CHAPTER 15. STATEMENTS OF POLICY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS

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Authority

The provisions of this Chapter 15 issued under section 2801-A(p) of The Administrative Code of 1929 (71 P.S. § 716(p)); act of August 14, 1963 (P.L. 839, No. 407) (16 P.S. §§ 13001—13006); and the Municipal Records Act (53 P.S. §§ 9001—9010), unless otherwise noted.

Source

The provisions of this Chapter 15 adopted January 28, 1983, effective January 29, 1983, 13 Pa.B. 576, unless otherwise noted.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS

§ 15.1. Legal custody.
(a) Legal custody of local public records resides with the governing body of the county or municipal government which created the record or with independently elected local officers consistent with legislation establishing their offices.
(b) Legal custody of historically valuable local public records may be transferred by local records custodians to the Commission in accordance with existing legislation.

§ 15.2. Transfer to Historical and Museum Commission.
(a) Public records are public property and should remain in public custody. If a county or municipal government cannot adequately care for its own historical records, they should be transferred to the custody of the Commission.
(b) The Commission believes that it is in the best interest of the public that local public records of historical value be maintained in a county or municipal archives operated by the political subdivision. If individual county/municipal governments are unable to maintain a local public archives, arrangements should be made to transfer historical records to the Commission.
(c) Records transferred to the Commission will be maintained at the State Archives or at depositories designated and approved by the Commission. Approved repositories will be required to sign memorandums of agreement with the Commission, which will focus on the institutions’ duties and responsibilities with respect to the care and administration of public records deposited by the Commission.

§ 15.3. Standards for repositories.
A repository maintaining historically valuable local public records should be able to demonstrate that it has the legal authority to hold the records and meet the following minimum standards:
(1) Archival records are to be properly protected against fire, theft or other loss.
(2) Archival records are to be arranged and described according to commonly accepted archival standards.
(3) Archival records are to be made available at reasonable times.

§ 15.4. Legal custody of transferred records.
Records maintained in an archival repository operated solely by the county or municipal government remain in the legal custody of the governing body of the political subdivision and the independent officers whose records constitute the county or municipal archives.
(1) Since legal custody remains with the office of origin, records may be removed to a county or municipal archives without the permission of the Comm-
mission as required by the current disposition procedures authorized by the County and Local Government Records Committees.

(2) In accordance with its overall responsibility for the protection of public records as provided in The Administrative Code of 1929 (71 P.S. § 74.1005), the Commission will monitor the conditions under which historical local public records are maintained in local public repositories.

§ 15.5. Private repositories.

Though the legal status of historical local public records that have been accepted by private repositories prior to the passage of the act of August 14, 1963 (P.L. 839, No. 407) (16 P.S. §§ 13001—13006) and the Municipal Records Act (53 P.S. §§ 9001—9010) has not been defined by the courts, it is the position of the Commission that the records are still public property. In regard to the records:

(1) The Commission appreciates and supports the position of those private Commonwealth repositories that want to continue to have physical custody of those records that were transferred prior to the statutes cited in this section, so long as they can demonstrate their ability to maintain minimum standards for archival records.

(2) The Commission will accept local public historical records from those private repositories that feel they cannot adequately care for records accepted in the past by their institutions.

§ 15.6. Research holdings.

Those institutions that want to maintain and build research holdings of local public records relating to a particular locality should concentrate on obtaining microfilm copies if they are unable to meet minimum standards for archival records.

RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE FOR RECORDS OF PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES

§ 15.51. General provisions.

(a) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section and §§ 15.52—15.69 have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Commission—The Historical and Museum Commission of the Commonwealth.
Committee—The Local Government Records Committee.
State Archives—The Commission’s Division of Archival and Records Management Services.

(b) Purpose. This schedule is issued to inform municipal officials in cities of the third class, boroughs, incorporated towns, townships of the first and second
classes and municipal authorities created by any of these municipalities of the opportunity to legally dispose of records in accordance with the provisions of the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule approved by the Committee.

(c) *Program.*

(1) An effective records management program can reduce storage and retrieval costs and increase productivity. Recognition of the need for a workable local records management program in Pennsylvania led to the passage of the act, and the creation of the Committee. The Committee’s primary responsibility is to develop records retention and disposition schedules for each municipal office. Municipal officers are authorized by the act to dispose of records in accordance with schedules and guidelines which have been approved by the Committee. The schedules authorize and recommend, but do not require the disposal of records after the expiration of approved retention periods.

(2) Under the act, the Commission is designated as the agency responsible for administering the program of the Committee. The Commission works through the State Archives in carrying out these records functions. The State Archives seeks and utilizes the assistance of State and municipal officials and others knowledgeable in this area to guide it in setting standards for the retention and disposition of municipal records. It is believed that the establishment of records disposition procedures for the use of municipal officials will help ensure the preservation of records of permanent value and encourage the destruction of nonessential records.

(d) *Municipal records.*

(1) The term “public records” is defined in section 2 of the act (53 P.S. § 9002). Retention periods listed on the Municipal Records Schedule apply to information in all forms and formats. The fact that information is created and stored electronically or on microfilm rather than on paper has no bearing on its retention status. Information included under the definition of a municipal record may be disposed of in accordance with the act and disposition procedures approved by the Committee. If not specified in this schedule, contact the State Archives for information regarding the disposition of duplicate copies of records.

(2) Historically valuable public records are public property and should remain in public custody. The records should be maintained in a municipally operated archives/records center. If a municipality cannot adequately care for its own historical records, provisions may be made to store select inactive records of historical value at the State Archives in accordance with The Administrative Code of 1929 (71 P.S. §§ 51—720.13), or in a historical repository approved by the Commission.

