section 4.0 on the date it is signed County Executive. Implementation shall be spearheaded by the Public Records Committee and by the executive department responsible for archives and records management functions. Separately elected officials shall be encouraged to treat this as a model policy and adopt a similar policy for their own agencies.
- B. The Director of the executive department responsible for archives and records management functions is responsible for communicating this policy to the County

Executive and executive leadership team. The Director of the Records and Licensing Services Division is responsible for communicating this policy to the Public Records Committee. Agency Records Officers are responsible for communicating this policy to the management structure within their respective agencies and other appropriate parties.

**V. Maintenance**

- A. This policy shall be maintained by the executive department responsible for archives and records management functions. Changes to the policy may be proposed by the Archives and Records Management Program in the Records and Licensing Services Division of the Department of Executive Services, or the Public Records Committee.
- B. This policy will automatically expire five (5) years after its effective date. A new, revised, or renewed policy will be initiated by the Records and Licensing Services Division or its successor agency prior to the expiration date.

**VI. Consequences for Noncompliance**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in a number of consequences, including noncompliance with record retention requirements and an inability to properly respond to public records requests. These consequences carry with them risks of fines, fees and legal action. Individual employees who fail to carry out the duties associated with this policy may receive additional training in this area and may have their failure to comply reflected in performance feedback.

Appendices: Records Management Program internet website