

RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Policy Title: Records Management Policy	Effective Date: 7/1/2017
Policy Number: FA-PO-1208	Date of Last Review: 8/21/2023
Oversight Department: Controller's Office	Next Review Date: 9/1/2026

1. PURPOSE

The *Records Management Policy* for Radford University (University) establishes the responsibilities for management, retention, and disposition of public records of the University as mandated by the Virginia Public Records Act.

2. APPLICABILITY

The *Records Management Policy* applies to all public records generated by University divisions, departments, offices, and employees unless specifically excluded.

3. DEFINITIONS

Active Record: A public record used with sufficient frequency in the conduct of University business to justify keeping it in the office that created the record.

Electronic Record: A public record created, stored, communicated, or accessed through the use of an automated system or electronic device. Electronic record formats include, but are not limited to, word processing files, spreadsheets, emails, instant messages, websites, databases, and scanned images, as well as multimedia files that may include audio, graphics, video, and animation. Ownership of the hardware, software, or media used to create, store, communicate, or access the electronic record has no bearing on whether such record is a public record.

Fiscal Record: Public records that are necessary to document and verify financial authorizations, obligations, and transactions, including records relating to pending audits.

Historical Value: Public records that contain unique information, regardless of age, that provide understanding of some aspect of the government and history of the University.

Inactive Record: A public record no longer needed to conduct current University business, but required to be retained for a defined period of time.

Legal Value: Public records that document actions taken in the protection and proving of legal or civil rights and/or the obligations of individuals and the University, including public records relating to pending or proposed litigation.

Non-Record: Materials or documents made or acquired and preserved solely for reference use or exhibition purposes; extra copies of records or documents preserved only for convenience or reference; and stocks of publications. Non-records also include telephone slips; letters of transmittal; and preliminary drafts of letters, working papers, memoranda, or reports.

Original Record: The first “generation” of the information contained in a public record, which is the preferred version of a record.

Private Record: A record that does not relate to or affect the carrying out of the official duties of the employee, the office, the department, or any aspect of the University. Private records include, but are not limited to, private correspondence, diaries, journals, or notes that are not prepared for, utilized for, circulated, or communicated in the course of transacting University business.

Public Record: Recorded information that documents a transaction or activity by or with the University or employee of the University. Regardless of physical form or characteristic, the recorded information is a public record if it is produced, collected, received, or retained in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of University business. The medium upon which such information is recorded has no bearing on the determination of whether the recording is a public record.

Records Officer: The university official appointed by the University to be responsible for providing standards, procedures, training, and guidance to meet requirements for the proper management of University records. The Risk Management & Finance System Security Manager in the Controller’s Office serves as the records officer for the University.

University Employee (Employee): Any person employed by the University as a teaching faculty, administrative or professional faculty, classified employee, part-time or wage employee, student employee, work/study employee, or any other person paid through the University’s payroll process.

4. POLICY

- A.** All public records of the University are subject to the provisions of the Virginia Public Records Act.
- B.** As a public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the University will adhere to all state records management policies and procedures with regard to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of public records.
- C.** All public records are the property of the University. Employees who terminate their employment with the University must return all public records to the appropriate office.
- D.** Employees must comply with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to the confidentiality of public records.
- E.** Divisions, departments, offices, and employees are responsible for the storage of public records. Active public records should be stored within, or in close proximity, to the applicable office for easy and timely access.
- F.** The final disposition of all public records must be approved by the Records Officer subject to additional approvals as required. Under no circumstances may public records be disposed without appropriate approval.

5. PROCEDURES

A. Management of Records

1. As necessary, the Records Officer for the University must be designated by the President, or designee, via the Records Officer Designation and Responsibilities form ([RM-25](#)) as required by the Library of Virginia.
2. Retention periods for public records are established by the Library of Virginia and are documented in retention schedules ([General Schedules](#) found on the Library of Virginia's website). Each department or office, with the assistance of the Records Officer, must ensure that the retention schedules are followed.
3. The public records retained should be the original documents to the maximum extent possible. If an original document has been sent outside the University, the institutional copy in the originating office will be treated as the original public record. The record retention/disposal requirements relate specifically to the original public records.
4. Prior to requesting approval for the disposal of any public record, the University must:
 - a. Conclude all investigations, litigation, required audits, and Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests;
 - b. Ensure that all public records created prior to 1912 are offered to the Library of Virginia; and
 - c. Comply with the Library of Virginia approved general or specific records retention and disposition schedules and ensure the retention periods for the public records have expired.
5. Inactive public records having historical value should be transferred to the special collections of the McConnell Library in consultation with the Records Officer.

B. Records Storage

Public records must be filed and arranged by an acceptable method that allows for determination of when a record series passes from active to inactive status and then ultimately has met record retention requirements and may be disposed. Inactive public records not maintained in the department or office must be maintained in a secured, designated storage area.

C. Requesting Approval for Disposal of Records

1. All departments and offices must complete and submit an electronic Certificate of Records Destruction Form ([eRM-3](#)) prior to disposing of any public records.
2. A separate [eRM-3](#) must be completed each time a department or office intends to dispose of public records. However, more than one type of public record may be listed on each form.

3. The form is routed electronically for approval and an email notification is sent to the requestor once the approval process is complete. The email will contain a link to be used when the records have been destroyed.

D. Disposal of Records:

1. The nature of the information and the format of the public records dictate the method of disposal, which is specified in the applicable retention schedules. Regardless of the method of disposal used, the department or office must ensure the public records are disposed of in a proper manner.
2. Public records identified as requiring confidential destruction must be fully destroyed in order to prevent unauthorized access through shredding, pulping, or burning. Electronic public records requiring confidential destruction must be destroyed through electronic shredding, overwriting the hard drive, or magnetic-media degaussing.
3. Public records not requiring confidential destruction may be disposed of by placing paper documents in a trash or recycling bin, or by simply deleting electronic data.
4. Once the public records have been disposed, the department or office must reply through the link in the approval email indicating that the records have been destroyed.

6. EXCLUSIONS

Non-records and private records do not fall under the provisions of this policy.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix: [eRM-3 Certificate of Records Destruction](#)

8. REFERENCES

[Code of Virginia, Title 42.1, Chapter 7](#), "Virginia Public Records Act"

Library of Virginia, [Record Retention webpage](#)

Radford University, [Record Retention webpage](#)

9. INTERPRETATION

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the President of the University and is generally delegated to the Vice President for Finance and Administration & Chief Financial Officer.

10. APPROVAL AND REVISIONS

The policy was submitted to and approved by the President's Cabinet at the meeting on June 28, 2017. President Hemphill signed the new policy on July 5, 2017.

In August 2020, the *Records Management Policy* was reviewed by the oversight department and the Office of Policy and Tax Compliance. Only minor editorial changes were made that did not affect the substance or intent of the policy.

Reviewed August 21, 2023. Procedures were revised to incorporate the change to an electronic request and approval process.

For questions or guidance on a specific policy, contact the Oversight Department referenced in the policy.