(3) Records are scheduled for permanent retention by municipal governments, either in the original or microfilm form, if they have continuing administrative and legal value. The records are also historically valuable. The fact that records are not scheduled for permanent retention does not necessarily
mean they do not have historical value or that the State Archives would not be interested in accessioning some of these records. For example, since relatively few early records have survived to the present, some records are historically valuable merely because of their age. Questions regarding the possible historical value of local public records, including those created after 1910, should be referred to the State Archives.

(e) Procedures for the destruction or transfer of municipal records.

(1) Records may be destroyed or transferred in conformance with sections 6 and 8 of the act (53 P.S. §§ 9006 and 9008). According to section 7 of the act (53 P.S. § 9007), a municipal official who disposes of public records in accordance with the act will not be held liable on an official bond or in the way of damages for loss or in another manner, civil or criminal, because of the disposition of public records under the act.

(2) These sections of the act require a municipality to:

(i) Declare its intent to follow the Municipal Records Schedule by municipal ordinance or resolution. This is basically a one time requirement. If the schedule is revised or updated, the municipality should go on record again by ordinance or resolution and specifically identify the new schedule so there is no confusion about which retention periods to follow.

(ii) Approve each individual act of disposition by resolution of its governing body. The records custodian should identify the records the custodian wants to destroy and have the governing body of the municipality concur with each individual request for destruction by means of a resolution. For example, if a municipal official wants to destroy ten boxes of cancelled checks in accordance with schedule guidelines, the governing body shall give its approval. The same is true if 2 years later the custodian wants to destroy another ten boxes of cancelled checks.

(3) When a municipality wishes to destroy nonpermanent records listed on the schedule, which have not been photographed, microphotographed or microfilmed, only paragraph (2) shall be followed. The Commission does not have to be notified of the action.

(4) In the following instances, in addition to complying with paragraph (2), receive written consent from the Commission by submitting a Records Disposal Certification Request in duplicate to the State Archives. If the disposal request involves compliance with retention requirements promulgated by an administering/funding/licensing agency, a copy of the appropriate rule should be included with the disposal form. Submit disposal forms as follows:

(i) Before destroying or transferring original records which have been photographed, microphotographed or microfilmed. Microfilm copies may be substituted for both permanent and nonpermanent records unless otherwise noted in the schedule, if the microfilm meets the standards approved by the Committee.
(A) Permanent records. Receive written consent from the Commission before destroying or transferring original permanent records which have been photographed, microphotographed or microfilmed. Requests to dispose of original records scheduled for permanent retention shall be accompanied by appropriate microfilm quality inspection report forms (MCIR-1) relating to the disposal request. These forms are available from the State Archives.

(B) Nonpermanent records. Receive written consent from the Commission before destroying or transferring original nonpermanent records which have been photographed, microphotographed or microfilmed prior to the expiration of the specified retention period when the municipality wishes to substitute the microfilm copy for the original record.

(ii) Before destroying or transferring records not listed on the schedule or records created prior to 1910.

(f) Audit requirements; Federal and State statutes/administrative regulations and records involved in litigation.

(1) Records subject to audit shall be retained for the periods listed in the schedule and shall be audited and findings resolved before the records may be destroyed. Applicable Federal and State statutes and administrative regulations may necessitate retaining records for a longer period of time than indicated in the schedule. Information on specific program regulations should be obtained from the appropriate administering/funding/licensing agency. Conversely, statutes and regulations may permit a shorter retention than indicated in the schedule. In those instances contact the State Archives before disposing of records.

(2) Records involved in litigation shall be retained until final disposition of the case even if they have met the minimum retention requirements.

(g) Standards for microfilming municipal records.

(1) Authority. The standards were adopted by the Committee in accordance with the act.

(2) Purpose. The standards are designed to help ensure the accuracy, usability, longevity and legal acceptance of microforms generated by municipal offices.

(3) Scope.

(i) The standards relate to the filming, processing, inspection, handling and storage of microform copies of municipal records. They shall be included as part of the requirements in microfilm service contracts. With minor exceptions, these standards are in strict conformance with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) standards and practices. Color films are not covered by the standards.

(ii) Municipal officials who plan to microfilm records should contact the State Archives for copies of the Standards for Microfilming Municipal
Records, advice on contracting for microfilm services, information on establishing a micrographics program, and sample microfilm identification targets.

(h) Policy and guidelines for the retention and disposition of original municipal records copied onto optical imaging systems and municipal records stored on optical disks.

(1) These types of records shall be managed as follows:

   (i) Purpose. Establish and clarify a records management policy for municipal officers with respect to the retention and ultimate disposition of original records copied onto optical imaging systems and to records stored on optical disks in order to enable officers to incorporate information retention and retrieval considerations at the earliest possible time into their plans to acquire optical imaging systems. Electronic Data Interchange, Optical Character Recognition data or static electronic database information that an officer may wish to store on optical media are not addressed in this section or §§15.52—15.69.

   (ii) Objectives.

      (A) Integrate records maintained on optical disks into municipal records management programs.

      (B) Provide information needed by municipal officers to properly evaluate the effect of optical imaging systems on their operations.

      (C) Ensure that information stored on optical imaging systems will be accessible in conformance with records retention and disposition schedules and procedures approved by the Committee.

      (D) Reduce the risks associated with optical imaging system hardware and software obsolescence.

   (iii) Scope. Applies to municipal officers covered by the act.

(2) Before purchasing or using an optical imaging system to copy or store municipal records, municipal officers should contact the State Archives for copies of the Policy and Guidelines for the Retention and Disposition of Original Municipal Records Copied onto Optical Imaging Systems and Municipal Records Stored on Optical Disks.

(3) Advice and assistance in connection with the application of this schedule may be obtained by writing or calling the: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Division of Archival and Records Management Services, Post Office Box 1026, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108-1026, (717) 787-3913, 783-9874 or 783-9875.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).
§ 15.52. Applicability.
Sections 15.53—15.69 should only be used in conjunction with § 15.51 (relating to general provisions) and all other relevant provisions of this schedule.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions).

