

# Transfer, Retrieval and Destruction of State Records

Records which are considered closed but still need to be retained for fiscal, legal, or administrative reasons may be kept at the State Records Center per approved Records Retention Schedules. This includes destroy and pre-archival materials. Agencies retain official custody of records stored at the State Records Center. Depending on the retention schedule, an agency may also transfer records directly to the Maine State Archives. **NOTE:** The procedures below currently apply only to non-digital records. Typical format would be paper.

## **Record Transfer**

### **STEP 1 – Approved Schedule**

**Records must be on an approved Records Schedule** before any records are sent to the State Records Center or Archives. You must know the Schedule and Series number for the records you are transferring.

Using the correct schedule and series number, along with the series title, will ensure your retention period is accurate and defines the final disposition of your agency’s material.

Be certain records have fulfilled the “in agency” retention time or that records have not already met their full retention times before preparing any records for transfer.

### **STEP 2 – Packing Boxes**

#### **Records**

- Must be considered closed before transfer.
- Must have met any in-agency retention before transfer.
- Any records being sent to the State Records Center (whether destroy or pre-archival) must be packed in boxes by closed year, then alphabetically or numerically. Box sets must be packed representing one year for each transmittal. Records sent as direct transfer to the State Archives (archival records) can have mixed years.

#### **Boxes**

- Records must be packed in Archives approved 801 boxes. These boxes are available for purchase through WB Mason online. Item number is PAIG801. You must be logged into your state account to place the order. WB Mason provides delivery to your agency.
- For archival records we recommend ordering boxes that are designed for permanent storage from other vendors, such as Gaylord or Hollinger. For more information contact the Archivist III.

### Packing Lists

- All boxes must contain packing lists.
- Packing lists go in the boxes. **Keep a copy for reference.** Do not tape the packing list on top of the box or inside the top cover.
- Both Archives and Records Center now require packing lists to also be emailed with the completed transmittal.

### Packing for Archives (or Pre-archival Material)

- Boxes should be full with no intention of adding to them.
- No clips, staples, rubber bands, three ring binders, hanging file folders will be accepted.
- If a box is packed and your material doesn't fill the box, adding a filler to help keep the material intact is recommended, or contact the Archivist III to see about smaller box sizes available through other vendors.

### Packing for Records Center (temporary/destroy records)

- Same as packing for Archives but leave room which can allow a small file to be added.
- Check with Records Management before sending any add-on files. If you have a large add-on, make a new overflow box. This will be added to the existing transmittal and will be assigned the same box number, but have an "O" added, keeping all related records together. Records Management will provide an updated transmittal to the agency.

**Maine State Archives will accept only boxes that meet the criteria listed above. We may refuse pickup or delivery if these requirements are not met.** This helps us to provide the best possible service to our customer agencies. If you have questions, please email [Records Management](#).

### Marking Boxes

Using a black marker, write the following on each box:

- Box number
- Dates in section marked From and Thru
- Contents (this is simply the first and last file in the box)
- Records Center staff will add all remaining information: the agency, number, retention date, and assigned location number.

## Step 3 – Creating Transmittals

- Make out a [Transmittal of Records Form](#), following the instructions on the second page of the document. Information includes: contact information, schedule/series information, and box information.
- The Records Center **does not accept mixed year dates on transmittals.** This includes both destroy and pre-archival records. In other words, in the column for "Last Date" the year must be the same.
- Records sent as direct transfer to the State Archives (archival records) can have mixed years.
- The transmittal must be signed by an authorized Records Officer or RO Assistant.
- For boxes transferred to Records Center email transmittal form (and packing lists) to [recordsmanagement.archives@maine.gov](mailto:recordsmanagement.archives@maine.gov).

- For boxes transferred to Archives email transmittal form (and packing lists) to [maine.archives@maine.gov](mailto:maine.archives@maine.gov).
- Transmittals will be reviewed for accuracy. Once approved, your transmittal will be processed, and you will be contacted to arrange a pick-up or delivery date. If delivering boxes, please arrange for a proper vehicle, such as a box truck.
- After the Records Center or Archives has received your boxes, a completed copy of the Transmittal of Records form will be returned, showing the 8-digit location numbers, assigned transmittal number, and the final disposition date for these records. **Keep this completed transmittal form with your packing lists on file. This will act as your finding aid when requesting records.**

## **Record Retrieval**

The State Records Center is a closed facility, but agencies can submit records requests from the Records Center on any workday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The Records Center provides its customer agencies with centralized, economical storage for their inactive and pre-archival government records.

