

Records and Information Management Program Manual



City of
Avondale

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Authority.....	4
Objectives.....	4
Records Management Duties and Responsibilities.....	5
Ownership of Records.....	7
What are records?.....	8
Retention, Storage, Destruction and Security.....	12
Electronic Records.....	14
Records Purge Days.....	16
Document Standards – Managing Active Records.....	17
Public Records Requests.....	19

City of Avondale

Records and Information Management Program Manual

All records received or generated by officials, employees, or representatives of the City of Avondale in the performance of their duties shall be maintained in accordance with the provisions set forth in this manual.

Introduction

Records maintained by local governments are among the most valuable resource in their care. They are essential for conducting business and are the official documentation of legally binding decisions and actions of the government. State law (A.R.S. §41-151.14) requires every municipality to establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of records, and to appoint an individual to manage the program in accordance with all applicable statutes. The designated individual oversees the program to ensure that records retention and disposition schedules are maintained and adhered to, and that all reporting requirements are met. In an effort to comply with state law the City of Avondale has established a citywide records management program.

The City Records Administrator, under the authority of the City Clerk, is responsible for the day to day oversight of the City of Avondale Records and Information Management Program to ensure compliance with state law. Through an ongoing Records Management Program, the Records Administrator provides assistance, and support to departments to ensure schedules are followed, destructions are properly documented, reported, and a file inventory exists. The City Records Administrator works closely with the Records Management Officers (RMO) in each department to inventory records and ensure records are maintained in accordance with established procedures and the state approved retention schedule. The Records Administrator also serves as the liaison to the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR).

This manual was prepared by the City Clerk's Office to provide written procedures for complying with state law and the city's records management policies and procedures. This manual contains policies and procedures necessary to ensure the effective organization, maintenance, storage, retrieval, security, and disposal of City of Avondale records. It will provide the City of Avondale with the ability to maintain records in an identifiable and accessible manner in order to fulfill public, legal, vital, and historical requirements of the preservation of public records, as set forth by law.

The Records Management Program is applicable to all departments, elected officials, employees, volunteers, and representatives of the City of Avondale.

Authority

Public Records Management (ARS §41-151.14) – Directs each governing body within the state to establish a records management program, provides a definition for “records management,” and sets forth the classification and penalty for violating the statute.

Definition of Records (ARS §41-151.18) – please turn to page eight this manual, “What are Records?” for the definition.

Destruction of Records without authorization (ARS §38-421) – Declares the destruction of public records by a public office without authorization a class 4 felony and by persons other than a public officer, a class 6 felony. Stealing, mutilating, defacing, altering, falsifying, removing, or secreting public records are also felony offenses.

Destruction of Records with Authorization (ARS §41-151.19) – Records determined to be of no legal, administrative, historical or other value shall be disposed of by such method as the state library may specify. A report of records destruction that includes a list of all records disposed of shall be filed at least annually with the state library on a form prescribed by the ASLAPR.

Preservation of Public Records (ARS §41-151.15) – Declares all records made or received by public officials of the State in the course of their public duties to be the property of the State. Public records are in no sense personal property, nor are they the property of a specific agency or political subdivision. The state also prohibits the destruction or disposition of any public record unless ASLPR has determined that the record has no further administrative, legal, fiscal, research, or other value.

Anti-Identification procedures (ARS §41-4172) – Requires government agencies to ensure that the personal identifying information of individuals or businesses, collected or obtained by the agency, is secure and cannot be accessed or viewed unless authorized by law.

Discarding and disposing of records containing personal identifying information; civil penalty; enforcement; definition (ARS §44-7601) – Requires the city to ensure that records containing personal information, as defined in the statute, are not discarded or disposed of without first redacting the personal information or destroying the records.

Objectives of the Records Management Program

The primary goal of the Records Management Program is to provide for efficient, economical, and effective control over the creation, distribution, maintenance, use, preservation, and disposition of all City of Avondale records, regardless of physical form or characteristic.

To be an effective, functional program, the Records Management Program must meet the following objectives:

1. Develop and maintain a current inventory (file plan) of all existing records, to include all media formats.
2. Evaluate the retention value for each record series, to include all forms or characteristics of that record. (This may be based on statutory, regulatory or audit requirements, and/or practical need or value.)
3. Determine how the record is to be kept, stored or preserved. This may include using paper, microfilm, optical imaging or electronic retention, depending on the nature of the records series. (i.e. high retrieval rate, permanent or archival)
4. Provide periodic reviews of records and their retention periods to ensure proper disposition is in effect.
5. Provide for the periodic review and update of the Records Management Manual.
6. Provide an Annual Audit Report (calendar year) to the City Manager via the City Clerk's Office.
7. Provide the necessary support to ensure an efficient citywide records management program.
8. Develop a process to evaluate, identify, preserve and protect the City's historical and vital documents.

