
Note: For information regarding security breaches, see CQB.
For record retention requirements under specific statutes, see the applicable policy code.

Definitions

Custodian

“Custodian” means the appointed or elected public officer who by the state constitution, state law, ordinance, or administrative policy is in charge of an office that creates or receives local government records. *Local Gov’t Code 201.003(2)*

Disposition

“Disposition” means final processing of local government records by archival transfer under Local Government Code 203.049 or destruction under Local Government Code 202.001 or Government Code 441.0945. *13 TAC 7.71(5)*

Electronic Record

“Electronic record” means any information that is recorded in a form for computer processing and that satisfies the definition of local government record data in Local Government Code 201.003(8), below. *13 TAC 7.71(6)*

Note: Additional definitions related to standards and procedures for management of electronic records are found in 13 Administrative Code 7.71.

Electronic Records System

“Electronic records system” means any information system that produces, manipulates, and stores local government records by using a computer. *13 TAC 7.71(7)*

Electronic Storage Media

“Electronic storage media” means all physical media capable of being read by a computer including computer hard disks, magnetic tapes, optical disks, or similar machine-readable media. *13 TAC 7.71(8)*

Essential Record

“Essential record” means any local government record necessary to the resumption or continuation of district operations in an emergency or disaster, to the re-creation of the legal and financial status of the district, or to the protection and fulfillment of obligations to the people of the state. *Local Gov’t Code 201.003(5)*

Local Government Record

“Local government record” means any document, paper, letter, book, map, photograph, sound or video recording, microfilm, magnetic tape, electronic medium, or other information recording medium, regardless of physical form or characteristic and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under the laws of the state, created or received by a district or any of its officers or employees, pursuant to law, including an ordinance, or in the transaction of public business. The term does not include:

1. Extra identical copies of documents created only for convenience of reference or research by officers or employees of the district;
2. Notes, journals, diaries, and similar documents created by an officer or employee of the district for the officer's or employee's personal convenience;
3. Blank forms, stocks of publications, or library and museum materials acquired solely for the purposes of reference or display;
4. Copies of documents in any media furnished to members of the public to which they are entitled under Government Code Chapter 552 (Public Information Act) or other state law; or
5. Any records, correspondence, notes, memoranda, or documents, other than a final written agreement described by Government Code 2009.054(c), associated with a matter conducted under an alternative dispute resolution procedure in which personnel of a district participated as a party, facilitated as an impartial third party, or facilitated as the administrator of a dispute resolution system or organization.

Local Gov't Code 201.003(8)

Permanent Record	"Permanent record" or "record of permanent value" means any local government record for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) is given as permanent. <i>Local Gov't Code 201.003(10)</i>
Records Control Schedule	"Records control schedule" means a document prepared by or under the authority of a records management officer listing the records maintained by a district, their retention periods, and other records disposition information that the records management program in each district may require. <i>Local Gov't Code 201.003(12)</i>
Records Management	"Records management" means the application of management techniques to the creation, use, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of records for the purposes of reducing the costs and improving the efficiency of recordkeeping. The term includes the development of records control schedules, the management of filing and information retrieval systems, the protection of essential and permanent records, the economical and space-effective storage of inactive records, control over the creation and distribution of forms, reports, and correspondence, and the management of micrographics and electronic and other records storage systems. <i>Local Gov't Code 201.003(13)</i>

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Records Management Officer	“Records management officer” means the person designated under Local Government Code 203.025 as the records management officer. [See Designation, below] <i>Local Gov’t Code 201.003(14)</i>
Records Retention Schedule	“Records retention schedule” means a document issued by TSLAC under authority of Government Code Chapter 441, Subchapter J, establishing mandatory retention periods for local government records. <i>Local Gov’t Code 201.003(15)</i>
Retention Period	“Retention period” means the minimum time that must pass after the creation, recording, or receipt of a record, or the fulfillment of certain actions associated with a record, before it is eligible for destruction. <i>Local Gov’t Code 201.003(16)</i>
Third-Party Custodians	“Third-party custodians” means parties with which a district may contract for services who are temporarily responsible for the maintenance of local government records, other than an interlocal contract under Local Government Code 203.025(f). <i>13 TAC 7.71(16)</i>

Board’s Responsibilities

The board shall:

1. Establish, promote, and support an active and continuing program for the efficient and economical management of all local government records;
2. Cause policies and procedures to be developed for the administration of the program under the direction of the records management officer;
3. Facilitate the creation and maintenance of local government records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the district and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the district, the state, and persons affected by the district’s activities;
4. Facilitate the identification and preservation of local government records that are of permanent value;
5. Facilitate the identification and protection of essential local government records; and
6. Cooperate with TSLAC in its conduct of statewide records management surveys.

