The Management of King County Public Records Policy INF-15-4-EP prohibits the removal of original records from county custody. However, reference copies and other transitory records may be created in or taken into home workspaces. Care must be taken to reduce risks.

**Taking Physical Records Home is Risky.**

- Records created in the conduct of work, and kept in physical form at home, or in electronic form on personal devices are public records that must be disclosed in response to public disclosure requests, litigation discovery, audits or investigations. This includes transitory/working files.
- It is harder to identify, locate, and provide access to records, as we are required to by state law (RCW 42.56) and county policy.
    o This increases financial and legal risk for the county.
    o This could result in more work for the employee as they will have to manually search through their own physical records when a disclosure request is made.
- Mixing personal and work records can blur the lines between your personal world and public disclosure.
- It is **more difficult to ensure the security** of records with sensitive or confidential information, thus opening the county, its workforce, and its customers to breaches of privacy.

**Digitizing Records is Preferable**

- Ideally, **all county records (including transitory records) should be managed electronically** and stored in locations such as OneDrive, SharePoint and Content Manager that are regularly backed-up and can be recovered after disasters and other unforeseen events.
- Managing records electronically helps to **reduce risk** and **ensure business continuity**
- For more guidance, review Records Management's **Disposition After Digitization (DAD) resources**.

**General Rules**

- As a general rule, **original physical records should never be taken home**
- Transitory notes, personal working files, duplicate reference material are okay to have at home, but organization and security of records are encouraged to minimize risk. Keep in mind that even transitory and reference material is best kept as an electronic version, as electronic records are backed-up, which prevents loss of information.

- If you believe your department or workgroup is not able to rely on digitized records and digital processes and still perform your work effectively:
  - Contact your Agency Records Officer, and
  - Contact the Records Management Program for additional guidance.

**Specific Rules**

- Keep work records **separate from personal records.**
- **Search for, organize, and produce records (original or copies)** if responsive to a public records request.
- **Protect records** from damage or unauthorized access at all times, including during transportation.
- **Abide by any other agency policies or contracts** that stipulate how records should be managed. For example, most records that contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Health information (HIPAA), and that relate to human resources issues are especially sensitive and may need extra security precautions.
- **Destroy transitory records** (shredding is preferred) as soon as they are no longer useful.