

TOWN OF ULYSSES

Records Management
Procedures and Policy Manual

Adopted: 1/18/1994; Revised: 2002

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INTRODUCTION

The following Records Management Policies and Procedures have been approved and adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Ulysses effective January 18, 1994.

The Records Management Advisory Board consists of the Town Supervisor, the Town Board and the Town Clerk/RMO and will meet twice yearly to:

1. provide advice to the Records Management Officer on the development of the records management program;
2. review records that have reached the retention period to be destroyed.
3. review any new Town record series and identify those which should be archival;
4. provide advice on the preparation of storage and the storage of archival records.

SECTION I.

OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of the Town of Ulysses Records Management Program is to provide protection and a systematic control for the records created by the Town of Ulysses. Records Management is an administrative service that ensures the legal disposition of obsolete records, identifies, preserves, and encourages the use of archival records, provides efficient records storage and makes records available when needed.

By controlling all phases of records, from creation to final disposition, the Town of Ulysses will be able to reduce paperwork proliferation, have efficient access to requested information, provide documentation of compliance to State and Federal Courts and Agencies, and maintain historical organizational records.

The program is coordinated by the Town Clerk, who was designated as the Records Management Officer by the Town Board.

SECTION II.

DEFINITIONS:

Local Government Record-

Section 57.07 of the Consolidated Arts and Cultural Affairs Law defines a "public record" as: any book, paper, map, photograph, microphotograph or other information storage device, regardless of physical form or characteristic which is the property of the state or any state agency, department, division, board, bureau, commission, county, city, town, village, district or any subdivision thereof by whatever name designated in or on which any entry has been made or is required to be made by law, or which any officer or employee or any said bodies has received or is required to receive for filing.

Under this definition, local government records include practically any type of recorded information that local government officials create or receive in the course of their official duties.

SECTION III.

TYPES OF RECORDS

1. ACTIVE: Those records which are used on a frequent basis and which must be maintained because the records retention period as specified by the appropriate Record Retention and Disposition Schedule has not expired.
2. INACTIVE: Records referenced infrequently (less than once per month per file drawer).

Retained for fiscal, legal, administrative purposes. Not ready for final disposition.

3. ARCHIVAL: "Vital Records" are those that are essential to the continuing operation of the Town of Ulysses. They contain information that would be needed to resume and continue the operations of the Town after a major disaster such as a fire or flood, to protect the legal and financial interests of the Town, and to preserve the rights of the people. Vital records may include such records as:

Minutes
Fiscal accounts and accounting records
Tax rolls
Franchises
Maps and surveys
Highway and street designations/determinations/descriptions
Deeds/Easements
Marriage records
Records relating to outstanding indebtedness
Payrolls/Employee records
Insurance policies
Policies and Procedures
Building Permits

[Some, but not all, "vital records" are also "archival records". For instance, minutes, deeds/easements, original maps are archival and must be retained permanently. Fiscal accounts, employee files, insurance policies, however, are not archival records. They are vital records because they are essential for operation of the Town, but they lack sufficient administrative, legal, fiscal, or other values to warrant their permanent retention.]

SECTION IV.

CATEGORIES OF EFFECTIVE RECORDS MANAGEMENT

1. Uniform Filing System: Each department with the guidance of the Records Management Officer will create and maintain a basic uniform filing system by using one of the following:
 - A. Numeric: filed according to number.
 1. Appropriate for:
 - a. vouchers
 2. Requires an index.
 - B. Alphabetical: simple system/flexible and self indexing.
 1. Appropriate for
 - a. subject files
 - b. correspondence files
 - c. name files
 2. Can become unmanageable if too large.
 - C. Chronological: filing by date.
 1. Appropriate for:
 - a. some correspondence files
 2. Requires an index or date of activity.
2. Categorization of Records: Each department with the guidance of the Records Management Officer shall utilize a system of categorizing records. The Records Management Officer shall train and/or advise each department with the applicable Records Management Retention and Disposition Schedule.
 - A. Filing Procedures
 1. Original archival/vital/permanent records shall be labeled and turned over to the Records Management Officer for appropriate storage.
 2. Inactive documents shall be placed in records storage boxes, labeled and turned over to the Records/Management Officer for temporary storage.
 3. Active documents shall be filed within each department.
 4. Each Department shall complete an update of the inventory of all documents and records stored within their department using the inventory worksheets supplied by the Records Management Officer.
3. Purging: Annually, the Records Management Officer with the cooperation of each department will conduct a purge of each department's records.
 - A. Active records will be sorted for disposition or removal to storage cartons. Each storage carton shall be labeled on the outside with department name, series title/description, and the disposition date.
 - B. Inactive records that have reached their disposition date will be sorted out for disposition.

1. Records found to have reached their disposition date will be listed and removed from the inventory sheets. The records will be listed according to their location, file name, record date, and disposition date. The list will be turned over to the Records Management Officer for presentation to the Advisory Board for approval of disposition.
2. After approval of disposition by the Advisory Board the records shall be disposed of according to the accepted methods and standards of the New York State Archives and Records Administration. The Records Retention and Disposition Schedule MU-1 adopted by the Town Board shall be used in the determination of records retention within the Town of Ulysses.

4. Retrieval/Stored Records

- A. Archival/vital/permanent and inactive records can be retrieved for reference through written request by Town employees or officials, or by filing a Freedom of Information Form with the Town Clerk for the public. Whenever possible, information from archival records shall be retrieved from the microfiche copies of documents.

The request must include the title and record date, if available, description of record, date of request, signature and department of individual requesting record.

- B. Retrieval of the document shall only be made by the Records Management Officer and/or his/her Deputy. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL ANYONE REMOVE A RECORD.**

Under no circumstances shall any ORIGINAL RECORD be removed from the Town Hall. A copy shall be supplied upon request by the Records Management Officer, at a cost of \$.10/page. If interdepartmental use is required, the record must be returned to the Records Management Officer within three (3) business days.

5. Managing Electronic Files

- A. Personal Computers: The personal computer is a tool. It is used to create documents which become records. The main characteristic that differentiates a computer from other tools is the computer's ability to store documents.

Electronic records have values which are identical to those records in other formats (ie: legal, fiscal, administrative, research).

- B. Personal Computer Storage and Retention

1. The Town of Ulysses considers the hard/paper copy generated from personal computers as the final/original record for records retention.
2. Each week a backup onto disc will be done for each personal computer. The discs will be labeled by date, name, and department,

then given to the Records Management Officer who will inventory them and store them off-site.

SECTION V.

Equipment and Supplies

A. Filing Supplies

1. Acid free folders will be used for records deemed archival/permanent.
2. Acid free paper will be used for archival/permanent records such as minutes of meetings.
3. Records storage cartons shall be utilized. Acid free cartons will be used for records deemed archival/permanent.

SECTION VI.

Administration

A. Department heads will be responsible for the implementation of the Records Management Procedures and the Policies within their department, as well as the training of all new employees within their departments on the procedures and policies.

B. Elected officials, committee members, and board appointees are encouraged to contact the Records Management Officer to familiarize themselves with their responsibilities under the Records Management Procedures and Policies Program.

SECTION VII.

Right to Amend

This document is intended to create policies and procedures for the continuation of the Town of Ulysses Records Management Program. The policies and procedures set forth in this manual may be amended by the Town Board at any time, and in any respect.