Records Management – Duties and Responsibilities

To ensure a successful Records Management Program, each participant plays a key role in managing their records in an accurate and comprehensive manner. To accomplish this goal, the following areas of responsibilities have been assigned:

- **City Clerk** - The City Clerk is the Chief Records Management Officer and Custodian of Records for the City of Avondale and is responsible for administering the City's Records Management Program.
- **City Records Administrator** - The City Records Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the City's Records Management Program and serves as the permanent Chair of the Records Management Team. The City Records Administrator will work closely with the IT Department and the City Attorney's office to develop, approve and apply standards for the records program (electronic and paper).

The City Records Administrator Duties:

- a. Oversees the day-to-day operation of City's Records Management Program to ensure compliance with the law.
- b. Serves as the Liaison with the Arizona State Library Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR).
- c. Assists individual departments in establishing an internal records program for active and inactive records.

- d. Prepares and maintains the City's Records Management Manual.
 - e. Provides training in Records Management fundamentals.
 - f. Keeps Records Management site in the city's ACES intranet current. (Updates, retention schedules, forms and etc.)
 - g. Files destruction reports with the ASLAPR.
 - h. Files requests for document imaging with the ASLAPR and monitors all authorizations to ensure compliance.
 - i. Maintains contract with off-site storage vendor.
 - j. Submits File Inventory to the ASLAPR.
 - k. Assists departments and offices of the City in the identification and preservation of the City's historic and vital records.
 - l. Makes recommendations on budgetary needs for Records Management Program.
 - m. Drafts, revises, and communicates the guidelines and procedures for the management and disposal of departmental records.
- **Department Director (or Designee)** – Department Director (or designee) is responsible for ensuring that the department records management goals and objectives are met. This includes maintaining the department's records according to Arizona Revised Statutes and the established policies and procedures contained in the City of Avondale's Records Management Manual.

Each Department Director shall designate one or more persons to act as a Records Management Officer (RMO) and notify the City Records Administrator of this designation, or any change in their department's RMO designation. The appointee shall have the responsibility and authority to carry out all of the duties of the RMO.

- **Information Technology Director** – Information Technology Director is responsible for the day to day operation of the electronic systems that store records. The IT Director shall work in conjunction with the Records Administrator to ensure that electronic public records are properly managed, protected and appropriately preserved for as long as they are required for business purposes.
- **Records Management Team** – The Records Management Team is comprised of at least one representative from every department. Large departments may have more than one. These representatives are responsible for the duties of the Records Management Officer (RMO). The goal of the Records Management Team is to coordinate, uniformly administer, and improve records management throughout the city.
- **City Clerk Assistant II** – City Clerk Assistant II assists the Records Administrator with the day to day clerical functions associated with the records management program by maintaining data bases for file room, archival storage and etc. The City Clerk Assistant II will also be a permanent member of the Records Management Team.

- **Records Management Officer** – The Records Management Officer (RMO) is responsible for coordinating the records management responsibilities for their respective department.

RMO(s) duties:

- a. Maintain department or division records in a neat and orderly manner to facilitate the access, maintenance, storage, security, microfilming, optical imaging, and disposal of records in compliance with state law.
 - b. Identify and transfer inactive records to the offsite facility.
 - c. Identify documents meeting destruction requirement guidelines, prepare any required forms or reports regarding the destruction, and ensure their destruction is complete after receiving authorization to do so from the Records Administrator.
 - d. Prepare all records management related forms and reports as necessary
 - e. Work with the Records Administrator to ensure records management compliance by following the records management guidelines to the best of their ability.
 - f. Serve as a member of the Records Management Team and act as a liaison between their department and the City Clerk’s Office.
 - g. Train newly assigned RMO’s for their department or office should they be re-assigned, transferred, or promoted and relieved of their RCO duties, when possible.
- **City Employees** – All City employees shall adhere to the City’s Records Management Policies and Procedures. Employees are responsible for evaluating their own records to determine whether it is a record or non-record and its retention period. Employees are expected to treat records within their possession with care understanding that some information needs to be retained for many years or even permanently.

Ownership of City Records

All records created, received, or maintained by the City of Avondale departments, employees in relation to city’s mission, goals, objectives, or business operations are the property of the State pursuant to A.R.S.§41-151.15. No City of Avondale employee has, by virtue of his or her position, any personal or property right to or property interest in such records, even though he or she may be named as the author, recipient, or custodian of them.

