

Records Retention Policy

ROWAN UNIVERSITY POLICY

Title: *Records Retention*

Subject: *Contracting and Procurement*

Policy No: *FIN: 2015:11*

Applies: *University-Wide*

Issuing Authority: *President*

Responsible Officer: *Senior Vice President for Finance and CFO*

Record Retention Manager: *Christine Brasteter*

Adopted: *12/02/2016*

Last Revision: *11/18/2020*

Last Reviewed: *11/15/2021*

I. PURPOSE

1. This policy is designed to meet legal and regulatory standards to ensure that public records are destroyed properly, with the additional benefits:
 - a. Economies - Cost avoidance or savings through reduced purchase and maintenance of real estate, equipment and supplies; and
 - b. Efficiencies - Increases in efficiency and safety through the removal of unnecessary files, and reductions in staff time allocated to managing unneeded files.
2. Avoidance of Potential Problems Associated with Noncompliance, such as:
 - a. Unplanned expenses of financial settlements or loss of revenues
 - b. Disruption of efficiency due to gaps in information
 - c. Irretrievable loss of historical legacy

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Under the direction of the President, the Senior Vice President of Finance and CFO, shall implement this policy and the Senior Director of the Office of Contracting & Procurement, or his/her designee, shall ensure compliance with the policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

1. This policy applies to all public records created or received at Rowan University.

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. *Records Inventory* – An inventory is a complete listing of records by record series, together with necessary descriptions and supporting information.
2. *Record Series* – A group of identical or related records that is normally filed together, and that can be evaluated as a unit to determine how long they should be maintained.
3. *Retention Schedule* – Include specific schedules that list record series unique to a particular, agency or office within an agency, and general records schedule that contain records that are common to most offices.
4. *Official Repository* – The unit, department, or division designated as having responsibility for retention and timely destruction of particular types of University records. Such responsibility is assigned to the unit's administrator or a designee.

5. *University Archives* – The Archives collects and preserves records of historical, legal, fiscal, and administrative value. It provides permanent retention of official records of the University, its officers, and component parts; maps and architectural records; audiovisual materials; publications; and artifacts documenting the University's history.
6. *University Archivist* – The individual responsible for designating which University records have historical value, and affecting the transfer of all archival records from the office in which they originated or were received to the University Archives at such times and in the manner and form prescribed by the Archives.
7. *University Record* – Any form of recorded information, regardless of physical characteristics, that is created, received, recorded, or legally filed in the course of University business or in the University's legal obligations. University records serve as evidence of the University's organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, transactions, or other activities.
8. *Official Record* – An official record can be in hard-copy form (e.g., paper, magnetic tape, film, etc.) or electronic form. An electronic document (e.g., e-mail, cloud-based documents, etc.) is considered a University record and is subject to the same retention period as the hard copy equivalent if the electronic document is created or received in the transaction of business; retained as evidence of official policies/decisions; and/or has historical significance or valuable informational content. However, if explicit permission is provided by the New Jersey Division of Revenue & Enterprise Services – Records Management Services (RMS), approving the electronic database and the specific records, the physical copies may be destroyed.
9. *Active Record* – A record with current use for the unit, department, or division that generated it. Records remain active for varying numbers of years, depending on the purpose for which they were created.
10. *Archival Record* – A record that is no longer required by the unit, department, or division in which it originated or was received, and that has permanent legal, institutional, or historical value.
11. *Inactive Record* – A record with no current use for the unit, department, or division that generated it and that has not yet reached the end of its retention period.

V. REFERENCES

1. [State of New Jersey Records Retention Policy](#)
2. [Artemis \(Records Retention and Disposition Management System\)](#)

VI. POLICY

1. As per the Destruction of Public Records Act of 1953 (P.L. 1953, c. 410), public agencies must receive prior written authorization to dispose of their public records, regardless of the medium in which the information is maintained. Rowan University, as a public agency, is required to follow this act, and must obtain approval to destroy all applicable records.
2. The Bureau of Records Management places all public records on Records Retention Schedules that list the minimum legal and fiscal time periods they must be retained by state and local governmental and educational agencies. Working with personnel from the records-creating agency, the Bureau determines these retention periods in conformance with state and federal codes, regulations, and statutes of limitation. Final approval of the schedules comes from the State Records Committee, which is comprised of representatives of the Attorney General, State Treasurer, State Auditor, Director of Local Government Services, and the Secretary of State.
3. No public records shall be destroyed without official approval from the New Jersey Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services (DORES) – Records Management Services (RMS).