§ 15.53. Administrative and legal records.
These records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) Administrative and subject files. Often referred to as administrative files, general correspondence, program files or subject files, these records may include correspondence, reports, program forms and other records created or received in the course of administering specific programs and providing basic municipal services. Portions of the file or the complete file may contain records which summarize primary program activities and functions such as annual departmental/office reports, procedural manuals, long-term studies or comprehensive program assessment studies, series of bulletins/newsletters and other published materials created in connection with special events or the administration of ongoing programs, and correspondence documenting agency policy. The files may also include or consist primarily of routine correspondence; replies not part of a specific case file; communications on supply, maintenance and other internal operations matters; correspondence of a transitory nature having no value after an action is completed and general housekeeping records.
   (i) Records that summarize the origin and administration of major municipal policies and programs should be retained permanently.
   (ii) Routine correspondence and program files, and housekeeping records should be retained as long as of administrative value.

(2) Agendas for meetings of governing body, board, agency, commission or committee thereof. Retain one copy permanently if not included with minutes. Retain duplicate copies as long as of administrative value.

(3) Annexation, consolidation and boundary change records. Retain these records permanently.

(4) Bonds; performance and security. Retain these records for 6 years after expiration. If bonds are part of a contract, retain as prescribed by the retention period for contracts.

(5) Bylaws, regulations and rules of order. Retain these records 5 years after superseded or revoked.

(6) Cemetery records.
(i) **Burial/exhumation/removal records.** Retain these records permanently.

(ii) **Lot location files.** Retain these records permanently.

(iii) **Lot ownership records.** Retain these records permanently.

(7) **Charters, corporate name change records, incorporation certificates and related amendments.** Retain these records permanently.

(8) **Contract files; includes advertisements, bid summary and tabulation sheets, franchises, instructions to bidders, leases or agreements, specifications and supporting workpapers.**

(i) **Bids and proposals.**

(A) If successful, retain 6 years after termination of general written contracts. Retain 12 years after termination of construction contracts.

(B) If unsuccessful, retain 3 years after job completion.

(ii) **Contracts and agreements.** Retain general written contracts 6 years after termination. Retain construction contracts 12 years after termination.

(9) **Deeds and related land records.** Retain these records permanently.

(10) **Disaster plans for municipal facilities.** Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.

(11) **Easements.** Retain these records permanently.

(12) **Election records.** Retain these records as follows:

(i) **Certificates of election.** Retain these records 6 years.

(ii) **Certifications for referenda.** Retain these records permanently.

(iii) **Notices of nominations to be made.** Retain these records 11 months.

(13) **Ethics Commission statements of financial interest.** Retain these records 5 years.

(14) **Executive vetoes and veto messages.** Retain these records permanently.

(15) **Grant administration records; includes fiscal and program records.** Comply with retention requirements promulgated by the appropriate administering/funding/licensing agency.

(16) **Hazardous substance survey forms.** Retain these records 30 years. If used as health and exposure record for employe involved in a specific incident, retain 30 years after termination of employment. (See § 15.55(8) (relating to personnel records).

(17) **Historic preservation documentation submitted to the Commission.**

(i) **Environmental review papers.** Retain these records 8 years.

(ii) **Historical and architectural information inventory/survey data.** Retain these records permanently.

(iii) **National register of historic places documentation.** Retain these records permanently.

(18) **Insurance claims and policies.** Retain claims 6 years after final settlement. Retain policies 6 years after expiration, if claims have been settled.

(19) **Legislative investigation records.** Retain these records 10 years; then contact State Archives regarding historical value.
(20) **Litigation case files.** Retain closed cases as long as of administrative and legal value. Retain cases of precedential value permanently.

(21) **Mailing lists.** Retain these records 1 year after superseded or obsolete.

(22) **Master property and equipment/fixed assets inventories.** Retain property and equipment inventories 5 years after superseded or obsolete. Retain fixed assets inventories permanently.

(23) **Material safety data sheets.** Retain these records 30 years. If used as health and exposure record for employee involved in a specific incident, retain 30 years after termination of employment. See § 15.55(8).

(24) **Minutes.** Retain the following records permanently: records accepted as part of the minutes, minutes of the governing board and other municipal boards, authorities and commissions and committees thereof; including, but not limited to; records from the board of health; charter commission; civil service commission; emergency medical services council; library board; licensing and review boards; municipal authorities such as industrial development, parking, sewer, traffic, transit and water; park and recreation board; pension board, planning commission, shade tree commission and zoning hearing board.

(25) **Municipal obligations.**

   (i) **Bonds and coupons.** Retain these records 6 years after cancellation.

   (ii) **Bond ledgers and books.** Retain these records permanently.

   (iii) **Cancelled notes.** Retain these records 6 years.

(26) **Municipal records disposal certification request forms, submitted to the Commission.** Retain these records permanently.

(27) **Notices of violation of municipal ordinance.** Retain these records 30 days after issue is settled or resolved.

(28) **Oaths of municipal officials.** Retain these records 6 years.

(29) **Ordinances.** Retain these records permanently.

(30) **Petitions.** Retain these records 5 years. Retain permanently those records resulting in an ordinance or charter change.

(31) **Photographs.** The records include photographs of municipal officials, buildings, public celebrations, and the like. Retain these records as long as of administrative value; then contact State Archives regarding historical value.

(32) **Press releases.** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(33) **Proclamations of official municipal events.** Retain these records permanently.

(34) **Public hearing notices and proof of publication.** Retain these records 10 years.

(35) **Real estate registry records.** Retain these records permanently.

(36) **Reports.**

   (i) **Annual municipal and municipal department/board/commission reports.** Retain these records permanently.