Employees may be allowed to remove city records temporarily from the office for the sole purpose of performing specific duties for the city. They must return such records promptly when that purpose is fulfilled or earlier when instructed to do so. Employees may not take any city records or copies of such records when they retire, resign, or otherwise terminate employment. Employees who have been authorized to remove city records from the office must return them when they retire, resign or are otherwise terminated. Employees must notify their RMO and copy the City Records Administrator anytime a record will be “checked – out” for more than one month.

Records that are confidential or investigative in nature should never be removed from the office and must be stored in a lockable container.

What are Records?

Records are: *"...all books, papers, maps, photographs or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, including prints or copies of such items produced or reproduced on film or electronic media pursuant to section §41-151.16, made or received by any governmental agency in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by the agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organizations functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the government; or because of the informational and historical value of data contained therein."* (A.R.S §41-151.15)

It is frequently assumed that records are only paper which is not necessarily true. The statute defines records as all forms of media "regardless of physical form or characteristics." Records can be paper, book, microfilm, card, magnetic tape, disk, map, or any copy or printout that has been created, received, or used by an organization as evidence of its activities. Records may include computer based records, still photographs, motion pictures, audio and video recordings, charts, maps, drawings, plans, micrographics and more.

Electronic Records - Electronic records are a document of writing comprised of any combination of text, graphic representation, data, audio information, or video information that is created, modified, maintained, or transmitted in digital form by a computer or related system. State Statute defines E-records as "those records created in electronic computer systems or other electronic media." Those records created in an electronic/digital environment are referred to as "born digital" and may spend their entire life-cycle in this form.

Active Records – a record is considered active as long as the reference value of the document remains high. A good rule of thumb is to consider any document that is referred to at least six times per year to be active.

Inactive Records – A record is considered "inactive" when there is no longer any activity or immediate interest in the document. Records meeting this criterion should be moved to storage and retained until they have met their retention period.

Non-Permanent Records – a non-permanent record is any record that has a time-defined period, even if the retention spans a great number of years or even decades. Non-permanent records must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the State-approved Records Retention Schedule.

If an individual deems that a non-permanent document to have historic value or should be retained longer than the retention schedule allows, he or she should contact the City Records Administrator to

discuss the issue. The City Records Administrator will work with the State to make any corrections to the retention schedule and will notify user of final determination.

Some examples of non-permanent records would be:

- Administrative or Personnel Files
- Budget and Financial Records
- Most Contracts

Non-records – State Statute defines non-records as: “Library or museum material made or acquired solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference and stocks of publications or documents intended for sale or distribution to interested persons.” (A.R.S. §41-151.18). These documents that have no administrative or legal value, such as transmittals, routing slips, publications, reference materials, duplicate/extra copies, superseded copies of published manuals or directives etc. However in the case of transmittals and routing slips if this item is used to document a decision that was made or etc., then this document would attain record status and needs to be treated as such.

Non-records should not be mixed with records in the same file or in the same box if being sent to storage. A copy of a record is not automatically a non-record. Copies of a single document may each have records status because each serves a separate program purpose. Multiple copies of a single record, however, generally are not all records. One copy of a document is usually designated as the “official” record. When an employee is unsure whether a file is a record or non-record, refer to the “Is it a Record” flowchart at the end of this document for further clarification or contact your Records Administrator.

Working documents, drafts, and other transitory documents are not considered records and do not require authorization to be destroyed. These documents should be destroyed as soon as the final “official” record has been produced. Maintaining working documents beyond this period makes them discoverable for lawsuits and available for public record requests.

Permanent Records – Permanent/Historical records are not scheduled for destruction, and usually make up 3-5% of the organization’s total records. Permanent/Historical records have special storage requirements and are to be maintained on high quality acid free paper, or microfilmed, according to state approved standards. (Please note the state has not recognized digital/electronic images as a permanent media.) Some examples of records that would fall into this category are: council meeting minutes, proclamations, or ordinances. Permanent records that are maintained electronically, including email, should be printed for archival purposes. If the email contains attachments you must

also print and retain them along with the email message. Electronic images of those records may be retained in digital format for reference purposes.

Historical records document the important issues, places, people and events of the city, and can include letters, reports, photographs, etc.; whether they are in paper or electronic format. The historic value of a document is distinguished by the unique character not because of age. Records that are considered routine today, can later take on historic relevance as the result of a special event or circumstance such as a former councilmember is elected to the Senate, or a municipal judge is appointed to the Supreme Court. As a result, we may not recognize an event as having historic significance until after the event has passed, along with the opportunity to preserve the record documenting the event. Listed below are some types of documents to look for when classifying historic records, however, not all documents with these characteristics would be considered historic.

