



Pharr Literacy Center Records Management

I. What is records management? It is the systematic planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities involved in adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of a business entity. Records management addresses the life cycle of records, i.e., the period of time that records are in the custody of the business entity. The life cycle usually consists of three stages:

- Creation or receipt
- Maintenance and use
- Disposition

Tools for maintaining and using records include file plans, indexes, controlled vocabularies, taxonomies, data dictionaries, and access and security procedures. The main tool used to manage the disposition of records is the records retention schedule.

II. Who is responsible for records management? A records manager ensures that everyone within the organization follows the retention schedule and understands the records process from creation to destruction of records and recognizes it as an integral part of any business entity. Within this organization, the Sites Coordinator will serve as the records manager and will instruct her staff as to how to maintain and dispose of the records in the central office of PLP. All employees and volunteers have a responsibility towards records management to:

- A. Create records needed to do the business of the corporation, records business decisions and actions taken, and document activities for which they are responsible.
- B. Take care of records so that information can be found when needed. This means setting up good directories and files, and filing materials (in whatever format) regularly and carefully in a manner that allows them to be safely stored and efficiently retrieved when necessary.

III. What are the benefits of records management? Records enable and support an entity's work to fulfill its mission. Every organization must address well-defined objectives that add value, either by achieving the organization's goals or by reducing costs. Since records contain information, a valuable resource, it is essential to take a systematic approach to the management of records. Records management:

- A. Contributes to the smooth operation of your agency's programs by making the information needed for decision making and operations readily available;
- B. Helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner;



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- C. Facilitates effective performance of activities throughout an agency;
- D. Protects the rights of the agency, its employees, and its customers;
- E. Provides continuity in the event of a disaster;
- F. Protects records from inappropriate and unauthorized access;
- G. Meets statutory and regulatory requirements including archival, audit, and oversight activities;
- H. Provides protection and support in litigation;
- I. Allows quicker retrieval of documents and information from files;
- J. Improves office efficiency and productivity;
- K. Provides better documentation more efficiently;
- L. Supports and documents historical and other research;
- M. Frees up office space for other purposes by moving inactive records to storage facilities; and,
- N. Avoids unnecessary purchases of office equipment.