   (ii) **Quarterly, monthly and other periodic routine activity reports.** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
(37) **Requests for service records.**

   (i) **Sheets/forms.** Retain these records 1 year after satisfaction of request.

   (ii) **Summary service logs/registers.** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(38) **Resolutions.** Retain these records permanently.

(39) **Rosters of officials, submitted to the Department of Transportation.** Retain these records permanently.

(40) **Sales and use tax exemption certificates.** Retain these records 3 years from the end of the year in which the last sale or lease takes place.

(41) **Solicitor’s records.**

   (i) **Case files.** Retain closed cases as long as of administrative and legal value. Retain cases of precedential value permanently.

   (ii) **Opinions.** Retain these records permanently.

(42) **Survey of financial condition forms, submitted to the Department of Community Affairs.** Retain these records 3 years.

(43) **Survey records, including employee and opinion surveys and summaries.** Retain routine surveys as long as of administrative value. Retain those relating to budget or charter changes permanently.

(44) **Treasurers’ bond certifications, submitted to the Department of Transportation.** Retain these records 7 years.

**Source**


**Cross References**

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.55 (relating to personnel records).

**§ 15.54. Data processing records.**

Data processing records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) **Cost/charge back reports.** Retain these records 3 years.

(2) **Data library inventory records.** Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.

(3) **Equipment maintenance/repair records.** Retain these records for life of equipment.

(4) **Hardware and software inventories.** Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.

(5) **Machine utilization reports.** Retain these records 2 years.

(6) **Operations documentation.** Retain these records for life of system or until superseded or obsolete.

(7) **Program documentation.** Retain these records for life of system.

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§ 15.55 Personnel records.

Personnel records shall be maintained as follows:

1. Administrative organizational charts. Retain one copy permanently if not included with minutes. Retain duplicate copies as long as of administrative value.

2. Applications for employment—not hired. Retain these records 2 years.

3. Civil service commission records. Retain as follows:
   i. Appeals/removal files. Retain these records 5 years after expiration of all appeal periods.
   ii. Eligibility lists. Retain these records 5 years after list expires.
   iii. Merit system examination records and answer sheets. Retain these records 5 years.
   iv. Recommendations of applicants for appointments. Retain these records 5 years.

4. Emergency information sheets. Retain most recent update for tenure of employe.

5. Employe card files or record books. Retain these records permanently.

6. Employe health insurance claim files. Retain these records 5 years after settlement of claim.

7. Equal employment opportunity records.
   i. Compliance reports and related records. Retain these records 3 years.
   ii. Official discrimination complaint case files. Retain these records 4 years after resolution of case.

8. Individual employe medical records. Retain these records the same length of time as individual employe personnel records. If the employe has been exposed to toxic substances or harmful physical agents in the work place, retain these records at least 30 years after termination of employment and comply with appropriate Occupational Safety and Health Standards issued by the United States Department of Labor (29 CFR Chapter 17 (relating to inter-
governmental review of Department of Labor programs and activities). See § 13.53(16) and (23) (relating to administrative and legal records).

(9) **Individual employe personnel records.** These records include applications for employment, commendations, correspondence, health insurance membership applications, letters of resignation, life insurance applications, performance evaluations, personnel change forms, personnel history card, photo identification records, references, resume, retirement membership applications, salary review forms, separation report, training records and vacation and sick leave reports.

(i) **Employees who separate with post-termination benefits.** Retain these records 50 years after termination of employment. If all benefits are paid prior to expiration of the 50-year period, retain records 3 years after all benefits have been paid. If applicable, comply with union rules relating to certain types of personnel records such as evaluations and reprimands.

(ii) **Employees who separate without post-termination benefits.** Retain these records 5 years after termination of employment. If applicable, comply with union rules relating to certain types of personnel records such as evaluations and reprimands.

(10) **Job announcements.** Retain these records 2 years after position has been filled.

(11) **Job descriptions.** Retain these records current plus one prior revision.

(12) **Labor negotiations files.** Retain these records 5 years after expiration of contract.

(13) **Union grievances.** Retain these records 3 years after final resolution.

(14) **Worker’s compensation records.** Retain these records 4 years after the signing of final settlement receipt, or 4 years after death of recipient.

**Source**


**Cross References**

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.53 (relating to administrative and legal records).

**§ 15.56. Payroll records.**

Payroll records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) **Cancelled payroll checks.** Retain these records 7 years.

(2) **Employe payroll adjustment records.** Retain these records 4 years.

(3) **Individual employe’s earning record—terminated employes.**

   (i) **Employees who separate with post-termination benefits.** Retain these records 50 years after termination of employment. If all benefits are paid prior to expiration of the 50-year period, retain records 3 years after all benefits have been paid.
Employes who separate without post-termination benefits. Retain these records 5 years after termination of employment.

(4) Individual employe’s pension files. Retain these records 50 years after termination of employment. If all benefits are paid prior to expiration of the 50-year period, retain records 3 years after all benefits have been paid.

(5) Payroll deduction authorizations. Retain these records 4 years after cancelled or superseded.

(6) Payroll earnings and deductions registers.
   (i) Pay period reports. Retain these records 4 years.
   (ii) Year-to-date annual summary. If payroll data is posted to individual employe’s earning record, retain 7 years; otherwise, retain 100 years.

(7) Payroll voucher (check) registers. Retain these records 7 years.

(8) Pension plan data sheets submitted to the Public Employee Retirement Study Commission. Retain these records 10 years.

(9) Pension plan ledgers and registers. Retain these records permanently.

(10) Pension plans. Retain these records 6 years after termination of plan.

(11) Quarterly returns of withholding of Federal Income Tax. Retain these records 4 years.

(12) Quarterly statements of State and local taxes withheld. Retain these records 4 years.

(13) Social Security reports. Retain these records 4 years.

(14) Time cards and attendance records, including vacation and leave slips and work schedules. Retain these records 3 years.

