

General Records Retention Schedule for Administrative Records of State Agencies



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General records retention schedule
for administrative records
of state agencies _____ 2002

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Introduction

The Archives and Records Management Division of the State Archives has prepared this general retention and disposition schedule to give state government agencies the legal authorization to retain and dispose of common administrative records. The schedule lists the permanently valuable records, which should be properly protected and transferred to the State Archives, and it also supplies a timetable that will allow agencies to regularly and legally dispose of records of non-permanent value. In preparing this schedule, the Division consulted with representatives from various state agencies.

Purpose

The schedule is designed to:

- give your agency uniform guidelines for the retention and disposition of common administrative records;
- make sure your agency retains for as long as necessary the records it will need for administrative, legal, fiscal, and other uses;
- make sure your agency retains records for as long as state and federal laws, regulations, policies, and procedures require;
- promote the cost-effective management of records;
- give your agency the legal authorization it needs to dispose regularly of its obsolete records.

Statutory authority

Section 30-1-90(B) of the *Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976*, as amended, authorizes the State Archives to promulgate as state regulations, general schedules for records common to state government agencies. On 26 June 1992, the General Assembly approved the administrative general schedule as Regulations 12-300 through 12-336. On 26 April 2002 the General Assembly approved additions/revisions to the administrative general schedule.

Definitions of schedules

A records retention schedule describes one or several records series, shows the length of time the records should be retained, and indicates their final disposition. Schedules are of two types—specific and general.

Specific Records Retention Schedules – these schedules are prepared and approved specifically for your agency; your agency’s name will appear on these.

General Records Retention Schedules – these schedules are state regulations issued by the State Archives and are published in the *Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976*, as amended. When a general schedule applies to records already covered under a specific schedule, the general schedule will supersede the specific schedule unless you wish to opt out of using the general schedule.

Special provisions

Opting out – You may already have approved specific schedules that cover some of the same records as the general schedules. If you prefer to continue using these specific schedules, the regulations allow you to opt out of using the general schedules. The regulations will also let you opt out of using general schedules if you wish to establish new specific schedules instead.

Unique records – These general schedules do not list records that are unique to your agency. To control the retention and disposition of these, you should refer to your specific schedules. If you have no specific schedules, contact your records officer. If you do not know who your records officer is, contact our State Records Analysis Unit at 803-896-6123.

Use of the State Records Center – The general schedules do not provide for records storage at the State Records Center. You may, however, continue to store at the Center any records your agency-specific schedules allow.

Confidential and restricted records – Agency records officers and records custodians should ensure that confidential records are filed, accessed, and disposed of according to federal, state, and basic records management requirements. If you transfer a restricted record to the State Archives for permanent retention, you must state clearly that it is restricted, give the reason for the restriction, and show how long the restriction applies.

Exceptions to minimum retention periods – This general schedule establishes minimum retention periods for the official copy of your agency’s records. Although most records can be destroyed when their minimum retentions have been met, you may need to keep some records longer to satisfy specific requirements. Be sure those requirements have been met before you dispose of those records.

Copies – This general schedule does not cover copies of records, which you may have made for convenience, information, or duplication. You may destroy copies when you no longer need them.

To whom does this schedule apply?

Any department of the state; any state board, commission, agency, and authority; any public or governmental body of the state; any organization, corporation, or agency supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds, including committees, subcommittees, advisory committees, and any quasi-governmental body of the state. Whenever the term “agency” is used in this publication it refers to all of the above.

To whom does this schedule not apply?

Any political subdivision of the state, including counties, municipalities, townships, school districts, special purpose districts, and any quasi-governmental subdivisions. The State Archives issues separate general and specific schedules for local government records.

General schedule format

Each record series listed in the general schedule is presented in the following format:

Regulation number and series title – The first line includes the regulation number, which is used for control, and the title most commonly used by agencies.

Part A – Description: A short statement describing the use and informational content of the record series. In many cases, the description also specifies the agency that creates the series.

Part B – Retention: The time period indicating the minimum length of time that records should be retained by the office before their disposition can take place.

Format for General Correspondence (Non-Executive Levels)

12-317 General Correspondence (Non-Executive Levels)

A. Description: Routine correspondence created or retained below the levels of agency director, deputy director and division director. Letters and memoranda reflect communications regarding program procedures, general work activities, and responses to information requests.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

Explanation of terms used in retention statements

“Until no longer needed for reference” – Records are to be kept until you decide they have no further reference value.