- Documents that influenced city leaders to make significant, unique, or controversial decisions (e.g., a letter from the Governor, or other high-ranking official; a Council members resignation letter)
- Documents that demonstrate how public policy was initiated, or why a special program was considered or implemented (e.g., documentation regarding a major anniversary for the city, major business and etc.)
- City documents leading to, or responding to, newsworthy events such as catastrophic event, ballot measure referendums, and etc.

Once a record has been identified as historic, it must be maintained as a permanent record requiring special protection and preservation on an archival medium.

Essential Records – Essential records are records containing information necessary for the City to continue operating its key functions and activities in the event of an emergency or disaster. Essential records are not necessarily permanent, nor are they required to be maintained on a special medium. Each city department or division will maintain a list of essential records within their possession; these records will be included in the city's Essential Records Protection and Recovery Plan. All city employees are required to adhere to this program. The objectives of the city's Essential Records Protection and Recovery Plan are to:

- Identify records necessary for maintaining business operations during an emergency situation.
- Identify records necessary for performing or reconstructing each department's most critical functions.
- Identify records protecting the legal and financial rights of the city, its employees, and citizens.
- Develop and implement cost effective methods for protecting essential records from loss, misuse, modification, and unauthorized access.

- Develop procedures and an action plan to assess damage and allow the City to begin recovery or reconstruction of City of Avondale essential records affected by an emergency or disaster.

Essential Records Consist of Two Main types:

- Emergency Operating Records – Records necessary for the continued operations or functions of a department during and after an emergency.
- Rights and Interest Records – records important to the protection of the legal and financial needs of a department, or the city, as well as records documenting individual rights affected by the department, or city activities and decisions. Rights and interest records include records that document the restriction of public access to areas of City, policies and procedures, ordinances, regulations and department rules.

The city's essential records must be available to city elected officials and employees to ensure continuity of service to citizens, businesses, and employees; to conduct official business, especially in times of disaster or emergency; and, to pay, account for, and/or collect financial obligations. *Please note: the city's Essential Records Protection and Recovery Plan is in the development stage and will be an addendum to this document once it is finalized.*

Record Series - a Record Series is a group of like records that are filed together and treated as a single unit for record management purposes. As an example, a personnel file exists for every employee in the organization. Even though there may be a large quantity of these files, with each file containing a variety of documents (evaluations, disciplinary actions, loyalty oaths and etc.) they are referred to as the record series "personnel files" for retention purposes.

File Inventory/File Plan - File Plans help maintain logical control of office records. Every department will be responsible for designing and implementing a file plan (filing system), if one is not already in place. The file plan shall designate the physical location(s) of the department files (including electronic), identify specific types of file (records series), the media format(s) the record is kept on, an identifying number for each record, a title description, and retention and disposition of the record.

Legal Hold

A legal hold is a communication issued as a result of current or anticipated litigation, audit, or governmental investigation, that suspends the normal disposition or processing of records. Once a legal hold has been issued by the City Attorney, City Clerk, or City Records Administrator all files associated with this hold will be preserved until the legal action is resolved and notification releasing hold is communicated.

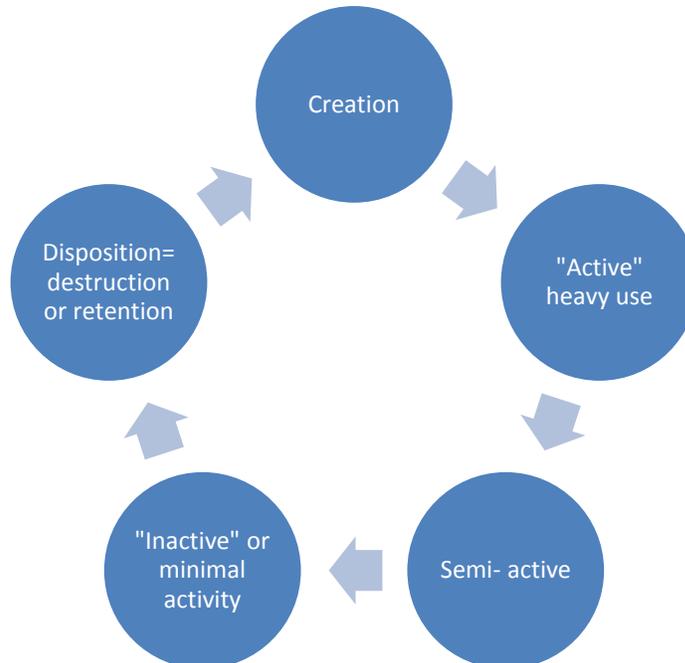
Records Retention and Disposition Schedules - A Records Retention and Disposition Schedule is a timetable that identifies the length of time a record must be kept in active and inactive status prior to final disposition. The retention period is based on use or need of the record, and on their administrative, legal, fiscal or archival value.