(15) Unemployment compensation records; Contributory Form UC-2/2A/2B and supporting records). Retain these records 4 years after contributions have been paid.

(16) Wage and Tax Statements (W-2 Forms). Retain these records 4 years after the due date of tax.

(17) Withholding Allowance Certificates (W-4 Forms). Retain these records 4 years after a new certificate is filed or employment is terminated.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.57. General financial and purchasing records.
General financial and purchasing records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) Account distribution summaries.
   (i) Weekly/monthly. Retain these records 3 years.
   (ii) Year-end. Retain these records 7 years.
(2) Accounts payable files and ledgers. Retain these records 7 years.
(3) Accounts receivable files and ledgers. Retain these records 7 years.
(4) Annual budget reports, submitted to the Department of Community Affairs. Retain these records 5 years.
(5) Annual budgets and related records. Retain one copy of the annual budget permanently. Retain duplicate copies as long as of administrative value. Retain other related papers 7 years.
(6) Audit reports including annual audit and financial reports submitted to the Department of Community Affairs and other audit reports submitted to the municipality by an independent, appointed auditor. Retain these records permanently.
(7) Audit workpapers. Retain current plus 3 prior audit cycles.
(8) Balance sheets. Retain these records 7 years.
(9) Bank statements and reconciliations. Retain these records 3 years.
(10) Bills. Retain these records 7 years.
(11) Cancelled checks. Retain these records 7 years.
(12) Check registers. Retain these records 7 years.
(13) Daily cash records. Retain these records 3 years.
(14) Deposit slips. Retain these records 3 years.
(15) Depreciation schedules. Retain these records for the life of the equipment plus 3 years.
(16) Expense reports—employe. Retain these records 7 years.
(17) Financial statements.
   (i) Periodic. Retain these records until final completion of audit.
   (ii) Certified. Retain these records permanently.
(18) General ledger analyses. Retain these records 7 years.
(19) Investment records. Retain these records 6 years after cancellation.
(20) Invoices. Retain these records 7 years.
(21) Purchase order files. Retain these records 7 years.
(22) Supply requisitions. Retain these records 2 years.
(23) Surplus property records.
   (i) Logs. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
   (ii) Sale files. Retain these records 3 years.
(24) Utility and paid service receipts. Retain these records 7 years.
(25) Vendor files. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
(26) Voucher files. Retain these records 7 years.
(27) Warrants. Retain these records 7 years.

Source
§ 15.58. Tax collection and assessment records.

(a) Tax collection records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) *Bill of taxes, filed by tax collector with sheriff*. Retain these records 2 years.
(2) *Certifications for taxes paid on real estate, provided by tax collector*. Retain these records 2 years.
(3) *Change of address records*. Retain these records 2 years.
(4) *Delinquent tax collection records*. Retain these records 1 year after delinquent taxes have been paid.
(5) *Exoneration certificates issued to tax collector*. Retain these records 5 years.
(6) *General and special tax ledgers/journals, including real estate, per capita, occupation, earned income, intangible personal property, mercantile, business privilege, amusement and other local taxes*. Retain these records 7 years.
(7) *Mobile home removal permits, issued by tax collector*. Retain these records 2 years after expiration.
(8) *Occupational tax lists*. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
(9) *Personal property tax return forms/cards*. Retain these records 5 years.
(10) *Public utility realty reports, submitted to the Department of Revenue*. Retain these records 7 years.
(11) *Real estate transfer records, from Recorder of Deeds*. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
(12) *Tax bills, paid receipts*. Retain these records 2 years.
(13) *Tax collector’s reports, annual report submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs*. Retain these records 10 years.
(14) *Tax collector’s return sheets, submitted to the Tax Claim Bureau*. Retain 1 year after delinquent taxes have been paid.
(15) *Tax collector’s settlement records*. Retain these records 10 years.
(16) *Tax duplicates, real estate and nonreal estate*. Retain duplicates in which tax payments have been recorded for 7 years. Retain other copies of the duplicates as long as of administrative value.
(17) *Tax millage certificates*. Retain these records permanently.
(18) *Tax notice certification statements, submitted to taxing district by the tax collector*. Retain these records 2 years.
(19) *Tax sale execution records, real estate*. Retain these records permanently.
(b) Assessment records shall be maintained as follows for third class cities which conduct their own real estate assessment:

1. Abatements and exonerations. Retain these records 5 years.
2. Aerial photographs. Retain these records permanently.
3. Appraisal forms. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
4. Assessment appeal papers. Retain these records 3 years after settlement. Retain 5 years after settlement if appealed to court.
5. Change of assessment notices. Retain these records 5 years.
6. Developers’ plans. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
7. Exemption files. Retain these records 3 years after expiration of exemption.
8. Industrial and commercial assessment reports. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
9. Mobile home and house trailer reports. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
10. Change of assessment notices. Retain these records 5 years.
11. Real estate tax duplicates. Retain these records 21 years; then contact the State Archives regarding historical value.
12. Real estate tax maps and indices. Retain these records permanently.

Source


Cross References

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.59. Police records.

Police records shall be maintained as follows:

1. Animal law enforcement records. Retain these records 2 years.
2. Bicycle registration records. Retain these records 2 years.
3. Calibration records, including chemical analysis intoxilizer, vehicle speedometer, radar, vascar and other speed measuring devices. Retain these records 5 years after expiration of certification.
   (i) Traffic. Retain these records 5 years if not part of criminal history case file.
   (ii) Nontraffic. Retain these records 5 years if not part of criminal history case file.
(5) Community relations files, including information relating to business and home security surveys, crime prevention, educational programs, neighborhood crime watch and public safety. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(6) Complaints, incident reports or initial activity reports. Retain these records 3 years if not part of criminal history case file.

(7) Court orders. Retain these records as long as of administrative and legal value if not part of criminal history case file.

