

# Records Management Policy

## Lancaster County Board of Commissioners

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners recognizes that Lancaster County records are information assets, and that retention and disposition regulations adopted by the Nebraska Secretary of State's Office provide legal guidance in the management of records. The Board also recognizes its legal responsibility to preserve records in the manner prescribed by the Secretary of State.

The purpose of this records management policy is to affirm the application of systematic controls to records and information, regardless of media, through their entire lifecycle from creation or receipt to destruction or permanent retention. Building on the existing records management structures in Lancaster County will allow the policies to adapt to changes in the records environment. The goal of this policy is not to replace existing databases and information management systems, but to enhance record management across the county. Except where specified below, all parts of this policy address both electronic and physical records, as they are seen as equivalent by the Secretary of State.

Therefore, the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the following policy relating to the management of records.

### Objectives:

- Efficient and responsible management of records including related costs
- Security and protection of confidential and vital records is of the utmost importance
- Access and customer service are paramount concerns
- Records are retained for as long as legally and operationally required and no longer
- Records are systematically destroyed according to their retention schedule

### Definitions:

- **Record:** For Records Management purposes, any book, document, paper, photograph, microfilm, sound recording, magnetic storage medium, optical storage medium, and any file created, generated, sent, communicated, received, or stored by electronic means, or any other material regardless of physical form or characteristic created or received pursuant to law, charter, or ordinance of in connection with any other activity relating to or having an effect upon the transaction of public business ([see Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1202\(4\)](#); [State of Nebraska State Records Administrator Durable Medium Written Best Practices & Procedures \(October 2009\)](#))
- **Convenience copy:** A duplicate copy of the official document kept for the use of a person or office. A convenience copy is not an official document.
- **Non-record Material:** The following materials are considered non-records by the Nebraska Secretary of State for Records Management purposes:
  - a. Books, periodicals, newspapers, and catalogues acquired and saved as a general reference resource;
  - b. Extra copies of documents saved only for convenience or reference for which no action is recorded or taken (i.e. reading files);
  - c. Identical or convenience copies of reports, memoranda, etc., for which your office was not the originator or the office of record, and which have not been annotated by your office;

- d. Stocks of publications, reproduced documents, or other printed materials preserved for supply purposes;
  - e. Blank forms;
  - f. Junk mail, spam, tickler files "to-do" and task lists that serve as a reminder that an action is required on a given date or that a reply to action is expected;
  - g. Materials received documenting employee fringe activities (carpool locators, employee recreation and welfare activities, blood donors, charitable funds, community notices, holiday and social meetings, etc.).
- (Nebraska Records Management Division Schedule 24, Item 24-60 (January 5, 2015).

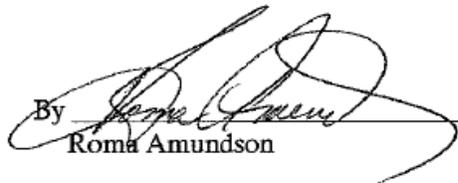
- Electronic Records Management System (ERMS): Software provided by the County to expressly maintain electronic records subject to statutory retention and compliant with Department of Defense (DoD) Standard 5015.2 regulating electronic records management applications.
- Records Administrator: Employee responsible for the administration of the County's ERMS.
- Records Coordinator: Employee responsible for managing physical records and related functions at the County Records Center.

#### **Policies:**

1. Each department is responsible for its own records and should work with records management professionals, designated by the County Board, to train employees in the management and disposition of records under their jurisdiction.
2. Access to physical and/or electronic records will be given only to authorized employees as designated in writing by the respective department head/elected official. Such access will be reviewed on an as-needed basis or, at a minimum, annually.
3. Employee user levels in the ERMS will be determined by the Department head/elected official or designee in consultation with the Records Administrator. Each department will have at least one designated "Super User" with elevated rights in the system.
4. It is recognized that there may be sensitive and confidential information contained in records. No one, including the Records Coordinator or Records Administrator, shall access the content of records without the express written permission of the respective department head/elected official or designee.
5. All employees, volunteers, interns and independent contractors shall be informed that information contained in non-public records shall not be discussed with unauthorized individuals and shall only be disclosed or reproduced as authorized.
6. Appointed department heads will be required to use the Records Center and ERMS to maintain their records. Elected officials will have access to the same resources and are encouraged to utilize them for records management.

7. The County considers electronic, paper and microfilm records as equivalent. With a few exceptions, the State does not require any records to be kept in a particular format. It is at the discretion of the department head/elected official to identify how each record type is retained.
8. Non-record material should not be stored in the Records Center or the ERMS.
9. Records shall be destroyed according to retention and disposition schedules approved by the Secretary of State.
10. The Records Center will notify departments in writing at least two (2) weeks prior to the designated disposal date.
11. The Records Administrator will perform a year-end audit of all electronic records scheduled for disposal and will notify departments accordingly. Departments will be responsible for deleting electronic records under their jurisdiction.
12. If a department head/elected official believes a record should be retained longer than statutorily required, a written request outlining the reason(s) why shall be submitted to the Records Coordinator and/or Records Administrator. The County Board will formally review all requests and make a final determination.
13. All requests from the public, including Nebraska Public Records Statutes requests, will be managed by the responsible department in consultation with the County Attorney's Office. Response to records requests will be within the time required by law, unless it is not possible to comply within that time frame. In those cases, the requesting member of the public will be notified as required by law by the responsible department. See generally Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 84-712 through 84-712.09.
14. When a subpoena or other court document requests access to or production of records, departments shall immediately contact the County Attorney's Office.
15. The Records Administrator will be responsible for creating and maintaining electronic records management policies and training manuals.
16. The Records Coordinator and Records Administrator will work closely with all County departments to ensure compliance with state statutes governing public records retention.

Approved by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners on April 26, 2016.

By  \_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
Roma Amundson