

Definitions

Custodian

“Custodian” means the appointed or elected public officer who by the state constitution, state law, ordinance, or administrative policy is in charge of an office that creates or receives local government records.

Essential Record

“Essential record” means any district record necessary to the resumption or continuation of district operations in an emergency or disaster, to the re-creation of the legal and financial status of the district, or to the protection and fulfillment of obligations to the people of the state.

Local Government Record

“Local government record” means any document, paper, letter, book, map, photograph, sound or video recording, microfilm, magnetic tape, electronic medium, or other information-recording medium, regardless of physical form or characteristic and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under the laws of the state, created or received by a district or any of its officers or employees, pursuant to law or in the transaction of public business. The term does not include:

1. Extra identical copies of documents created only for convenience of reference or research by district officers or employees;
2. Notes, journals, diaries, and similar documents created by a district officer or employee for his or her own personal convenience;
3. Blank forms, stocks of publications, and library and museum materials acquired solely for the purposes of reference or display; or
4. Copies of documents in any media furnished to the public under the Open Records Act or other state law.

Permanent Record

“Permanent record” or “record of permanent value” means any local government record for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) is given as permanent.

Records Control Schedule

“Records control schedule” means a document prepared by or under the authority of a records management officer listing the records maintained by a district, their retention periods, and other records disposition information that the records management program in each district may require.

Records Management

“Records management” means the application of management techniques to the creation, use, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of records for the purposes of reducing the costs and improving the efficiency of recordkeeping. The term includes

the development of records control schedules, the management of filing and information retrieval systems, the protection of essential and permanent records, the economical and space-effective storage of inactive records, control over the creation and distribution of forms, reports, and correspondence, and the management of micrographics and electronic and other records storage systems.

Records Management Officer

“Records management officer” means the person identified under Local Government Code 203.025 as the records management officer. [See Designation, below]

Records Retention Schedule

“Records retention schedule” means a document issued by TSLAC under authority of Subchapter J, Chapter 441, Government Code, establishing mandatory retention periods for local government records.

Retention Period

“Retention period” means the minimum time that must pass after the creation, recording, or receipt of a record, or the fulfillment of certain actions associated with a record, before it is eligible for destruction.

Local Gov’t Code 201.003

Board’s Responsibilities

In implementing the Local Government Records Act (Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C), a board shall:

1. Establish, promote, and support an active and continuing program for the efficient and economical management of all district records;
2. Cause policies and procedures to be developed for the administration of the program under the direction of the records management officer;
3. Facilitate the creation and maintenance of district records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the district and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the district, the state, and persons affected by the district’s activities;
4. Facilitate the identification and preservation of district records that are of permanent value;
5. Facilitate the identification and protection of essential district records; and
6. Cooperate with TSLAC in its conduct of statewide records management surveys.

Local Gov’t Code 203.021

**Custodians of
Records**

In implementing the Local Government Records Act, district custodians of records shall:

1. Cooperate with the records management officer in carrying out the policies and procedures established by a district for the efficient and economical management of records and in carrying out the requirements of the Local Government Records Act;
2. Adequately document the transaction of district business and the services, programs, and duties for which they and their staff are responsible; and
3. Maintain the records in their care and carry out the preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition of the records only in accordance with the policies and procedures of the district's records management program and the requirements of the Local Government Records Act and rules adopted under it.

Local Gov't Code 203.022

**Records
Management Officer**

A board shall designate an individual or an office or position as the records management officer for the district.

Designation

The name, office, or position of the records management officer shall be entered into the minutes of the board and filed by the records management officer with the director and librarian of TSLAC within 30 days after the date of the designation.

Any subsequent designations of a new individual or a new office or position shall be entered into the minutes and reported to TSLAC in the same manner as the original designation.

If the order designating a records management officer designates an office or position rather than an individual, a new holder of that office or position must file the holder's name with TSLAC within 30 days after the date of assuming the office or position.

Local Gov't Code 203.025

Duties

In implementing the Local Government Records Act, the records management officer shall:

1. Assist in establishing and developing policies and procedures for a district's records management program;
2. Administer the records management program and provide assistance to the custodians in order to reduce costs and improve record-keeping efficiency;

3. In cooperation with the custodians of records, prepare and file records control schedules, amended schedules, and lists of obsolete records, as required by the Local Government Records Act;
4. In cooperation with the custodians of records, prepare or direct the preparation of requests for authorization to destroy records, when such requests are required under the Local Government Records Act;
5. In cooperation with the custodians of records, identify and take adequate steps to preserve district records of permanent value;
6. In cooperation with the custodians of records, identify and take adequate steps to protect essential district records;
7. In cooperation with the custodians of records, ensure that the maintenance, preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition of records is carried out in accordance with a district's records management program and the requirements of the Local Government Records Act and rules adopted under it;
8. Disseminate to the board and custodians of records information concerning state laws, administrative rules, and government policies relating to a district's records; and
9. In cooperation with the custodians of records, establish procedures to ensure that the handling of records is carried out with due regard for the duties and responsibilities of custodians that may be imposed by law and the confidentiality of information in records to which access is restricted by law.