(8) Criminal history/investigatory case files. These records include, but are not limited to, arrest and detention records, citations and complaints, crime analysis records, evidence records, field notes, hospital and medical records, lab reports, offense reports, probation and parole records, press releases, search warrants, subpoenas and vehicular reports.
   (i) Homicides/suspicious deaths/missing persons. Retain these records 75 years.
   (ii) Summary cases. Retain these records 5 years after close of investigation.
   (iii) Other cases. Retain these records 20 years after close of investigation.

(9) Criminal history dissemination records. Retain same length of time as case file. If no criminal record is found, retain 2 years.

(10) Daily activity records, including assignment sheets, officer activity reports, patrol logs, sign-in logs and work schedules. Retain these records 2 years.

(11) Daily bulletins/blotters/logs; chronological summary of departmental activities. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(12) Dispatcher’s log books. Retain these records 2 years after last entry.

(13) Firearms and ammunition—records/inventories (departmental). Retain these records 2 years after superseded or obsolete.

(14) Hunting accident reports, submitted to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Retain these records 2 years.

(15) Internal affairs case files.
   (i) Incident log. Retain these records 7 years after last entry.
   (ii) Substantiated charges. Retain these records 3 years after termination of employment.
   (iii) Unsubstantiated charges. Retain these records 3 years after close of investigation or comply with union rules, if applicable.

(16) K-9 corps records. Retain veterinary and training records 2 years after retirement or death of dog.

(17) Master name index. Retain these records as long as of administrative and legal value.

(18) Motor vehicle records.
Accident reports. Retain these records 5 years after close of investigation if not part of criminal history case file.

Parking violations (tickets). Retain these records 1 year after all fines have been paid.

Police requests for removal of abandoned or impounded vehicles. Retain these records 2 years.

Recommendations for special driver's examinations. Retain these records 1 year.

Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting Program worksheets and printouts. Retain these records 2 years.

Permits and related applications. Retain these records 2 years after expiration.

Property records; evidence/found/recovered. Retain these records 10 years after property is no longer in custody of the police department if the record is not part of the criminal history case file.

Temporary detention records.

Detention reports. Retain these records 3 years if not part of criminal history case file.

Inspection reports from the Department of Corrections. Retain these records 4 years.

Towing records.

Tow truck operator's schedules. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

Towing service records. Retain these records 1 year after all fines have been paid.

Vacation/vacant house check records. Retain these records 30 days after re-occupancy.

Video/audio tapes.

Training documentation. Retain these records 2 years.

Officer activity documentation. Retain these records as long as of administrative and legal value.

Waivers for riding in police vehicles. Retain these records as long as of administrative and legal value.

Source


Cross References

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.60. Fire records.

Fire records shall be maintained as follows:

15-19
(1) Annual fire loss records. Retain these records permanently if not part of annual report.

(2) Certification of service by paid and volunteer firefighters (submitted to the Office of the Auditor General). Retain current report plus two prior audit cycles.

(3) Daily operations blotters and activity logs. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(4) Drill reports. Retain these records 7 years.

(5) Duty officer’s fire/incident reports. Retain these records 7 years if not part of investigation file.

(6) Equipment records.
   (i) Issued to firefighters. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
   (ii) Loaned to other companies. Retain these records until satisfactory return of equipment.

(7) Fire codes and ordinances. Retain these records permanently.

(8) Firesafety inspection records.
   (i) Automated sprinkler system records. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
   (ii) Building surveys and inspection records. Retain these records 10 years after superseded or obsolete.
   (iii) New construction reports and inspection forms. Retain these records 10 years after superseded or obsolete.
   (iv) Notifications of violations or defects. Retain these records 5 years after subsequent inspection reveals defect or violation has been corrected.

(9) Hydrant records.
   (i) Location listings and maps. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
   (ii) Major maintenance/testing records. Retain these records 2 years after hydrant is removed or replaced.

(10) Investigation case files.
   (i) Arson/fires resulting in death or injury, or both. Retain these records 15 years after case is closed.
   (ii) Other fires. Retain these records 10 years after cause is determined.

(11) Maintenance records.
   (i) Apparatus inspection reports. Retain these records 2 years after retirement of apparatus or transfer with vehicle, if appropriate.
   (ii) Equipment and maintenance logs. Retain these records for life of equipment.
   (iii) Fire alarm box test records. Retain these records 2 years after box is removed or replaced.
§ 15.61. Emergency services records.

Emergency services records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) **Audio tapes and logs.** Retain tapes 45 days unless being held as evidence. Retain logs 3 years after last entry.

(2) **Basic comprehensive emergency management plan and records.** Retain these records 3 years after superseded.

(3) **Civil defense records.** Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.

(4) **Comprehensive emergency medical services plans.** Retain these records 3 years after superseded.

(5) **Dosimetry meter records.** Retain these records 2 years after expiration of certification.

(6) **Emergency medical treatment records—trip reports.** Retain these records 7 years.

(7) **Incident cards and reports.** Retain these records 3 years.

(8) **Quality assurance reviews.** Retain these records 10 years.

(9) **Radio dispatcher’s logs.** Retain these records 3 years after last entry.

Source


Cross References

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).


Public health records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) **Applications for food service manager/operator certification.** Retain these records 4 years.

(2) **Citations.** Retain these records 3 years.

(3) **Epidemiological reports of food-borne illnesses, outbreaks and complaints.** Retain these records 7 years.
(4) Epidemiological reports of water-borne illnesses, outbreaks and complaints. Retain these records 12 years after resolution of case.

(5) Food embargo, condemnation and recall records. Retain these records 5 years.

(6) General nuisance records. Nonstructure notices of violation and correspondence including, but not limited to, tall grass weeds, animal fecal matter, odors, filthy conditions and decaying matter shall be retained 2 years after final disposition.