“State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent” – Records are to be transferred to the State Archives where portions may be selected for permanent retention.

“State Archives: Permanent” – All records are to be transferred to the State Archives for permanent retention.

“Microfilm Optional” – Microfilm may be substituted for the original records IF the microfilm meets the state standards (see R-12-200 of the *Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976*, as amended). Before you destroy the originals, you must submit and have approved a Microfilm Quality Certification for Records Disposition form.

“X’ years, destroy.” – Records may be destroyed after x number of years provided you have met the terms mentioned in Section 12-300 of the regulation.

Using this schedule effectively

- Before using this general schedule you should contact your agency records officer, who should coordinate all activities relating to the retention and disposition of agency records and function as a liaison with the State Archives in administering the agency’s records management program. If you do not know who the records officer is, contact the State Records Analysis Unit at 803-896-6123.
- Agency records officers should work with other agency staff to coordinate the regular disposition of obsolete records. Disposition should be carried out periodically – at least once a year. To streamline disposition, agency staff should review filing arrangements, cut off files periodically, and develop procedures to segregate inactive and obsolete files.
- Generally, records should be destroyed when the minimum retention periods have been met, unless they are needed to meet specific requirements (see Section 12-300) or are designated for archival retention. Although you are not required to destroy records at the end of their minimum retention periods, obsolete records should not occupy expensive office and storage space.
- The titles and descriptions of record series listed in the general schedule may not reflect exactly the titles and descriptions you use. If you are not certain whether the schedule applies to a specific record in your office, please contact the State Records Analysis Unit at 803-896-6123.

How to use the general schedule

1. Study the general schedule and compare it with your specific schedules, if you have any, to determine which schedules you will use. If you wish to use your specific schedules instead of the general schedule, follow the established procedure for those specific schedules.
2. Locate and examine all your records.
3. Match each records series with the title and description on the general schedule.
4. Follow the records disposition process outlined below. The process is illustrated by the flow chart on page 9.

Records disposition process

Permanent (archival) records:

Paper Records – After your permanently-valuable paper records become inactive, you should transfer them to the State Archives. Contact the State Records Center at 803-898-9936 for details and to arrange a date for the transfer.

Micrographics – If you microfilm permanent records, contact the Micrographics Services Branch at 803-896-6208 for help and information about microfilm standards.

Digital Images – If you are maintaining permanent records as digital images, special requirements apply. Contact the State Records Analysis Unit at 803-896-6123 for more information.

Non-permanent records:

To destroy records according to general schedules, you must first complete and forward to the State Records Analysis Unit a “Report on Records Destroyed” form. A sample form is included on page 6 and blank forms are available from the State Records Analysis Unit. Follow the step-by-step instructions on the back of the form. Please note that both the form and the process are the same as those you use to document records disposal under your specific schedules. To help you estimate cubic footage for column 9 on the form, we have included a table of volumes on page 8.

Contacting the State Archives—When and whom?

When?

1. You submit a “Report on Records Destroyed” form when destroying records covered by general and/or specific schedules.
2. You need to prepare or revise specific schedules.
3. You need help with your records management duties.

Whom?

State Records Analysis Unit
Department of Archives and History
8301 Parklane Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29223-4905
Phone 803-896-6123
Fax 803-896-6138
We are on the Inter-Agency mailing list.

When?

1. You want to substitute microfilm (Form ARM-12 Microfilm Quality Certification For Records Disposition) for the original records. (Note: You must have a records schedule to do this.)
2. You need to store security microfilm of permanently valuable records.
3. You want information about the filming, processing, quality control, and duplicating services the State Archives provides.

Whom?

Micrographics Services
8301 Parklane Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29223-4905
Phone 803-896-6208
Fax 803-896-6138
We are on the Inter-Agency mailing list.

When?

1. You need to transfer permanent records to the State Archives using a general or specific schedule.
2. You need to transfer non-permanent records to the State Records Center for temporary storage under a specific schedule.

Whom?

State Records Center
1942-A Laurel Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Phone 803-898-9936
Fax 803-898-9981
We are on the Inter-Agency mailing list.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FORM REPORT ON RECORDS DESTROYED

Please read the instructions carefully before completing this form.

After completion, your agency must return this form to the State Archives, Records Services Branch, and retain a copy for reference to document the legal disposition of your records.

AGENCY means any state or local government entity.

This form should be used to report the destruction of records covered under a specific and/or general record retention schedule. Generally, this form should be completed by the agency records officer or authorized representative.

