



Our Mission & History

- Established in 1905 as the Arkansas History Commission to survey public records in the state
- The third oldest state archives established in the US
- Agency established by Act 304 of 1909 to:
 - Preserve official records of the state
 - Collect and preserve historical materials relating to Arkansas and its people
- Currently holds the largest collection of Arkansas historical materials in existence
- In 2005 and 2010, regional branch archives opened at Washington, AR and Powhatan, AR
- Those agencies focus on collecting materials on northeast and southwest Arkansas
- Act 3 (2016) officially renamed agency as Arkansas State Archives

Locations, Operating Hours & Policies

Arkansas State Archives

One Capitol Mall, Little Rock

Open Monday-Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives

11 Seventh Street, Powhatan, AR 7258

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives

201 AR-195 , Washington, AR 71862

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Collections at all locations are open to the public during operating hours
- To register as a researcher, a valid photographic ID will be required
- For additional information, please see ASA Rules and Regulations

Records Retention in Arkansas

Act 918 of 2005 concerns the retention of public records in Arkansas

- The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration has provided these minimal guidelines to govern the retention and disposition of the most common types of agency records.
- Similarly, DF&A has also provided general guidelines for electronic records retention.

Neither set of guidelines nor Act 918 provides for the preservation of records having permanent value in the state archives.

- As of January 1, 2016, the Arkansas State Archives preserves only about 13% of state agency records.
- Many official state records have been lost, destroyed, or donated to organizations where they may not be publicly accessible.
- Preserving records at the Arkansas State Archives ensures that:
 - Your agency's history will not be lost
 - The goal of governmental accountability to the public is served
 - Governmental efficiency is promoted by centralizing non-current state records in one location designed for records storage
 - Manpower used to care for state records is used judiciously and effectively

Governor's Memorandum, 2016

- On February 17, 2016, Governor Asa Hutchinson issued a memo to the directors of state agencies, offices and departments.
- Memo declares 13% of state agencies working with the state archives to be "unacceptable"
- Mandates that state entities work with the state archives to preserve non-current records that may have long-term value

What is an Archival Record?

The Society of American Archivists defines archival records as:

Materials created or received by . . . an organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs that are preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator.

A public record is defined as:

1. Data or information in a fixed format that was created or received by a government agency in the course of business and that is preserved for future reference.
2. Records filed with a government agency to give constructive notice.
3. Government records that are not restricted and are accessible to the public.

Agency Records That May Have Archival Value

- Administrative records
- Meeting records, such as minutes, notes, agendas
- Correspondence – paper and electronic
- Memos
- Records involving agency rules, such as regulations, policies, procedures, and directives
- Certain financial records
- Annual reports
- Budgets
- Audit reports
- Campaign finance
- Grants
- Legal Records
 - Contracts
 - Case files
 - Codes
 - Policies
 - Statutes
 - Licensing and accreditations
- Historical Records
 - Maps
 - Blueprints
 - Pamphlets
 - Photographs
 - Vital records
 - Artifacts

Transferring Records to the Arkansas State Archives

- Each agency will designate a liaison(s) to the state archives
- Responsibilities of liaison:
 - Initiating transfer through State Archives Collections Manager
- Overseeing preparation of records for transfer
 - Packing
 - Creating box-level inventory
- Signing off on Records Transfer paperwork
- Contact State Archives to perform records assessment
- Pack records designated for transfer to state archives
 - State Archives can provide storage cartons if your agency cannot supply
- Create an inventory of the contents of each box following sample guide provided by State Archives
- Complete Records Transfer Form
 - Refer to DFA State Records Retention Schedules for Record Number
 - For categories of records not represented in schedules, leave first column blank
- Contact Archival Manager 5 days in advance to arrange records pick-up

Caring for Records in Your Custody

- Records still in use in state offices should be kept onsite at the individual agencies.
- Since these records may someday be designated as
- “archival” there are some basic steps agencies should take to ensure protection and survival of records.
- These basic steps pertain to:
 - Where records are stored
 - How records are organized and housed
 - Who has access to records

Good Records Storage Practices

- Do not store records near sources of water (i.e., under pipes) or in basements that may flood
- Do not store records directly on the floor – store boxes on metal shelving or on pallets
- If you must store records in a humid environment, install a portable dehumidifier(s).
- Mold can grow in a climate that is too warm and too wet.
 - The ideal temperature and humidity for paper is 55-68° F and 35-50%relative humidity.
 - A hygro-thermometer can help you monitor fluctuations in your temperature and humidity and is relatively inexpensive.
- Store records in areas with fire suppression systems – wet paper can be salvaged if you act quickly. Burned records are rarely salvageable.
- Light exposure will fade paper. Storage in boxes or file cabinets can protect paper from light fading.
 - Displaying original records is not recommended; use a color copy instead!
- Remember that media, like film, tapes and computer data, has a shorter shelf life – don't keep these items in storage too long or you may permanently lose the contents!