Local Gov’t Code 203.021

District’s Duties

Each district shall:

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1. Submit to the director and librarian of TSLAC the name of the district's records management officer and the name of the new officer in the event of a change;
2. File a plan or an ordinance or order establishing a records management program and any amendments to the plan or ordinance or order with the director and librarian;
3. Notify TSLAC at least ten days before destroying a local government record that does not appear on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC; and
4. File with the director and librarian a written certification as provided by Local Government Code 203.041 that the district has prepared a records control schedule that:
 - a. Establishes a retention period for each local government record as required by Local Government Code Chapter 203, Subchapter C; and
 - b. Complies with a local government records retention schedule distributed by the director and librarian under Government Code 441.158 and any other state and federal requirements.

Gov't Code 441.169

Minimum
Requirements for
Electronic Records

Each district must:

1. Manage electronic records according to the district's records management program and records retention schedule regardless of format, system, or storage location;
2. Maintain ownership and responsibility for electronic records regardless of where the record originates or resides, including, but not limited to, external electronic records systems, third-party custodians, and social media platforms;
3. Develop and maintain up-to-date documentation about electronic records systems and storage media adequate to identify, retain, read, process, or migrate electronic records and ensure the timely, authorized final disposition of electronic records;
4. Ensure that electronic records remain readily retrievable and readable for as long as they are maintained by the district through migration or by maintaining any software, hardware, and documentation required to retrieve and read the electronic records;

5. Maintain descriptive and technical metadata required for electronic records to maintain and retain reliability, including metadata necessary to adequately support the usability, authenticity, or integrity as well as the preservation of a record;
6. Preserve the authenticity, integrity, reliability, and usability of the records;
7. Ensure that electronic records are readily retrievable and readable independently of other records in the database management system, electronic records system, or electronic storage media;
8. Ensure that system backups that are required for disaster recovery are not used to satisfy records retention requirements unless indexed to ensure usability and are tested on a regular basis; and
9. Require all third-party custodians of records to provide the district with descriptions of their business continuity and/or disaster recovery plans pertaining to the protection of the district's essential records.

Any technology for electronic records developed, used, or acquired by a district must support the district's ability to meet the minimum requirements in 13 Administrative Code 7.74(a) to preserve and make readily retrievable and readable any electronic record or to extract or migrate the record in as complete a form as possible for its full retention period.

13 TAC 7.74

Security of
Electronic Records

Districts must implement and maintain an electronic records security program for office and storage areas that complies with 13 Administrative Code 7.75.

Note: The district's duties regarding maintenance of electronic storage media are set out in 13 Administrative Code 7.76. The minimum requirements for all electronic records systems are found in 13 Administrative Code 7.77.

Custodians of
Records

District custodians of records shall:

1. Cooperate with the records management officer in carrying out the policies and procedures established by a district for the efficient and economical management of records and in carrying out the requirements of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C;

2. Adequately document the transaction of district business and the services, programs, and duties for which they and their staff are responsible; and
3. Maintain the records in their care and carry out the preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition of the records only in accordance with the policies and procedures of the district's records management program and the requirements of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C and rules adopted under it.

Local Gov't Code 203.022

**Records
Management Officer**

Designation

The board shall designate a records management officer by designating an individual or designating an office or position, the holder of which shall be the records management officer.

The name, office, or position of the records management officer shall be entered on the minutes of the board. The name or the name and office or position of the records management officer shall be filed by the records management officer with the director and librarian of TSLAC within 30 days after the date of the designation.

The designation of a new individual or a new office or position shall be entered on the minutes and reported to TSLAC in the same manner as the original designation.

If the order designating a records management officer designates an office or position rather than an individual, a new holder of that office or position must file the holder's name with TSLAC within 30 days after the date of assuming the office or position.