Public record - A draft circulated for public comment; a final document; or any other material that was created or received for the purpose of conducting the business of the City of Avondale. (See “Is it a Public Record” flowchart at the end of this manual.)

Retention, storage, destruction, security

Life-cycle of a Record

The life-cycle of a record begins when it is received or created by an agency taking intangible information and making it tangible. Customers may fill out a form, correspondence is written or received, reports generated, permits submitted and numerous other activities that can initiate “government business.” The diagram below illustrates the stages of a records life-cycle, regardless of media; paper documents and electronic documents will all follow this lifecycle. This chapter focuses on the Destruction or permanent preservation aspect of the records life-cycle.



Retention and Disposition Schedules

All records created and/or received by elected officials, employees, volunteers and representatives of the City of Avondale must be listed on a Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

Pursuant to Arizona Law, the City must establish and maintain an active, continuing program for the economical and efficient management of records. This program must outline the procedures and responsibilities established to meet these legal requirements. ASLAPR is responsible for approving retention periods for all records. All city records, regardless of format, must be maintained in accordance with the approved schedules. The retention and destruction of an electronic record, microfilm, or image is the same as the paper copy of the same record. A Certificate of Records Destruction Form is required for destruction for those records meeting their retention period. Retention schedules can be found on the City Clerk's ACES page.

Destruction of Records

ASLAPR is charged by law with the responsibility of authorizing the destruction of public records, and destruction of official city records must be reported to ASLAPR (ARS §41-151.19)

Records are to be destroyed promptly and consistently according to a current, state-approved retention schedule. This includes all records regardless of where, or how, they are stored or used. An approved retention schedule serves as authorization from ASLAPR to destroy a record once the retention period has been met.

Before a document is destroyed in accordance with the approved retention schedule the RMO must document the records and amount that are going to be destroyed on the Certificate of Destruction Form found on the Clerk's ACES site. The completed form should be forwarded to the City Clerk and City Records Administrator for review and approval. The Records Administrator will retain a copy for the official files and forward the original to ASLAPR. A copy is sent to the requesting department for their files which serves as the notice to proceed with the destruction of those records.

Records not listed on the current, state-approved retention schedule **should not be destroyed**. Likewise, if it is determined that a record slated for destruction is required beyond the prescribed retention due to a legal hold or ongoing audit, it **should not be destroyed**. Consult the Records Administrator for assistance.

Storage of Records

Most records have active and inactive stages in their lifecycle. For purposes of retention, these records are grouped within the same series. However, for filing purposes, active and inactive files are usually maintained separately as it is more cost-effective to store inactive files at an offsite storage facility.

The City of Avondale contracts with off-site records storage facility located within the Phoenix metropolitan area. Records stored at that facility remain accessible by the departments until they

have met their state-approved retention. Each department is responsible for the costs associated with storing boxes in this facility as well as any fees for accessing this information on a per retrieval basis. When sending records to off-site storage the RMO will fill out the appropriate paperwork and follow guidelines established for transferring a box to storage; form and instructions are located on the Clerk's ACES site. Once the RMO has completed the form they will notify the City's Records Administrator prior to contacting the storage vendor for processing. The Records Administrator will assign tracking information to this box to ensure proper disposition is achieved.

Methods of Destruction

The majority of City records are accessible to the public therefore destruction of this information can be handled in a few ways. Information that does not contain personal, confidential or restricted information can be recycled. Information that does contain this information must be destroyed by shredding. City of Avondale uses a contract vendor to provide this service, contact your RMO for directions on using this service. Each department is responsible for all costs associated with utilizing this service.

Electronic records

The Arizona Electronic Transaction Act (ARS §44-7001 et. seq.) authorizes state and local governments to establish electronic/digital systems for conducting their business. It also specifically requires that any records that are a product of these systems be managed pursuant to records statutes.

Document Conversion (paper to digital or other media)

ARS §41-151.16 and §44-7041 authorizes each agency of the state, or its political subdivision, the ability to implement a program to convert paper documents to microfilm or electronic media providing the agency obtain prior approval from ASLAPR. The requirements for a document conversion program must include; record series, method of production or reproduction, method of storage, equipment to be used, etc. Agencies that violate the provisions of this statute are guilty of a class 2 misdemeanor.

Prior to any city department starting a document conversion project they must consult with the IT Department and City Records Administrator to establish protocols necessary for security, naming conventions, server storage and ensure that appropriate retention is applied. Once this step has been accomplished the process to obtain authorization from the state is to complete a Request for Document Imaging Implementation Form (form is location on the Clerk's ACES page). The Records Administrator will forward the request to ASLAPR for approval, and notify the department when the approval has been granted.