Organizing and boxing records

- Generally, office filing systems will be retained by the State Archives after transfer.
- Clearly labeled folders will help you create the records transfer form and provide better public access to your records. Examples:
 - Director's Correspondence, 1963-1975
 - Annual Reports, 1968-1972
- Storage in folders in file cabinets is acceptable for working files
- Storage in file cabinets is temporarily acceptable for non-current records
 - File folders sold at office supply stores are generally not "archival" – i.e., they have a high acid content
 - Over time the acid in the folders can transfer onto the documents inside causing discoloration and fading
- If you have files that you want to store long-term, record storage cartons are recommended over banker's boxes.
- Not all records can be stored in boxes. If your agency has records with unique storage needs, contact us for a consultation!

Access to Agency Records

- Agency records can be lost due to lack of control over who has access to them
- Limit who has access to your agency records
- Implement a system for checking-out records to track location if multiple people need access to agency records
- If records are stored in a shared storage space, such as a basement or warehouse, implement all the security controls possible to safeguard your records:
 - Keep file cabinets locked
 - Create an inventory of stored records so you will know what you have –this will be useful later when transferring to the archives
 - Keep all records in secure containers
 - Don't leave loose material or open boxes for anyone to access
 - If non-current records are occasionally retrieved, designate a person to be responsible for paging and returning to the correct location

Managing Electronic Records

What is an electronic record?

- A records created, communicated and maintained by means of computer technology
 - These may be “born digital” (created using computer technology)
- Examples:
 - Microsoft Word documents
 - Excel spreadsheets
 - Access databases
 - Digital photographs
- Or they may have been converted into digital form from an original format, such as:
 - Photographic prints scanned as TIFFs or JPEGs
 - Paper documents scanned as PDFs
 - Cassette tape recordings converted to MP3 files

Challenges of Preserving Electronic Records

- Electronic formats have shorter life spans, making them harder to preserve than paper records
- Preserving electronic records depends on:
 - Availability of software -- who uses WordStar or WordPerfect anymore?
 - Availability of hardware – does your office have a PC with a floppy disk drive, or a Betamax tape player?
- If records are not properly managed and preserved, organizations risk losing important and historically significant information.

How can the Arkansas State Archive help?

- The Arkansas State Archives is staffed by information professionals who routinely work with a wide range of archival formats, including media and electronic records.
- The State Archives has acquired an electronic records management system, Preservica© to assist state agencies with the preservation of electronic records that have long-term value.
- Through Preservica©, electronic records can be organized, preserved, described, and migrated to ensure that they never become unreadable.
- Preservica© also has built-in features to ensure that documents are the original versions and not altered, important for files having legal value.
- Preservica is a secure, cloud-based system for records management and preservation that enables users to access information 24/7 from any PC.

How can your agency practice good electronic records management?

- Organize your electronic records using a standardized file-naming system. Examples:

Name	Date modified	Type
Commissioner_Appointments	6/10/2016 12:10 PM	File folder
Commissioner_Lists	6/10/2016 12:10 PM	File folder
Correspondence	6/10/2016 12:10 PM	File folder
Director_Mtg_Notes	6/10/2016 12:10 PM	File folder
Meeting_Minutes_Final	6/10/2016 12:10 PM	File folder
Meeting_Packets	6/16/2016 4:47 PM	File folder
Other	11/20/2015 3:35 PM	File folder

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
AHC_Minutes_20151210	2/29/2016 4:57 PM	Microsoft Word D...	21 KB
AHC_Minutes_20160310	6/3/2016 5:53 PM	Microsoft Word D...	32 KB
AHC_Minutes_20160310	6/6/2016 9:14 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...	235 KB

- Save files using open, uncompressed, non-proprietary file formats, in other words files that can be opened without the use of a specific software or program:
 - XML
 - TIFF
 - PNG
 - JPEG 2000
 - MPEG
 - WAV
 - CSV
- PDFs are acceptable for saving records in use, but be advised that backwards compatibility of PDFs with Adobe is limited to a few generations.
- Provide for secure backup storage of your valuable files in dispersed locations.
- Make sure you backup storage is backed up frequently – automatic backup is ideal.
- If you have files on storage media you cannot access, who you gonna call? The State Archives!
- We can work with you to transfer your files having long-term value into Preservica© before the information is gone forever!