

10.2 Record Retention and Storage Policy

Approved by President's Cabinet 3/22/16

Introduction: East Georgia State College recognizes the importance of a records management program: a systematic control of all records (regardless of storage media) from creation or receipt through processing, distribution, retrieval and maintenance to their ultimate disposition. Record retention and storage are essential components of the records management program. As a public entity, the college acknowledges its responsibility to create and maintain records of its operations, to reduce storage and maintenance costs through the use of technology and off campus storage, to preserve its historical records and to document the college's actions for purposes of accountability to the public. This policy is created to ensure that East Georgia State College's record retention and storage practices are in compliance with federal and state law, including the Georgia Open Records Act, the University System of Georgia policies, and external entities, such as accrediting bodies.

Definitions: "Records" means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books (except books in formally organized libraries), microfilm, magnetic tape, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in performance of functions by any agency.(OCGA 50-18-91(5). "Record retention schedules" define the minimum period of time that a specific type of record must be preserved. If not expressly stated in the retention schedule, the retention period is the Georgia statute of limitations for legal claims plus one year, applicable to that type of record.

Records Classification and Management: Record retention schedules are defined by the University System of Georgia, federal or state law. Records are classified into 14 categories and retention periods are set for records according to record type. See University System of Georgia Record Retention Schedule: http://www.usg.edu/records_management/documents/USG_retention_schedules2015.pdf

The college is not required to retain records beyond the applicable retention period; however, it may choose to do so depending on available resources. In such event, records retained beyond their applicable retention period must be produced in response to a valid subpoena or court order, Georgia Open Records Request, or other similar request pursuant to state or federal law or policy. Records designed as "permanent" must be transferred to the college's warehouse and designed as "archives" for long term preservation.

Records Management Officer: The college records management officer is the Registrar or his/her designee. The records management officer is responsible for regular and systematic implementation of the retention schedule and management of the institution's record keeping processes. The duties of the records management officer include developing and documenting procedures for quality recordkeeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the institution, regular implementation of retention schedules, coordinating the transfer and destruction of the college's records, suspending program operation when necessary, train staff in records management policies and procedures, implement a business disaster recovery plan and documenting program implementation through record keeping. Record keeping will include information to locate current records, to document records out of the custody of the college, to document the disposition of inactive records, to provide written procedures governing all record management activities, and to meet reporting requirements.

Suspending Program Operation: Even if normally permitted by the record retention schedule, the destruction of records must stop immediately upon notice by the college of pending or imminent litigation, government investigation or audit. The records management officer will work closely with the Chief Business Officer, Legal Counsel, Vice President of Information Technology, and Vice President of Institutional Advancement (EGSC Open Records Manager) to be notified when destruction must cease and to ensure that all departments are notified of the temporary suspension of the records management program.