1. Enter your agency's name (Department of Health and Environmental Control) or the name of your political subdivision (Lexington County Sheriff's Office).
2. Leave block 2 blank. This block will be completed by SC Department of Archives and History Record Analysts upon receipt of this form by the Records Services Branch.
3. Enter any division or office identification which will clarify the records destroyed (Retirement System, State Law Enforcement Division).
4. Enter the date your agency prepares this form.
5. The official making the report should sign here. The approving authority must be the agency's chief administrative officer or authorized representative. In most state agencies, this authorized representative may be the agency records officer. In local agencies this authorized representative may be the manager, administrator, elected department head or other designated official.
6. Enter the exact record series title. Each series title should correspond to the one cited in the record retention schedule.
7. Enter the appropriate record series number for each record series destroyed.
8. Enter the earliest and latest dates covered by the records destroyed (2/1992-5/1993; or 1987-1990).
9. Enter the volume (in cubic feet) of records destroyed. *See 11 below.*
10. Enter the date (month and year) of destruction (3/1993; 1/1987; 12/1980).
11. Enter the total volume of records destroyed. Add figures entered in column 9.

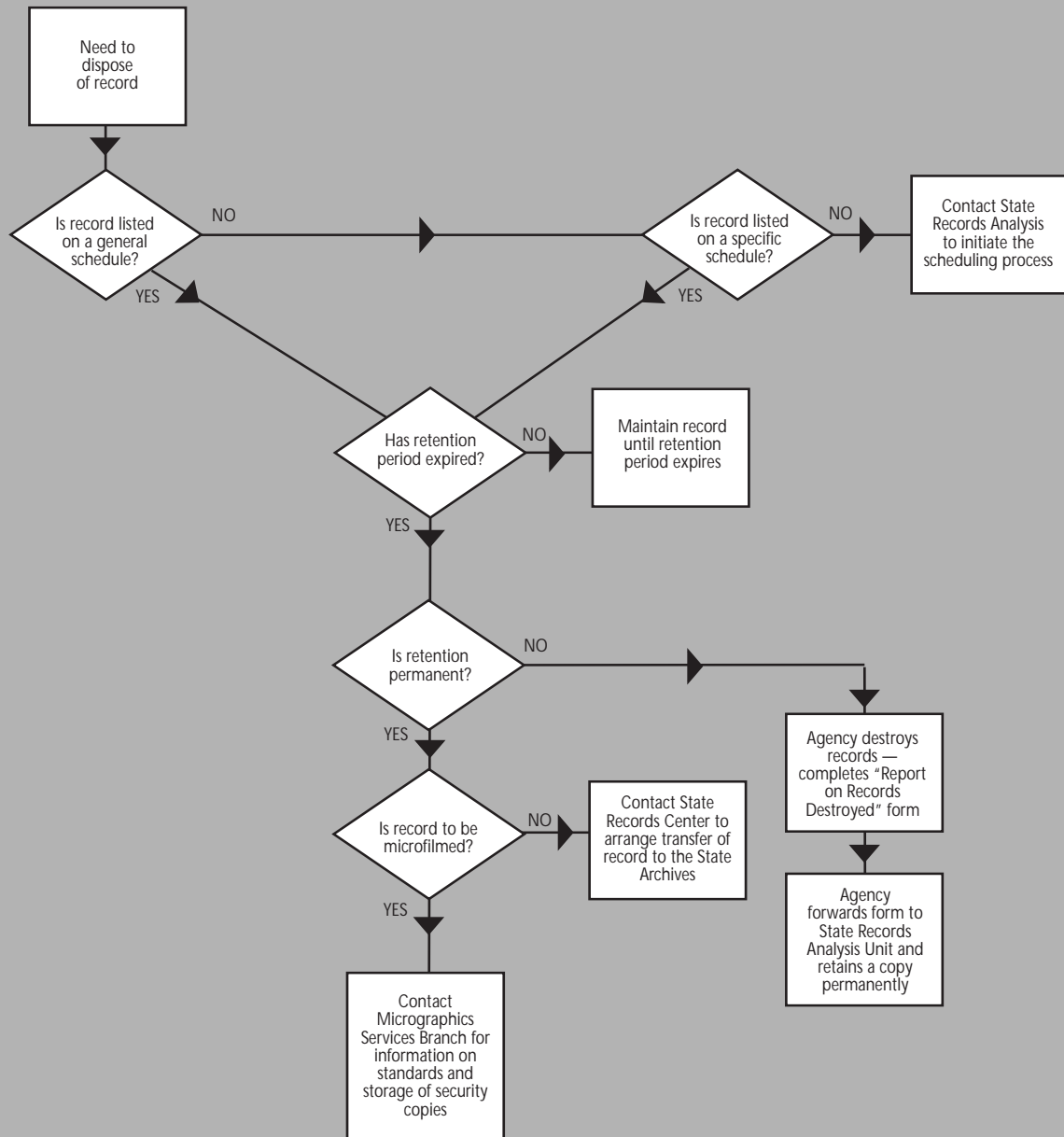
TABLE OF VOLUMES

	QTY.	ITEM/SIZE	CAPACITY
C A B I N E T S	1	vertical letter-size file drawer	1.5 cubic feet
	1	vertical legal-size file drawer	2.0 cubic feet
	1	lateral legal-size file drawer	2.5 cubic feet
B O X E S	1	standard Records Center box	1.0 cubic foot
S H E L V E S	1	letter-size open shelf—36" long	2.0 cubic feet
	1	legal-size open shelf—36" long	2.5 cubic feet
C A R D F I L E S	10	12" rows of 3" x 5" cards	1.0 cubic foot
	6	12" rows of 4" X 6" cards	1.0 cubic foot
	4	12" rows of 5" x 8" cards	1.0 cubic foot
	5	14" boxes of tab cards	1.0 cubic foot

CUBIC FOOT EQUIVALENCY FORMULA

$$\frac{L \times W \times H \text{ (in inches)}}{1728 \text{ inches}} = \text{cubic feet/unit}$$

Records disposal process



General Retention Schedule for State Administrative Records

12-300. Introduction and general matters; application of schedule.

The following general records retention schedule contains minimum retention periods for the official copy of the agency's records. These retentions and dispositions apply regardless of physical format, i.e., paper, microfilm, electronic storage, digital imaging, etc. Convenience, informational or duplicate copies are not governed by this regulation and may be destroyed when no longer needed for reference. To destroy records in accordance with this regulation, state agencies must