

Texas A&M AgriLife Research Procedures

61.99.01.A0.01 | Retention of State Records

*Approved: July 12, 1998
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Next Scheduled Review: February 13, 2020

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) will maintain an active and continuing state records management program in compliance with The Texas A&M University System (A&M System) Policies and Regulations, and federal and state law. All AgriLife Research units will work with the AgriLife Research/Extension Records Officer (RO) to manage and retain state records.

REASON FOR PROCEDURE

AgriLife Research recognizes the need for all units to manage and retain state records according to A&M System Regulations, Records Retention Schedule, and applicable state and federal laws.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 DESIGNATION OF RECORDS OFFICER

- 1.1 The Director of AgriLife Research will designate an individual as the RO to manage the retention and disposition of state records. The RO reports to the Director through the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services.
- 1.2 Records Officer Responsibilities:
 - A. Ensure that the A&M System Records Retention Schedule lists all the records series created or received by and maintained by AgriLife Research. The RO will periodically survey the state records of AgriLife Research, and provide the A&M System Records Management Officer with a written list of proposed changes to the schedule based upon the survey.
 - B. Identify records subject to internal, state, or federal audits, and ensure that AgriLife Research is in compliance with the audit requirements.
 - C. Work in cooperation with the A&M System Records Management Officer, the A&M System Office of General Counsel, and AgriLife Research units for any litigation holds.
 - D. Develop procedures for the retention, disposition, management, and security of state records— including the identification of those eligible for destruction or other disposition.
 - E. Provide employee training on compliance with records management procedures.

2.0 UNIT RECORDS COORDINATORS

- 2.1 Unit heads will appoint a records coordinator using an AG-705, *Records Coordinator Designation Form*.
- 2.2 Records Coordinator Responsibilities:

- A. Serve as the official records representative for his/her unit.
- B. Coordinate a records inventory for the unit consisting of identifying vital and archival records, and identifying official records and records series.
- C. Coordinate records retention for the unit.
- D. Coordinate records destruction for the unit.

3.0 RECORDS RETENTION

The record copy of AgriLife Research records—including those in electronic format—should be readily accessible for any purpose such as AgriLife Research business, public information requests, audits, or litigation.

4.0 ELECTRONIC RECORDS

4.1 AgriLife records that are maintained in an electronic format will be managed in the same manner as those in paper or other format, and in accordance with the [State Standards and Procedures for Electronic Records, 13 TAC §§ 6.91-6.97](#). These records need to be in the most unalterable format suitable for records retention.

4.2 Electronic Document Management System

- A. The Texas A&M University (TAMU) Shared Services Laserfiche Electronic Document Management System (Laserfiche), which is managed by TAMU Computing and Information Services (CIS), should be used for the storage of AgriLife Research State Records. Records in this system will be retained until the end of the retention period or other period if the record is a part of any litigation, audit, open records request, administrative review, or other such action.
- B. TAMU CIS ensures Laserfiche meets the requirements of [13 TAC §§ 6.91-6.979](#) for hardware and software, has the capability to retain records for the full retention period, and the capability to migrate records to another system if necessary. The RO periodically checks that records are maintained in a standard interchange format.
- C. Management of the AgriLife Laserfiche Repository(s) will be provided by the AgriLife Research/Extension RO and TAMU CIS/AgriLife Systems Administrator(s).
- D. AgriLife Laserfiche repositories will be backed-up and stored off-site by TAMU CIS in accordance with TAMU CIS standard procedures. Approximately once a quarter, the backup will be partially restored to a temporary repository which can be validated by three to five units. This validation should include an examination of selected documents to ensure that they are retrievable and usable as a record.
- E. After a validation, a notice will be sent to the Laserfiche unit administrators indicating that a successful validation has been conducted and that the paper documents input to the system—except documents associated with any government contracts executed under the requirements for FAR 4.703(c) (3) (which must be retained for 1 year after scanning into Laserfiche [does not apply to grants])—are considered convenience copies.
- F. Documents that contain 6 point or smaller type that are to be scanned or otherwise placed into Laserfiche or retained as an official record in electronic format must be at a resolution of 300 DPI or greater.
- G. Records considered archival or vital will be so annotated on the record series properties in Laserfiche.

5.0 DESTRUCTION AND DISPOSITION OF STATE RECORDS

- 5.1 State records may not be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without the written approval of the RO or designee using an AG-703, *Records Destruction Form*. This requirement does not apply to duplicates, convenience copies, or transitory information which can be destroyed when the purpose of the document has been fulfilled. Copies should not be retained longer than the official record copy.
- 5.2 State records listed on the retention schedule cannot be destroyed until the designated retention period has expired, and the RO or designee has approved the destruction. The retention periods on the schedule apply only to the record copy of AgriLife Research records. A state record cannot be destroyed if any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, open records request, administrative review, or other action involving the record is initiated before the expiration of the retention period. The record must be retained until the completion of the action and the resolution of all issues that arise from it—or until the expiration of the retention period—whichever is later.
- 5.3 State records not listed on the records retention schedule cannot be destroyed until the RO obtains written approval from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission through the A&M System Records Management Officer.
- 5.4 Destruction of state records must be done in a manner that ensures protection of sensitive or confidential information.
- 5.5 The AG-703 will be filed in Laserfiche when the destruction is completed.
- 5.6 Records that are historical in nature, and which are sent to the State Library and Archives Commission must be in paper or microfilm format.

6.0 TRAINING

- 6.1 Training for employees and records coordinators will be offered on an as needed basis, but no less than once per fiscal year.
- 6.2 Unit records coordinators will be required to take the A&M System online course, *Retention of State Records*, training annually.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[Texas Government Code Chapter 441](#)

[13 Texas Administrative Code Part 1, Chapter 6](#)

[A&M System Regulation 61.99.01, Retention of State Records](#)

[A&M System Records Retention Schedule](#)

[AG-703, *Records Destruction Form*](#)

[AG-703, *Records Destruction Form Instructions*](#)

[AG-705, *Records Coordinator Designation Form*](#)

DEFINITIONS

See A&M System Regulation 61.99.01 for Records Management definitions.

CONTACT OFFICE

For questions, contact the AgriLife Research/Extension RO—AgriLife Risk and Compliance—at 979-845-4766.