



Recordkeeping Best Practices

Kansas State University Records Management offers comprehensive services to faculty, staff, and departments across the university, assisting in all aspects of managing university records and information. Our team works closely with departments to develop file naming conventions, storage protocols, and retention plans for paper-based, electronic, and multimedia records. Kansas State University Records Management is located in the Morse Department of Archives and Special Collections, on the fifth floor of Hale Library.

We provide guidance on best practices, creating new schedules, transferring records to the University Archives, understanding related laws and statutes, records retention, and accessing training materials. All university employees are responsible for managing the records in their custody. For questions regarding the maintenance, destruction, or preservation of university records, please contact the University Records Manager, Danielle Hall, at dnhall@ksu.edu.

Stay informed by following the [K-State University Records Management Blog](#), where you'll find university records management news, tips, policies, projects, and more.

Organize with Purpose

Regular organization prevents records from becoming overwhelming or misplaced.

- **Annual Reviews:** Schedule a yearly review of both digital and paper files—ideally at the start or end of the academic, calendar, or fiscal year.
- **High-Volume Areas:** For departments that generate large amounts of data, quarterly assessments may be more appropriate.
- **Retention Schedules:** Use your office's approved [Records Retention Schedule](#) to determine:
 - What records exist
 - How long they must be kept
 - When and how they should be destroyed or archived

Why it matters: Regular organization ensures that important records are accessible when needed and that outdated materials don't pose unnecessary risks.

Understand What to Keep

Not all documents are created equally. Knowing the difference between records and non-records is essential.

- **Records:** Records are any kind of information your organization creates and keeps while doing business, in any format, and they remain the organization's property—even if employees create them at home or on personal devices.
- **Non-Records:** these are materials that do not document official activities or decisions, such as personal notes, drafts, duplicate copies, reference materials, junk mail, or informal messages unrelated to university business.

Tip: Keep only the final version of a document. Delete earlier drafts and reference copies once they're no longer needed.

Store Thoughtfully

Proper storage ensures that records are both secure and retrievable.

- **Physical Records:**
 - Store in a central, secure location
 - Use access controls for sensitive materials
- **Digital Records:**
 - Save in stable formats (e.g., PDF, TIFF)
 - Use consistent naming conventions throughout your office or department.
 - Organize by function, record type, and date
 - Store only final versions on shared drives; delete drafts from local storage

Why it matters: Organized storage reduces time spent searching for documents and protects against data loss or breaches.\

Secure Destruction: Protecting Privacy and Reducing Risk

- **Paper Records**
 - **Shred** expired or non-records, especially those containing confidential or personal information (PII).
 - If unsure whether to shred or recycle, always choose shredding.
- **Digital Records**
 - Apply the same retention rules as for paper.

Destroy all components of a record series—paper, digital, audiovisual—at the same time.

Legal Holds: Never destroy records that may be involved in current or anticipated litigation. If in doubt, consult the **Office of General Counsel**

University Archives: Preserving What Matters

Records that have historical value and may be appropriate for transfer to the University Archives are indicated in the Records Retention Schedules by the retention plans "archives" and/or "transfer to the university."

- For details about transferring records to the Archives, please contact the university archivist at releimkue@ksu.edu or 785- 532-5013.