When a public agency creates or receives a document in an electronic format approval from the State is not required. *State approved micrographics and/or imaging authorizations must be renewed every five years, the city's Records Administrator will monitor all authorizations and ensure compliance.*

E-Records “born digital”

“Born digital” records are those non-permanent documents that were created using computer software and may remain in this format for its respective lifecycle. Some examples are word documents; excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint and etc. Documents created electronically that meet permanent retention criteria should be saved to a recognized permanent media.

Each department should save their “official” e-records in accordance with the established naming conventions and file structure adopted by their area using the I and/or J drives.

Internet and Email Use

Electronic messages including email and voice message are subject to public disclosure.

The majority of electronic email or voice mail messages received are communication that function much like phone calls and, for records management purposes, are considered to be non-records. Electronic messages cannot be given blanket retention periods because they are not technically a type of record or record series. Email retention is based upon content and not on its format. Here are some examples of email as a record:

- Approves or authorizes actions or expenditures
- Is a formal communication and would have otherwise been sent as a letter or memorandum relating to official business.
- Sets a policy change or development.
- Creates a precedent, such as issuing instructions or advice.
- Involves negotiations on behalf of the city.

Electronic messages that are considered to be official records must be maintained for the same length of time as a paper record. For example, a citizen complaint that is sent via email must be maintained the same length of time as a complaint received on paper and destroyed in accordance with the state-approved retention schedule. If the retention is non-permanent then the email may remain in an electronic format for the duration of its retention period. Only the primary keeper or project manager is responsible for maintaining the “official” record.

Subject lines for emails are very important, since they indicate to a recipient what the message is all about. If subject lines are not used appropriately, the recipients may not realize the importance of the

message and choose to read it later or not at all. In addition, email messages without the proper subject line make filing more difficult and retrieval in some cases impossible.

Email messages on a particular subject can become a string of replies until a matter is finalized. In such cases the user shall place all emails into the system separately as they occur in a file folder for the particular subject or capture the final message. In the case of capturing of the final message the user needs to make sure the final message contains the whole thread of the discussion.

Employees should move email messages on a regular basis in order to manage their Microsoft Outlook account. This will ensure emails deemed records are stored for the appropriate retention period and non-records are purged in a timely manner. Emails that are considered records need to be saved in the employees "retain" folder. In many cases an employee will use their email account to actively track and flag projects; emails that remain in the active mail box even though they are flagged will be destroyed in accordance to the timeline indicated in the Records Management Policy. Here are some examples of non-record emails:

- Bulletins, drafts, personal messages, junk mail, meeting notices.

Records Purge Days

All departments are responsible for conducting one or more records purge days each year. During these days, employees are required to review all PC based records and paper files under their custody, including e-mails to ensure all records eligible for disposal have been deleted/purged/destroyed. Employees will follow the established procedures when dealing with information that contains confidential, personal, and restricted information.

All employees who maintain files are required to accomplish five tasks on records purge days:

1. Review all PC based records, determine if they are eligible for disposal, and then dispose of them in accordance with destruction procedures.
2. Review all paper files housed in their work station, determine if they are eligible for disposal or should be archived. Then follow the established procedure for appropriate action.
3. Review all emails; emails deemed records will be filed within the employees retain folder in outlook.
4. All personal working files stored on PCs shall be reviewed and purged as provided. Employees are encouraged to retain records of this nature for the minimum period of time essential to perform their work in an efficient manner, generally one year or less.
5. Fill out the Certificate of Retention Compliance form – stating that they are in compliance with the records retention schedules and with this related procedure. Any exceptions must be documented and justified. This form shall be sent to the City Records Administrator and a copy to their department's RMO.

Document Standards - Managing Active Records

To effectively manage active records, guidelines for the creation, control, and classification of official records that are originated by elected officials, employees, volunteers, and representatives of the City of Avondale must be followed. The following minimum document standards are to be used:

1. Official documents must be created on material that meets legal requirements. In accordance with the State approved standards permanent records must be maintained on high quality, acid free paper or on another permanent media. Please note the city does not use microfilm/microform. Public records, with limited exception, must be on 8 ½ by 11 inch paper (ARS §39-103).
2. With the exception of agreements and contracts, only one original of an official record may be submitted as the true and final document for signature and retention. The City Clerk's Office, Records Management services, retains official City records unless the City Clerk designates another department or an individual as the official (primary) record holder.
3. Designation of another individual or department as the primary record holder of an official document shall be in writing, signed by the City Clerk, and kept on file in the Clerk's Office. An approved records inventory may serve as the Clerk's written designation of a department or individual as the official (primary) record holder of a specific record or record series.
4. The document must be easy to read and understand; free from stains, marks, tear, or creases; and include the following information, where applicable:
 - Document name, number, and date (usually the origination or publication date);
 - Running total page numbers (example – 1 of 5)