(7) Health inspection records.
   (i) Nonfood establishments. These records include applications for annual licenses, complaints, copies of licenses, inspection reports, notices of violation, enforcement and legal records and correspondence. Retain these records 4 years.
   (ii) Food establishment records. These records include applications for annual licenses, bacteriological reports, certificates of health, complaints, copies of licenses, inspection reports, notices of violation, enforcement and legal records and correspondence relating to establishments serving or manufacturing food and drinks. Retain these records 4 years.

(8) Rent withholding cases. Retain these records 7 years.

(9) Reports to the State Board of Health. Retain these records 5 years.

(10) State permits and approvals. Retain in compliance with regulations promulgated by the issuing agency.

(11) Vector control records. These records include field contact reports, investigations, logbooks, spraying records and treatment records. Retain these records 4 years.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.63. Public works/engineering records.
Public works/engineering records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) Applications/licenses/permits for access driveway locations, handicapped parking spaces, load zones and signs.
   (i) Annual or short-term. Retain these records 3 years after expiration.
   (ii) Continuing/indefinite. Retain these records until revoked or suspended.

(2) Complaints and notification of hazards. Retain these records 2 years after correction/final resolution.

(3) Construction records.
(1) **Engineering and survey notes and drawings.** Retain these records permanently.

(ii) **Plans and specifications.** Retain these records until structure is reconstructed or is no longer municipal property/responsibility; transfer to new owner, if appropriate.

(4) **Equipment records.** Retain these records for life of equipment.

(5) **Highway transfers.** These records include agreements, encumbrances, engineering data, general project information, maps, resolutions and other supporting papers. Retain these records permanently.

(6) **Liquid fuels tax records.** Retain these records 7 years.

(7) **Maintenance records—road/building/facility.**

(i) **Routine.** Retain these records 5 years.

(ii) **Structural.** Retain these records until structure is reconstructed or is no longer municipal property/responsibility; transfer to new owner, if appropriate.

(8) **Maps.** Retain 1 copy permanently. Retain other copies until superseded or obsolete.

(9) **Motor vehicle records.** Retain these records until retirement or sale of vehicle; transfer to new owner if appropriate.

(10) **Road and bridge books and papers.** Retain these records permanently.

(11) **Road mileage reports submitted to the Department of Transportation.** Retain these records permanently.

(12) **Road operations procedures.** Retain these records until superseded.

(13) **Stormwater management records, including agreements and requirements, applications for reimbursement, copies of county plan, site plans and technical studies.** Retain these records permanently.

(14) **Street light records.**

(i) **Installation records and plans.** Retain these records until light is removed or replaced.

(ii) **Routine maintenance records.** Retain these records 5 years.

(15) **Street records.**

(i) **Assessment notification records.** Retain these records 3 years after all payments have been made.

(ii) **Opening orders and deeds of dedication.** Retain these records permanently.

(iii) **Street cut/excavation permits.** Retain these records 5 years.

(16) **Traffic sign and signal records, including installation and maintenance records, permits and plans.** Retain these records until sign/signal is removed or replaced.

(17) **Traffic studies, including delay and traffic flow studies, speed, time and volume.** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(18) **Transportation system performance forms submitted to the Department of Transportation.** Retain these records 3 years.

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(19) **Underground conduit records.** Retain these records permanently.

**Source**


**Cross References**

This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.64. Waste management and sewage disposal records.

Waste management and sewage disposal records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) **Act 537 plan, revisions and supplements—Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (35 P. S. §§ 750.1—750.20).** Retain these records until superseded.

(2) **BioSolids disposal records (sludge).** These records include permits and permit applications, contracts, operational reports, laboratory analysis reports and related correspondence. Retain these records permanently.

(3) **Investigation case files (Department of Environmental Resources records).** These records include inspection reports, notices of violation, laboratory results, investigations, complaints, enforcement actions and related correspondence. Retain these records 25 years after case is closed.

(4) **Notification of permits and permit revisions—Section 1905-A of The Administrative Code of 1929 (71 P. S. § 510-5).** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.

(5) **Onlot sewage system records.**

   (i) **Applications for onlot sewage system permits.** These records include plans and specifications, applications for permits, inspections, test results, copies of permits issued, notices of violation and related records. Retain these records until system is replaced or property is connected to a public sewage treatment system.

   (ii) **Sewage planning module components for subdivisions, including plans, specifications, county subdivision applications and related records.** Retain these records 5 years after last lot developed.

(6) **Operating records for public sewage treatment systems, sewer line extensions and pumping facilities.**

   (i) **Daily operating reports.** Retain these records 2 years.

   (ii) **Monthly discharge monitoring reports.** Retain these records 3 years.

   (iii) **Yearly waste load management reports.** See 25 Pa. Code Chapter 94 (relating to municipal wasteload management). Retain these records permanently.

(7) **Planning modules for new land development submitted to the Department of Environmental Resources.** Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
(8) Public sewage treatment system installation records relating to subdivisions. These records include plans, specifications, sewage planning module components, county subdivision applications and related records. Retain plans and specifications permanently. Retain other records 5 years after completion of project.

(9) Public sewage treatment systems/sewer line extensions/pumping facilities records as required by The Clean Streams Law (35 P. S. §§ 691.1—691.1001). These records include plans, specifications and permits, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit Applications (NPDES) and related records. Retain these records permanently.

(10) Recycling program records. Retain these records 5 years.

(11) Sewer assessment notification records for initial installation. Retain these records 3 years after all payments have been made.

(12) Sewer enforcement officer certification records. Retain these records until expiration of certification.

(13) Sewer rights-of-way and easements. Retain these records permanently.

(14) Solid waste records; landfills.
   (i) Case files. These records include applications for landfill permits, copies of permits, complaints, daily disposal logs, groundwater monitoring records, inspections, module 1 applications, notices of violation, reviews of proposed sites, sampling reports and related correspondence. Retain these records 30 years after lifespan of facility.
   (ii) Volume and weight records. Retain these records 2 years.