Local Gov't Code 203.025(a)–(e)

Duties

The district's records management officer shall:

1. Assist in establishing and developing policies and procedures for a district's records management program;
2. Administer the records management program and provide assistance to custodians for the purposes of reducing costs and improving recordkeeping efficiency;
3. In cooperation with the custodians of the records:
 - a. Prepare the records control schedules and amended schedules required by Local Government Code 203.041 and the list of obsolete records as provided by Local Government Code 203.044;

- b. Identify and take adequate steps to preserve local government records of permanent value;
 - c. Identify and take adequate steps to protect essential local government records;
 - d. Ensure that the maintenance, preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition of records is carried out in accordance with a district's records management program and the requirements of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C and rules adopted under it;
4. Disseminate to the board and custodians of records information concerning state laws, administrative rules, and government policies relating to local government records; and
5. In cooperation with the custodians of records, establish procedures to ensure that the handling of records in any context of the records management program is carried out with due regard for the duties and responsibilities of custodians that may be imposed by law and the confidentiality of information in records to which access is restricted by law.

Local Gov't Code 203.023

Electronic Records
Management
Practices

District records management officers, in conjunction with the board, shall approve and institute written policies and procedures that communicate the district's approach for electronic records management practices that ensure electronic records maintain and retain reliability, usability, integrity, and authenticity.

A district's policies and procedures must:

1. Establish a component of the district's active and continuing records management program to address the management of electronic records created, received, retained, used, transmitted, or disposed of electronically, including electronic records maintained or managed by third-party custodians or other external entities;
2. Integrate the management of electronic records into existing records and information resources management programs;
3. Incorporate electronic records management objectives, responsibilities, and authorities;
4. Address electronic records management requirements, including retention requirements and final disposition;
5. Address the use of new technologies through regular media and format conversion, recopying, reformatting, and other

necessary maintenance to ensure the retention and usability of electronic records until the expiration of their retention periods and final disposition; and

6. Ensure transparency by documenting, in an open and verifiable manner, the processes and activities carried out in the management of electronic records.

A district's policies and procedures must ensure information that must be protected from unauthorized use or disclosure is appropriately protected as required by applicable law, regulation, or other applicable requirement

13 TAC 7.73

**Records
Management
Program**

A board by ordinance or order shall establish a records management program to be administered by the records management officer. The ordinance or order must provide methods and procedures to enable the board, custodians, and the records management officer to fulfill the statutory duties and responsibilities concerning management and preservation of records. The ordinance or order may prescribe any policies or procedures for the operation of the records management program that are consistent with the requirements of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C rules adopted under it. A copy of the ordinance or order must be filed by the records management officer with TSLAC within 30 days after the date of its adoption. *Local Gov't Code 203.026(a)–(c)*

**Electronic Records
Management**

The board and its records management officer, in cooperation with other employees of the district, must:

1. Administer a program for the management of records created, received, maintained, used, or stored on electronic media;
2. Integrate the management of electronic records with other records and information resources management programs;
3. Incorporate electronic records management objectives, responsibilities, and authorities in pertinent directives;
4. Establish procedures for addressing records management requirements, including recordkeeping requirements and disposition;
5. Make training available for users of electronic records systems that addresses:
 - a. The operation, care, and handling of the equipment, software, media, and information contained in the system; and

- b. Records management concepts and applicable requirements, including any records management issues as they relate to item 5a;
6. Develop and maintain up-to-date documentation about all electronic records systems that is adequate to specify all technical characteristics necessary for reading or processing the records and the timely, authorized disposition of records; and
7. Specify the location and media on which electronic records are maintained to meet retention requirements and maintain inventories of electronic records systems to facilitate disposition.

13 TAC 7.72(c)

**Records Control
Schedules**

The records management officer shall:

1. Prepare a records control schedule listing the following records and establishing a retention period for each:
 - a. All records created or received by the district;
 - b. Any record no longer created or received by the district that is still in its possession and for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC has not expired; and
 - c. Any record no longer created or received by the district that is still in its possession and for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC has expired but which will not be destroyed; and
2. File with the director and librarian a written certification of compliance that the district has adopted records control schedules that comply with the minimum requirements established on records retention schedules issued by TSLAC.

**Amendment of
Schedules**

The records management officer shall review the district's records control schedules and prepare amendments to the schedules as needed to reflect new records created or received by the district or revisions to retention periods established in a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC. The records management officer shall file with the director and librarian a written certification of compliance that the district has amended the records control schedules to comply with the minimum requirements established on records retention schedules issued by TSLAC.

The board shall require in the ordinance or order establishing the records management program the review or approval of a records

control schedule or amended schedule by the officers of the district as it considers necessary.