Formatting

Permanent documents, such as Minutes, Agendas, Annexations, Resolutions, Ordinances, and etc. should be prepared using a one-inch margins, using a font style of Arial, Calibri, Courier, Times New Roman and any other font that is professional in appearance; font size will be no smaller than 11 pt. This ensures the readability for documents that are scanned and shared electronically. Documents that will be recorded with the Maricopa County Recorder, as well as ordinances and resolutions should follow the guidelines provided in ARS §11-480 listed below.

Recorded Documents (County Recorder)

Documents to be recorded with the Maricopa County Recorder's Office shall follow these form requirements (ARS §11-480). (The document will be returned, unrecorded if all requirements are not met.)

- A caption briefly stating the nature (or title) of the document (i.e. warranty deed, release of lien.)
- The document must be an original, or a copy of the original, and shall be sufficiently legible.

- The document must have original signatures, except when otherwise provided by law.
- Paper size must be no larger than 8 ½" x 14"
- Font size shall be no smaller than 10 point.
- The margins must have at least ½" across the top, bottom, left, and right sides.
- The first page must have a top margin of at least 2" reserved for the recordation information. The first 3 ½" of the top left margin of the first page may be used to show the name of the person requesting recording and the name and address to which the document is to be returned following recording. If the first page of the document does not comply with the top margin requirements, a cover sheet with a 2" top margin may be used. The cover sheet must include the title and date of the document.
- Any document modifying, in any way, the provisions of a previously recorded document must state the date of recordation (of the previous recorded document) and the recording number and page number of the document being modified.
- The recording number must be placed on each additional page of the Recorded document. The recording number may be typed on a label and placed on each page, placed within the footer of each page, or written on each page.

Classification of Official Documents

When working with documents that require multiple revisions it is advisable to use revisions dates and signifiers such as draft to ensure that when the "final/official" document is produced it is easily identifiable and all drafts can be destroyed in a timely manner.

In addition signifiers such as confidential and sensitive should be used when working with documents of this nature to prevent accidental disclosure.

Contract agreements

All contracts and/or agreements are reviewed by the City Attorney and the official executed document is maintained by the City Clerk's Office.

Publications

All **official** city publications such as brochures, pamphlets, utility bill inserts, rack material and etc. are to be reviewed by the Community Relations and Public Affairs Department before printing or publishing. All materials should include date of publication, responsible department, contact information, and revision date and version (if applicable).

Records Security

The purpose of records security is to prevent the unauthorized disclosure and/or loss of municipal records and information. Employees are never to leave records with sensitive information in them on their desk for others to access. These items must be secured immediately after use. Employees are to exit any computer program that displays confidential data before leaving their workstation or by locking the computer with password protection. Employees are to secure in a locked room or receptacle, sensitive data that can be easily stolen or breached, such as files, CDs, portable devices and etc.

Duty to Protect Personal Information

Unless there is a legal basis to redact personal identifying information, it is subject to release pursuant to the provisions of Title 39 Public Records Laws.

The city is required to ensure that records containing confidential, discretionary (in the best interest of the state/city), or personal information, as defined in the statute, are not discarded or disposed of without first redacting the personal information or securely destroying the records.

All departments and offices must review the records they maintain on a regular basis to identify confidential, discretionary, and personal information, if any, and establish procedures to protect that information from unauthorized access. All departments and office should regularly review and update their procedures concerning the collection of identifying information to verify whether the information collected is essential to the records being created or received. Departments should not collect unnecessary information, especially personal information.

Departments must also ensure the proper disposition of records containing confidential, discretionary or personal information pursuant to the city's record retention schedules. Paper records containing this information must be shredded. The data in electronic records (including computers, disks, CDs, hard drives, laptops, cell phones, flash drives or any other electronic media) containing this type of information must be securely destroyed using procedures approved by the ITS Security Administrator.