(15) Toxic reduction evaluation reports; including engineering analysis, pollutant control evaluations, quality reviews and systems inventories. Retain these records permanently.

(16) Transporter/hauler records. These records include log books, permit applications including vehicle information, notices of violation, inspection and operational reports and related correspondence. Retain these records 4 years.

Source
The provisions of this § 15.64 adopted February 18, 1994, effective February 19, 1994, 24 Pa.B. 993.

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.65. Planning and building/zoning code enforcement records.
Planning and building/zoning code enforcement records shall be maintained as follows:
   (1) Aerial photographs. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete; then contact State Archives regarding historical value.
(2) **Building and housing construction records.** Retain records relating to places of public assembly until structure is demolished. Retain records relating to other structures 5 years after certificate of occupancy has been issued or 5 years after final approval of project, if no certificate of occupancy has been issued.

(3) **Building permits and applications.** Retain records relating to places of public assembly until structure is demolished. Retain records relating to other structures 5 years after certificate of occupancy has been issued or 5 years after final approval of project if no certificate of occupancy has been issued. Contact State Archives regarding historical value.

(4) **Citations.** Retain these records 3 years after resolution of complaint.

(5) **Complaints, notices of violations and investigations.** Retain these records 3 years after final disposition.

(6) **Comprehensive master plans.** Retain these records permanently.

(7) **Contractors’ licensing records.** Retain these records 7 years.

(8) **Demolition permits and applications.** Retain these records permanently.

(9) **Economic development and redevelopment files.** Comply with retention requirements promulgated by the appropriate administering/funding/licensing agency.

(10) **Floodplain management records.**

   (i) **Annual reports of floodplain management activities submitted to the Department of Community Affairs.** Retain these records 5 years.

   (ii) **Variances to floodplain regulations.** Retain these records permanently.

(11) **Maps and plats.** These records include community facilities, zoning, floodplain, geologic survey, land use, subdivision, topographic and water and soil. Retain one copy permanently. Retain other copies until superseded or obsolete.

(12) **Occupancy and use permits.** Retain these records until revoked or superseded.

(13) **Reports of buildings or zoning permits issued and local public construction submitted to the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.** Retain these records 5 years.

(14) **Subdivision and land development reviews and approvals/disapprovals.** Retain application form, official review and report, approval or disapproval, plot plans and financial security and development agreements permanently. Retain other records as long as of administrative value.

(15) **Zoning board and zoning hearing board records.**

   (i) **Board decisions or findings of fact.** Retain these records permanently.

   (ii) **Hearing applications.** Retain these records 3 years after final decision.
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(iii) Hearing tapes/stenographic notes and transcripts. Retain tapes and notes 90 days after final decision if no appeal to common pleas court is filed. If appeal to common pleas court is filed, retain tapes, notes and transcripts until resolution of case.

(iv) Ordinance amendment reviews. Retain these records permanently.

(v) Records in court cases. Retain these records permanently.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.66. Water quality, supply and distribution records.

Water quality, supply and distribution records shall be maintained as follows:

(1) Operating records for water treatment plants.
   (i) Annual reports and special studies. Retain these records permanently.
   (ii) Daily operating reports. Retain these records 2 years.
   (iii) Monthly operating reports. Retain these records 10 years.

(2) Permit files for water treatment plants and public water supply systems. These records include applications, approvals/disapprovals, plans, maps, specifications, engineering drawings, variances, inspection reports and related correspondence. Retain these records permanently.

(3) Water line assessment notification records for initial installation. Retain these records 3 years after all payments have been made.

(4) Water quality records. These records include inspections, tests, monitoring reports, chemical analyses and supporting documentation. Retain annual water supply reports, emergency response plans, operation and maintenance plans until superseded or obsolete. Retain other records 12 years.

(5) Waterworks operators certification records. Retain these records until expiration of certification.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).
§ 15.67. Library records.
Library records shall be maintained as follows:

1. Applications for State aid. Retain these records 5 years.
2. Book and materials inventories. Retain these records until superseded or obsolete.
3. Book purchase and disposal records. Retain these records 2 years.
   (i) Annual statistics. Retain these records permanently if not incorporated in annual report. If incorporated in annual report retain as long as of administrative value.
   (ii) Interlibrary loan records. Retain these records as long as of administrative value.
5. Library board rules and regulations. Retain these records 5 years after revoked or superseded.
6. Materials accession and disposal records. Retain these records 2 years.
7. Patron registration files. Retain these records 3 years after expiration of card. For patrons with delinquencies, retain 3 years after settlement of delinquencies.
8. Reports to State Library. Retain these records permanently.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).

§ 15.68. Parks and recreation records.
Parks and recreation records shall be maintained as follows:

1. Accident/incident reports. Retain these records 3 years.
2. Citations. Retain these records 3 years.
3. Park planning files, including as-built plans showing layout, topography and proposed improvements. Retain these records permanently.
4. Park program files. Retain these records 2 years.
5. Park rules and regulations. Retain these records 5 years after revoked or superseded.
6. Park use records. These records include facilities such as tennis courts, golf course, athletic fields and playgrounds. Retain these records 3 years.
7. Public bathing facilities. These records include inspections, notices of violations, service requests, enforcement records, laboratory results, operational reports, complaints and correspondence. Retain these records 4 years.

15-28
Sec. 15.69. Full-time municipal health department records.

Full-time municipal health departments should contact the State Archives at the following address for copies of this Retention and Disposition Schedule: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Division of Archival and Records Management Services, Post Office Box 1026, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108-1026, (717) 787-3913, 783-9874 or 783-9875.

Source

Cross References
This section cited in 46 Pa. Code § 15.51 (relating to general provisions); and 46 Pa. Code § 15.52 (relating to applicability).