
Transferring Archival Records: Benefits of Transferring Records to the Archives

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local agencies on how transferring records to the Washington State Archives benefits the agency.

Transferring your agency's archival records:

1. Protects the records

As records age, they require special care. The Archives is equipped to provide a safe and controlled environment for the storage of paper and electronic records. Archives staff have the unique training and tools needed to properly preserve fragile records, perform high-quality digital imaging when needed, and preserve electronic records by migrating data from older technologies to newer and more usable formats.

2. Saves money

Transferring archival records reduces costs by freeing up physical storage space and electronic space on servers, and by lowering the volume of electronic records that the agency needs to back up, restore, and migrate.

3. Reduces agency time spent on public records requests

Transferring your archival records to the Archives (and not retaining any copies) also transfers the legal responsibility for providing access to those records. If you receive a request for records that you have already transferred, you can just refer the requestor to the Archives. This can save valuable staff time and resources.

4. Promotes government transparency and access to Washington State history

The Archives collects, preserves, and makes available the valuable legal and historical records of the State of Washington. These records provide a vital account of public government in Washington State, beginning with the establishment of the Washington Territory in 1853 and continuing to the present day. The records are a rich resource for the personal and professional needs of citizens and government agencies, and contribute to government transparency.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**