complete and submit a report of records destroyed form to the State Archives after eligible records have been destroyed. These forms are available from the Department's Division of Archives and Records Management. State agencies must also contact the State Archives to transfer permanent records to the State Archives for archival retention. Before disposing of public records under this general schedule, state agencies are responsible for ensuring that records are no longer required for federal or state audits, for legal purposes, for litigation, for fiscal information, and/or for any other action. This general schedule supersedes all schedules approved previously for the same records series. However, state agencies may opt out of this general schedule, and request the continuing use of existing schedules or the establishment of specific retention schedules for their records when appropriate, necessary or in order to avoid conflict with other laws and regulations.

12-301. Annual Accountability Reports

A. Description: Used to determine whether an agency is effectively achieving its legislative mission and program objectives. This record series is prepared by all state agencies and submitted to the Budget and Control Board for distribution to the General Assembly and the Governor's Office. Information includes an agency's mission statement, program objectives, work performance measurement data, analysis of program cost allocations, and other related information. The record copy of this series is scheduled for permanent retention by the State Archives through the State Budget and Control Board's Office of Budget.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-302. Meeting Minutes (Executive Levels)

A. Description: Used to document the meetings of an agency's executive staff which includes the director, the deputy director, and the division directors. Information includes agenda, place, date, list of attendees, and a summary of discussions and decisions. Also included are informational attachments which are closely related to the meeting minutes.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: 3 years.
- (2) State Archives: Permanent.

12-303. Meeting Minutes (Non-Executive Levels)

A. Description: Used to document the meetings of agency staff below the agency director, deputy director, and division director levels. Meetings may also include non-agency attendees. Information includes agenda, location, date, list of attendees, attachments, and a summary of discussions and decisions.

B. Retention: 2 years; destroy.

12-304. Contracts

A. Description: Used to document the contractual relationship between agencies and service providers. Information includes the contract with description of the services to be provided, dates of the contract, signatures, and correspondence.