Public Record Requests

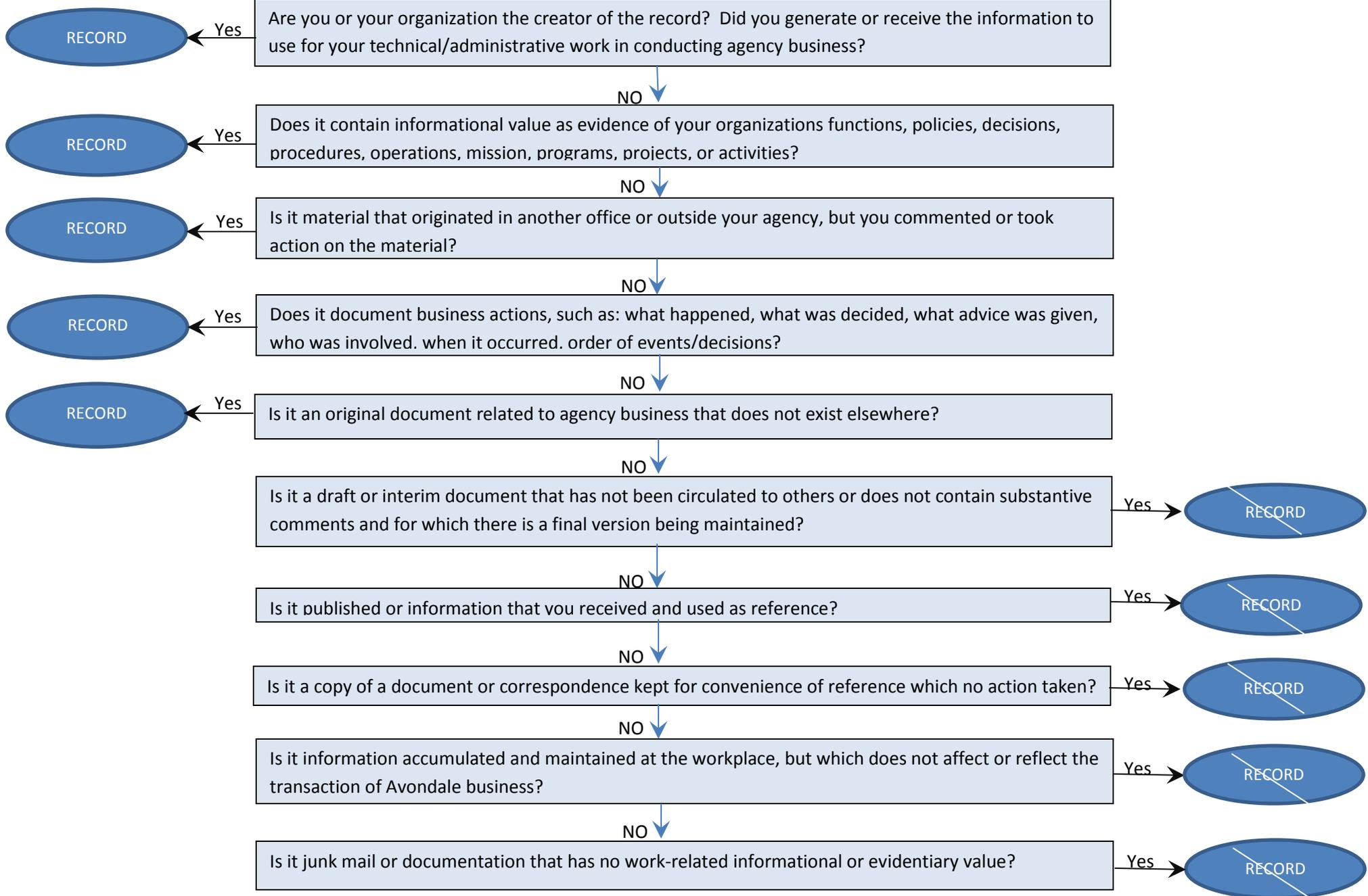
Arizona Revised Statutes require that we "promptly" provide citizens and the media the right to inspect and obtain copies of public records, which is important to foster transparency of government and maintaining public trust. The city strives to meet its obligations to the public under the laws, while protecting city and individual legal interests, as allowed by law. All requests for information need to be directed to the City Clerk's Office for processing.

- a. Duty to disclose Public Records; Legal Exceptions: Any record created or received by the City of Avondale is presumed to be public in nature and is subject to release upon public request. However, Arizona law permits denial of access to certain kinds of information if release of this information infringes on privacy interests, is confidential, would interfere with a legitimate government function, or would not be in the best interest of the city. The City Attorney will make the final decision as to whether or not the record should be released.
- b. Working Copies and Draft Documents. Working copies, such as draft documents or other transitory records used to develop a final document are not subject to disclosure. However, if working copies and drafts exist after the final document is prepared, those documents are subject to disclosure.

Redaction Guidelines

The majority of our records are public documents and therefore subject to disclosure. However, certain information is protected under Arizona law; the City Attorney's Office will make the final determination for information that will be redacted on all public records request.

Is it a RECORD?



WHEN IN DOUBT, TREAT IT AS RECORD OR CALL YOUR RECORDS ADMINISTRATOR FOR ASSISTANCE.