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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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## **Records Retention and Disposal**

**Policy Name:** Records Retention and Disposal

## **Policy Purpose**

This policy specifies the retention schedule and disposition procedures for East Tennessee State University (ETSU or University) Public Records.

## **Applicability**

This policy applies to all ETSU departments and divisions.

## **Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation**

The Associate Vice President of Financial Services/Comptroller is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the ETSU Office of Financial Services/Comptroller. The Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

## **Defined Terms**

*A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.*

### Agency

Any department, division, board, bureau, commission or other separate legislative branch and the judicial branch to the extent that it is constitutionally permissible.

### Confidential/Confidential Public Record

Any ETSU Public Record that has been designated Confidential by statute, including information or matters or Records considered to be privileged and any aspect of which access by the general public has been generally denied.

### Disposal/Disposition

Depending upon the context, Disposal/Disposition means:

1. The preservation of the original Records in whole or in part; or
2. Records preservation by photographic or other reproduction processes; or
3. Outright destruction of the Records.

**Policy Effective Date:** 03/10/25 • **Policy Revised:** Insert  
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### Public Records (Records)

All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, microfilm, electronic data processing files and output, sound recordings, or other material regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental Agency

### Records Disposition Authorization (RDA)

The official document utilized by an Agency head to request authority for the Disposition of Public Records. The Public Records Commission determines and orders the proper Disposition of State of Tennessee Public Records through the approval of Records Disposition Authorizations.

### Records Officer

ETSU's Records Officer is the Associate Vice President of Financial Services/Comptroller. The Records Officer is responsible for reviewing requests prior to Disposal to verify that Records are outside the State of Tennessee's retention period. The Records Officer is also responsible for reporting completed Records Disposals to the State of Tennessee, Records Management Division.

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### **Policy**

The Public Records Commission has set forth guidelines regarding the Disposal of institutional Public Records. The ETSU Records Officer, in accordance with the provisions of these procedures, must approve Disposal requests for all official University Public Records. A Records Disposal Authorization (RDA) form will be used to request authorization to Dispose of outdated Public Records. The form must be submitted to the ETSU Comptroller's Office for approval by the Records Officer prior to any disposition of Public Records.

Public Records will be retained for the balance of the indicated retention period. No Record shall be destroyed, however, so long as it pertains to any pending legal case, claim, or action; or to any federal or state audit until such actions have been concluded. Storage of Records shall comply with [State of Tennessee Archives Management standards](#).

Records approved for destruction shall be destroyed only by state-approved methods. Any Record designated Confidential shall be so treated in the maintenance, storage, and Disposition of such Confidential Records. These Records will be destroyed in such a manner that they cannot be read, interpreted, or reconstructed.

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### Procedures

#### 1. Requesting Records Disposal Authorization.

A Records Disposal Authorization (RDA) form will be used to request authorization to Dispose of outdated Public Records. The form may be accessed and submitted through the [Office of Financial Services/Comptroller](#).

- 1.1. The Records Officer must approve an RDA request before any Records Disposal may proceed.
- 1.2. A requestor may check on the status of a pending RDA request on the Dynamic Forms user portal.

#### 2. Disposal of Records.

Unless otherwise specified or required by law, Records may be imaged, microfilmed, or electronically reproduced and the paper copy destroyed upon verification of an archival quality reproduction. The microfilm, image, or electronic record is retained for the balance of the indicated retention period according to the standards specified in the [Public Records Commission's Electronic Records Policy](#).

##### 2.1. State-approved methods of Records destruction include:

- 2.1.1. Shredding.
- 2.1.2. Incineration.
- 2.1.3. Electronic data wiping/overwriting.
- 2.1.4. Magnetic degaussing.

#### 3. Record Retention Schedules

- 3.1. The State of Tennessee's Records classifications and retention schedules have been condensed into a single document *Records Classification Guide*. The [Records Classification Guide](#) provides a description of the Record type, corresponding State classification number (RDA, SW, or SW-U number), the retention period, and a description of the ending action for the Record (e.g., *destroy* or *keep permanently*).
- 3.2. The Records Classification Guide will be updated by the ETSU Records Officer as new Records classifications are created and/or updated by the State's Records Management Division.

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## **Applicable Forms and Websites**

[Office of Financial Services/Comptroller](#)

[Records Classification Guide](#)

[Public Records Commission's Electronic Records Policy](#)

[State of Tennessee Archives Management standards](#)

## **Authority and Revisions**

**Authority:** TCA § 49-8-203, et seq, T.C.A §§ 10-7-302, and 10-7-304.

**Previous Policy:** FP-09 Records Disposal

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.