VII. PROCEDURE

1. Rowan University is committed to effective records retention and requires that University records, regardless of format, be disposed of or retained for specific periods of time in accordance with legal or other institutional requirements, or for historical value. As a public university, Rowan follows the State of New Jersey Records Retention Policy.
2. Each Department is responsible for adhering to this policy. Certain departments and units are designated as "*Official Repositories*," as listed in the procedures created pursuant to this policy. Office repositories are responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate records retention management

practices in compliance with this Policy and its related procedures. Departments and units that are not official repositories are expected to retain records only while they remain active records.

3. Each unit's administrator or a designee must:
 - a. Implement the unit's and/or office's records management practices.
 - b. Ensure that these records management practices are consistent with this policy.
 - c. Educate staff within the administrative unit in understanding sound records management practices.
 - d. Preserve inactive records of legal, fiscal, administrative, or historical value. These records should be transferred to the University Archives.
 - e. Ensure that access to confidential files is restricted. Long-term restrictions on access to selected archival records should be negotiated at the time of their transfer to the University Archives.
 - f. Destroy inactive records that have no archival value upon expiration of the applicable retention period
4. The University will manage its records and ensure they are retained for the period(s) of time necessary to satisfy the University's business and legal obligations and are disposed of in accordance with the State of New Jersey four year college records retention and disposition schedule.
 - a. No records are to be destroyed or disposed of before state approval.
 - b. When the prescribed retention period for University records has passed, a determination of whether to preserve or (archive) or dispose of the documents must be made.
 - c. To decide if the record is of historic value to the University, consult the University Archivist, who has the authority to designate which records are archival.
5. Storage of Records
 - a. Files are kept and maintained by the specific department responsible for overseeing them. These files can be stored locally or through the University's record storage vendor.
 - b. Department heads, managers or supervisors should grant access to files for all employees who may require them during the course of normal business or as deemed necessary.
 - c. Department heads, managers or supervisors shall designate the most appropriate locations for files that need to be retained; provided they are not breaching any fire codes, jeopardizing the safety and well-being of others or unreasonably placed.

6. **Disposal of Records**

- a. In order to destroy public records, all requests must be made through Artemis. Artemis is an online records retention and disposition management system utilized for all state, county, municipal, and educational agencies. The Artemis System contains all record retention schedules, including search features, and corresponding details where applicable.
- b. In order to access the Artemis System, users will require a Username, Password and Pin number. To obtain access, please contact the Record retention Manager in the Office of Contracting & Procurement.
- c. Record Disposition Requests can be made by any Rowan employee with an Artemis Account. Before first accessing the Artemis System, users are encouraged to meet with the Records Retention Manager for training purposes.
- d. Users must identify the types of files they are seeking to destroy and find the corresponding Retention Schedules in the Artemis System. These schedules will contain the following:
 - i. Title
 - ii. Description
 - iii. Retention Period
 - iv. Schedule Number & Record Series
- e. Once the proper Retention Schedule is identified, the information provided shall be used to enter the Record Disposition request. Multiple requests may be placed at the same time if they have the same Retention Schedule. While making the request:
 - i. Select the Retention Schedule.
 - ii. Select the option to sign Disposition Requests Electronically.
 - iii. Enter the Record Series (the Record Series Title will auto-populate in the next column).
 - iv. Verify the files meet the minimum time requirements, and enter the 'From' and 'To' dates accordingly.
 - v. Select the Medium Type (such as paper).
 - vi. Enter the volume of documents looking to be destroyed.

- vii. Select the eSign / Reroute Option. This will prompt a pop-up requesting your Pin Number. Once entered, an additional screen will become available and the Records Manager will need to be selected from the drop-down menu. The request can now be finalized by the using department.
- f. After the using department finalizes the request, it will be forwarded to Rowan's Record Retention Manager for completion and submitted to New Jersey's Records Management Services for final authorization.
- g. Authorized Disposition Requests can be found by selecting the link on the Artemis home page. Once the request has been authorized, the using department can destroy the files.
- h. After the files have been destroyed, the user must update the disposition status by selecting the approved request, and identifying which method was used during the process (such as shredding).
- i. Archiving of Records to be Kept and Maintained Permanently
 - i. Inventory process
 - ii. Location details
 - iii. Filing process
- j. Direct questions about these responsibilities to the University Records Manager, who will work closely with units to ensure understanding of this policy and implementation of these responsibilities.