### **Access to Records**

- Only those persons who have been authorized with an access card number (cardholders) may order or view agency records (this includes Records Officers and Assistants).
- Records Officers can appoint cardholders by using the Application for Records Center Use form. This form is also used to remove cardholders.
- Access cards are not transferable. We will not accept requests from someone using an access card number which is not assigned to them. It is the responsibility of the agency, not Records Management, to assign cardholders. For security purposes, we will not release materials without following proper protocols.
- We do not issue photo IDs. Please have both your access card number and your driver's license, security badge, or other photo ID ready if you will be picking up records for your agency. We need to be certain records are released only to authorized personnel.

### **Requesting Records**

- Agencies are required to use the online [Request for Reference Service Form](#). Agencies with an @maine.gov email address will use this online form to request files from the State Records Center or Archives. You will be required to login with your maine.gov email and password. **Requestors MUST have an access card number to request files and complete all required information.** The request will go directly to the Records Center email account for processing. If an alternative method is required, please contact the [Records Center](#).
- Cardholders from Legislative Offices and Independent Agencies who do not have an @maine.gov address can use our alternative [Request Form for Legislative and Independent Agency Use Only](#)

Requests are typically fulfilled within 1-3 business days (excluding days when State offices are closed) provided the requestor is a cardholder and all correct referencing information has been entered through the online form. Requests cannot be fulfilled if the two above conditions are not met.

The agency can have files sent or an approved cardholder may pick up the records. You must schedule a pick-up time with Records Center staff.

**NOTES:**

- Archival records (once they have fulfilled retention requirements) may not leave the building and must be viewed at the Maine State Archives.
- Pre-archival records – see note below\*

## **Record Returns to the State Records Center**

- The online form now requires an estimate of return. If an agency has no intention of returning files, we will send a transfer form to be signed for the purposes of tracking the records formerly in our care.
- Any pre-archival records requested cannot be altered. They must be intact upon return.\*
- Information must be included directing staff to the location of the returned records so they can be filed appropriately.

## **Destruction of Records**

### **Records Destruction at the State Records Center**

- Records Management will send a *Records Center Disposition Notification* to the agency to be approved and signed by the agency Records Officer. This is typically done on an annual basis.
- If the agency does not sign but determines records must be retained longer, they must provide justification for doing so. In some cases, schedules will be amended, or records will be refiled under a different schedule.
- If an agency requests to have any (temporary) records returned to them which are due for destruction, the agency accepts the responsibility of non-compliance and any potential liabilities associated with keeping records beyond established retention periods agreed to by the agency and Maine State Archives.
- State records may not be destroyed if any active FOAA, pending litigation, audit, or appeal. This applies until the completion of the action and the resolution of all issues that arise from the action, or until the expiration of the retention period, whichever is later.
- Maine State Archives reserves the right to return records which have passed their expired retention date by two years. This occurs when any agency refuses to sign off on disposition notifications and makes no attempt at communicating with Records Center staff and/or revising their retention schedules.
- Maine State Archives reserves the right to destroy records which have passed their expired retention date by two years for those agencies which become defunct; there are no longer any contact staff, and no processing information has been forwarded to Records Management.

## **Records Destruction within the Agency**

- Agencies may destroy records according to approved retention schedules – this includes both Agency-specific and State General Schedules.
- State records should be destroyed in a confidential manner (preferably by shredding), even if those records are not confidential.
- Program records need to be documented on a disposition form. Refer to State General Schedule 7.2 in the [Records Management schedule](#) for further information.
- As noted in the RC destruction section, records cannot be destroyed if under any active FOAA, etc.

## **Records Management Forms**

All Records Management forms are located on our website. They can be found on one or both of the following sites: [Records Management Forms](#) or [Transferring Records – State Records Center and Archives](#).

## **Records Center Training**

RC training is available on our website discussing the above processes in detail. There is also training for other Records Management procedures on our [Training and Resources page](#).