Local Gov't Code 203.023

**Records
Management
Program**

A board by ordinance or order shall establish a records management program to be administered by the records management officer. The ordinance or order must provide methods and procedures to enable the board, custodians, and the records management officer to fulfill the statutory duties and responsibilities concerning management and preservation of records. The ordinance or order may prescribe any policies or procedures for the operation of the records management program that are consistent with the requirements of the Local Government Records Act and rules adopted under it. A copy of the ordinance or order must be filed by the records management officer with TSLAC within 30 days after the date of its adoption. *Local Gov't Code 203.026(a)-(c)*

**Records Control
Schedules**

The records management officer shall prepare and file with TSLAC a records control schedule listing the following records and establishing a retention period for:

1. All records created or received by the district;
2. Any record no longer created or received by the district that is still in its possession and for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC has not expired; and
3. Any record no longer created or received by the district that is still in its possession and for which the retention period on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC has expired but which will not be destroyed.

In lieu of filing a records control schedule, the records management officer may file with TSLAC a written certification of compliance that the district has adopted records control schedules that comply with the minimum requirements established on records retention schedules issued by TSLAC.

The board shall require in the ordinance or order establishing the records management program the review or approval of a records control schedule or amended schedule by the officers of the district as it considers necessary.

Local Gov't Code 203.041

Retention Periods

A retention period for each record on the records control schedule shall be determined by the board or under its direction. A retention period may not be less than a retention period prescribed by state or federal law, regulation, or rule of court; or a retention period for the record established on a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC. *Local Gov't Code 203.042*

TSLAC Retention
Schedules

TSLAC has adopted the following retention schedules, among others: Local Schedule GR—Records Common to All Governments, Local Schedule EL—Records of Elections and Voter Registration, Local Schedule TX—Records of Property Taxation, and Local Schedule SD—Records for Public School Districts. These schedules establish mandatory minimum retention periods for the records listed. *13 TAC 7.125*

Note: [Local government records retention schedules](#)¹ are available on the TSLAC website.

TSLAC Review

If the director and librarian of TSLAC or designee accepts the records control schedule, amended schedule, written certification of

compliance, or amended certification for filing, the acceptable records control schedule may be used as the basis for the destruction of records listed on it without additional notice from the director and librarian.

If the director and librarian or designee rejects the records control schedule, amended schedule, written certification of compliance, or amended certification for filing, the reasons for the rejection shall be stated in writing within a reasonable time to the records management officer and the schedule, amended schedule, written certification, or amended certification shall be corrected and resubmitted.

Local Gov't Code 203.043(a), (b)

**Destruction of
Records**

A district record may be intentionally destroyed under any of the following conditions:

1. The record is listed on a records control schedule filed with TSLAC and either its retention period has expired or it has been microfilmed or electronically stored in accordance with legal requirements;
2. The record appears on a list of obsolete records approved by TSLAC;
3. A destruction request is filed with and approved by TSLAC for a record not listed on an approved control schedule;
4. A court issues an expunction order for the destruction or obliteration of the records, pursuant to state law; and
5. The records are defined as exempt from scheduling or filing requirements or listed as exempt in a records retention schedule issued by TSLAC.

Local Gov't Code 202.001

Exceptions

A district record the subject matter of which is known by the custodian to be the subject of litigation may not be destroyed until the litigation is settled. A district record that is subject to a request under the Texas Public Information Act, Chapter 552, Government Code, may not be destroyed until the request is resolved. *Local Gov't Code 202.002*

A district shall not destroy a student's education record, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the record. *34 C.F.R. 99.10(e)* [See FL]

Recordkeeping	As a board may require, the records management officer shall keep accurate lists of records destroyed, their volume, and other information of records management activities. <i>Local Gov't Code 203.046</i>
Preservation of Records	Permanent records shall be stored under conditions that meet the requirements of 13 Administrative Code 7.164.
Permanent Records	
Microfilming	District records may be maintained on microfilm in addition to or instead of paper or other media, subject to the requirements of Chapter 204, Local Government Code and rules adopted by TSLAC. <i>Local Gov't Code 204.002</i>
Electronic Storage	District record data may be stored electronically in addition to or instead of source documents in paper or other media, subject to the requirements of Chapter 205, Local Government Code and rules adopted by TSLAC. <i>Local Gov't Code 205.002</i>
Records Offenses	A board member or district employee commits an offense if the board member or employee knowingly or intentionally violates Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C (regarding local government records) or rules adopted under it by destroying or alienating a local government record in contravention of Local Government Code Subtitle C or by intentionally failing to deliver records to a successor in office as provided by Local Government Code 201.006(a). <i>Local Gov't Code 202.008</i>
Destruction or Alienation of Record	
Tampering with Governmental Record	A person commits an offense if the person: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Knowingly makes a false entry in, or false alteration of, a governmental record;2. Makes, presents, or uses any record, document, or thing with knowledge of its falsity and with intent that it be taken as a genuine governmental record;3. Intentionally destroys, conceals, removes, or otherwise impairs the verity, legibility, or availability of a governmental record;4. Possesses, sells, or offers to sell a governmental record or a blank governmental record form with intent that it be used unlawfully;5. Makes, presents, or uses a governmental record with knowledge of its falsity; or6. Possesses, sells, or offers to sell a governmental record or a blank governmental record form with knowledge that it was obtained unlawfully.

It is an exception to the application of item 3, above, that the governmental record is destroyed pursuant to legal authorization or transferred under Government Code 441.204. With regard to the destruction of a local government record, legal authorization includes compliance with the provisions of Local Government Code Title 6, Subtitle C.

Penal Code 37.10

Federal
Investigations

Whoever knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes a false entry in any record, document, or tangible object with the intent to impede, obstruct, or influence the investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States or any bankruptcy case, or in relation to or contemplation of any such matter or case, shall be fined, imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both. *18 U.S.C. 1519*

¹ Local Government Retention Schedules: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slr/recordspubs/localretention.html>