B. Retention: 3 years after cancellation or expiration of the contract; destroy.

12-305. Administrative Correspondence Files (Executive Levels)

A. Description: Correspondence is related to the administration of an agency or division. Communications concern coordination of programs, agency policy, and responsibilities of a non-routine nature that impact on the agency or its divisions. These letters are usually found at the agency director, deputy director and division director levels.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: 3 years after fiscal year. Microfilm optional.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-306. Administrative Files (Executive Levels)

A. Description: Document actions of an agency director, deputy director and division directors. Information includes memoranda and reports concerning agency policy, organizational and program development records, non-routine fiscal data, personnel information and related notes. These records reflect administration of policy, coordination of agency functions, and management of program activity.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: 3 years after fiscal year. Microfilm optional.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-307. Administrative Reference Files (Non-Executive Levels)

A. Description: Routine office management files retained below the agency director, deputy director and division director levels. Included are memoranda, reports, printed matter and other reference materials. Topics include: job activities, program material, general office information, professional associations, charitable affairs, parking for staff, disaster preparedness, and other related topics.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-308. Administrative Regulation Background Files

A. Description: Used for the general operation of agency programs. Information includes regulations; instructions ; other issuances that establish methods to administer an agency's mission, functions, and responsibilities ; and other related information.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: Until superseded.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-309. Agency Annual Reports

A. Description: Published report of agency activities made annually to the General Assembly. Information includes financial summaries, objectives, goals, and other data concerning the agency during the fiscal year. Most annual reports contain an organizational chart, along with brief narratives, and statistical information concerning each major section and division of the agency.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency's Copy: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Permanent (2 copies)
- (3) State Library: (15 copies)

12-310. Agency Publications

A. Description: Printed material published by state agencies for internal and external distribution. This series includes directories, manuals, research reports, surveys, and other agency publications (except annual report).

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency's Copy: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.
- (3) State Library: (15 copies).

12-311. Agency Organizational Charts

A. Description: Reflect the organizational structure of the agency and its divisions. Information includes a diagram which shows a systematic and symbolic arrangement of an agency's divisions and program areas by name and function.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency's Copy: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-312. Attorney General Opinions

A. Description: Official opinions issued by the Attorney General or his assistants. These are legal interpretations written upon request of an agency to guide in enforcing and obeying the law. Also included is related correspondence. The record copy of this series is scheduled for permanent retention by the State Archives through the Attorney General's office.

B. Retention: Until superseded and no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-313. Calendars

A. Description: Used to keep track of work related events and commitments of agency staff members. Information includes daily appointment books, calendars, and other records indicating dates for meetings and work activities.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-314. Computer Utilization Summaries

A. Description: Generated to determine staff use of an agency's computer systems. Information details the total time the system is used, amount of individual staff time the system is used, and total time work stations are used (including job queue and printers).

B. Retention: 3 years; destroy.

12-315. Conferences, Workshops, And Seminars (Agency Sponsored)

A. Description: Files concerning each conference, workshop or seminar sponsored by the agency. Information includes registration material, letters, brochures, lists of restaurants, hotel listings, and other related information.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-316. Deeds And Leases To State Property Files

A. Description: Document deeds and leases to real property owned or used by the state. Information includes description and location of the property, maps, sale agreements, land acquisition forms, deeds, lease agreements, and related correspondence. The record copies of deeds and leases are scheduled for permanent retention by the State Archives through the State Budget and Control Board's Office of General Services.

B. Retention: Until property is sold, disposed of, or relinquished, and is no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-317. General Correspondence (Non-Executive Levels)

A. Description: Routine correspondence created or retained below the levels of agency director, deputy director and division director. Letters and memoranda reflect communications regarding program procedures, general work activities, and responses to information requests.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-318. Information Technology Plans

A. Description: Prepared by state agencies outlining their anticipated needs for information technology. Plans reflect information requirements, equipment needs, service specifications, cost, and technology purchase requests. The record copy of this series is scheduled for permanent retention by the State Archives through the State Budget and Control Board's Office of Research and Statistics.

B. Retention: 3 years; destroy.

12-319. Internal Management Policy And Procedure Files

A. Description: Policies, procedural directives and manuals developed by the agency to govern its internal management functions such as payroll, procurement, personnel administration, equipment inventory, and other internal management matters.

B. Retention:

(1) Agency: Until superseded, updated, or no longer needed for reference.

(2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-320. Legislative Reference File

A. Description: Records pertaining to bills, prospective legislation and laws. Information includes bill and supporting material concerning proposed legislation, such as newspaper clippings, reports, and correspondence. The series also includes copies of approved legislation.

B. Retention:

(1) Agency: Until no longer needed for reference.

(2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-321. Litigation Case Files

A. Description: Document judicial proceedings, which involve the agency. Files include some or all of the following documents: affidavits, summons and complaints, responses, orders of dismissals, notice and general appeal, laws and regulations applying to a particular case, legal briefs, transcripts of proceedings, orders, court decisions, and related information. Portions of this series are scheduled for permanent retention by the State Archives through the Attorney General's office. Court records in this series are also available in the court having jurisdiction over these cases.