Local Gov't Code 203.041

Retention Periods A retention period for each record on the records control schedule shall be determined by the board or under its direction. A retention period may not be less than a retention period prescribed by state or federal law, regulation, or rule of court; or a retention period for the record established on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC. *Local Gov't Code 203.042*

TSLAC Retention Schedules TSLAC has adopted the following retention schedules, among others: Local Schedule GR—Records Common to All Governments, Local Schedule EL—Records of Elections and Voter Registration, Local Schedule TX—Records of Property Taxation, and Local Schedule SD—Records for Public School Districts. These schedules establish mandatory minimum retention periods for the records listed. *13 TAC 7.125*

Note: [Local government records retention schedules](#)¹ are available on the TSLAC website.

Destruction of Records

A local government record may be destroyed if:

1. The record is listed on a valid records control schedule and either its retention period has expired or it has been micro-filmed or electronically stored in accordance with legal requirements;
2. The record appears on a list of obsolete records as provided by Local Government Code 203.044;
3. The record is not listed on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC and the district provides notice to TSLAC at least ten days before destroying the record as required by Government Code 441.169;
4. A court issues an expunction order for the destruction or obliteration of the records, pursuant to state law; and
5. The records are defined as exempt from scheduling or filing requirements or listed as exempt in a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC.

Local Gov't Code 202.001; 13 TAC 7.123(c)

Electronic Records Destruction Electronic records may be destroyed only in accordance with Local Government Code 202.001, above.

Each district must ensure that:

1. Electronic records eligible for destruction are disposed of in a manner that ensures protection of any confidential information; and
2. Electronic storage media used for electronic records containing confidential information is not reused if the previously recorded information can be compromised in any way through reuse.

13 TAC 7.78(a), (b)

Exceptions	A local government record the subject matter of which is known by the custodian to be the subject of litigation may not be destroyed until the litigation is settled. A local government record that is subject to a request under Government Code Chapter 552 (Public Information Act) may not be destroyed until the request is resolved. <i>Local Gov't Code 202.002</i>
	[See FL regarding student records.]
Recordkeeping	As a board may require, the records management officer shall keep accurate lists of records destroyed, their volume, and other information of records management activities. <i>Local Gov't Code 203.046</i>
Preservation of Records	Permanent records shall be stored under conditions that meet the requirements of 13 Administrative Code 7.164.
Permanent Records	
Microfilm	Any local government record may be maintained on microfilm in addition to or instead of paper or other media, subject to the requirements of Local Government Code Chapter 204 and rules adopted under it. <i>Local Gov't Code 204.002</i>
Electronic Storage	Any local government record data may be stored electronically in addition to or instead of source documents in paper or other media, subject to the requirements of Local Government Code Chapter 205 and rules adopted under it. <i>Local Gov't Code 205.002</i>
Records Offenses	A board member or district employee commits an offense if the board member or employee knowingly or intentionally violates Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C (local government records) or rules adopted under it by destroying or alienating a local government record in contravention of Local Government Code Subtitle C or by intentionally failing to deliver records to a successor in office as provided by Local Government Code 201.006(a). <i>Local Gov't Code 202.008</i>
Destruction or Alienation of Record	

Tampering with
Governmental
Record

A person commits an offense if the person:

1. Knowingly makes a false entry in, or false alteration of, a governmental record;
2. Makes, presents, or uses any record, document, or thing with knowledge of its falsity and with intent that it be taken as a genuine governmental record;
3. Intentionally destroys, conceals, removes, or otherwise impairs the verity, legibility, or availability of a governmental record;
4. Possesses, sells, or offers to sell a governmental record or a blank governmental record form with intent that it be used unlawfully;
5. Makes, presents, or uses a governmental record with knowledge of its falsity; or
6. Possesses, sells, or offers to sell a governmental record or a blank governmental record form with knowledge that it was obtained unlawfully.

It is an exception to the application of item 3, above, that the governmental record is destroyed pursuant to legal authorization or transferred under Government Code 441.204. With regard to the destruction of a local government record, legal authorization includes compliance with the provisions of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C.

Penal Code 37.10

Federal
Investigations

Whoever knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes a false entry in any record, document, or tangible object with the intent to impede, obstruct, or influence the investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States or any bankruptcy case, or in relation to or contemplation of any such matter or case, shall be fined, imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both. *18 U.S.C. 1519*

¹ Local Government Retention Schedules:
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slr/recordspubs/localretention.html>