B. Retention:

(1) Agency: 6 years after the case is closed. Microfilm optional.

(2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-322. Mailing Lists

A. Description: Used to record the names and addresses of clients and other persons with whom the agency has regular contact. Information includes mailing lists, and registers concerning employees, officials, and constituents, with whom agency staff communicate regularly.

B. Retention: Until superseded; destroy.

12-323. Meeting Minutes (Boards And Commissions Of State Agencies)

A. Description: Records of official proceedings of state agency governing bodies. Information includes agenda, date, place, list of attendees, and a summary of discussion and decisions. Official minutes also include all informational attachments such as reports, surveys, proposals, studies and charts distributed to members for discussion, and for use in making decisions on agency policy, planning and administrative matters.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: 3 years. Microfilm optional.
- (2) State Archives: Permanent.

12-324. Motor Vehicle Insurance

A. Description: Record of motor vehicle insurance retained by an agency. It includes insurance policies which list effective policy dates, amounts of coverage, number of vehicles covered, and rate. Also included are notes, correspondence and other related information.

B. Retention: 1 year and until renewal of insurance policy; destroy.

12-325. Motor Vehicle Operations And Maintenance Files

A. Description: Files of motor vehicle operations and maintenance. Included are requests for state vehicles, vehicles inspection/use reports, motor vehicle accident reports, motor vehicle inventories, and other related information.

B. Retention: 3 years; destroy.

12-326. Permanent Improvement Files

A. Description: Files concern construction of and permanent improvements to the agency's facilities. Information includes project proposal, capital improvement requests, authorizations to execute construction contracts, cost estimates, construction contracts, related memoranda, correspondence, blueprints, and specifications.

B. Retention:

- (1) Records created before 1980:
 - (a) Agency: Until completion of construction project and no longer needed for reference.
 - (b) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.
- (2) Records created in 1980 and later: Until completion of construction project and no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-327. Photographs

A. Description: Photographic proofs and negatives of agency activities. Photographs may include identification according to time, place, and agency activity.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-328. Property Inventories

A. Description: Itemized lists of fixed assets (except land and buildings) completed by state agencies. Information includes inventories of equipment, furniture, and other similar property.

B. Retention: 3 years; destroy.

12-329. Public Relations File

A. Description: Information concerning agency publicity. Included are press releases, biographies, newspaper clippings, promotional materials, bulletins, broadcast scripts, photographs, visual documentation, and other related items.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-330. Disaster/Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Plans

A. Description: Document the plans for protection and reestablishment of agency services and equipment in case of disaster. Information includes plan, procedures, checklists, and emergency phone numbers and addresses.

B. Retention: Until superseded by revised plan; destroy.

12-331. Records Management Files

A. Description: Files related to an agency's records management program. Included are records retention schedules, guidelines, information concerning records inventory and scheduling, records transfers, microfilm applications, disposal notices, and other related data.

B. Retention:

- (1) Record Copy: In State Archives as scheduled.
- (2) Agency's Copy: Until superseded and no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-332. Speeches (Executive Levels)

A. Description: Drafts and final copies of speeches given by an agency director, deputy director and division directors. Speeches may concern policy issues, strategic planning, legislation concerning the agency, and other related topics.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: Until no longer needed for reference.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-333. Speeches (Non-Executive Levels)

A. Description: Drafts and final copies of speeches given by employees below the agency director, deputy director and division directors' level. Speeches concern program procedure, work activities, and related topics.

B. Retention: Until no longer needed for reference; destroy.

12-334. Surveys/Maps

A. Description: Developed by an agency to carry out its mission and function. Information concerns roads, boundaries, property lines, corners, monuments, road marker placements, structures, sites, and other related data.

B. Retention:

- (1) Agency: Until no longer needed for reference. Microfilm optional.
- (2) State Archives: Selection of needed documentation. Permanent.

12-335. Telephone Logs

A. Description: Listing of telephone calls made by agency personnel for a particular time period. Logs reflect date, time, caller, recipient of call, and nature of business discussed.

B. Retention: 3 years and until reconciliation of telephone billing, destroy.

12-336. Work Reports

A. Description: Reports of work activities performed by personnel carrying out regular or special duties. Series does not include published project reports or reports to the Governor or General Assembly. These documents reflect dates, person responsible for report, and a running account of activities performed.

B. Retention: 2 years or until summarized or superseded; destroy.