Local Law Enforcement Agencies

Functional Analysis
&
Records Disposition Authority

Revision
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Functional Analysis of Local Law Enforcement Agencies

Sources of Information

- Representatives of Local Law Enforcement
- Alabama Sheriffs' Association
- Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police
- Alabama Constitution of 1901
- Alabama Government Manual (1998)
- Code of Alabama 1975
- Bailey, William G. The Encyclopedia of "Police Science" (1989)
- Martin, David. Alabama's State and Local Government, 3rd edition (1988)
- Thomas James D. and William H. Stewart. Alabama Government and Politics (1988)
- Timmons, Robert D. "Alabama Sheriffs' Association" (1996)

Historical Context

The word "sheriff" is of English derivation, a contraction of the word "shire" (county) and "reeve" (an agent of the king). The Alabama Constitution of 1819 provided that the sheriff would be elected by the people in each county "for the term of three years. . . and [would] not be eligible to serve either as principal [sheriff] or deputy for the succeeding years." Sheriffs were made subject to impeachment if prisoners were taken from them and lynched. Today, the sheriff serves a term of four years and can serve consecutive terms. There is an elected sheriff in each of Alabama's 67 counties who performs general law enforcement duties and serves judicial writs. The sheriff is not responsible for automobile accident investigations, which are handled by state troopers or city police.

The development of modern municipal law enforcement procedures began with the creation of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829. While informal, voluntary, and private systems for providing police services had existed previously, that year marked the creation of a paid, public, full-time police force in London and (with the contemporary Sureté in France) the real inception of modern police administration. Faced with the task of establishing a 1,000-member police force "from scratch," Sir Robert Peel relied on the following fundamental principles: (1) the police should be under government control, (2) the basic mission of the police is preventing crime and disorder, (3) the police's success is dependent upon public approval, (4) the police should be organized along military lines, (5) securing and training proper persons for the police force is essential, (6) police officers should be hired on a probationary basis, (7) police strength should be deployed in different shifts and precincts, and (8) police officers should employ only the minimum force necessary when dealing with offenders.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a reform movement swept through American police administration. Central to these reforms was the idea of government by rational decision-making. Reformers sought to separate politics from administration and to put police administration in the hands of trained professionals. Civil service and merit systems were created to guarantee that

personnel decisions were based on objective criteria, rather than on political connection. This reforming spirit influenced the development of police administration in many states, including Alabama. During the Constitutional Convention of 1901, among the most controversial and hard-fought issues were the governor's impeachment power over the sheriff in lynching cases, and the question of whether the sheriff should be allowed to serve more than one successive term. Supporters of the latter measure wanted to keep an experienced man in office; opponents charged that successive terms would lead to the establishment of a "courthouse ring," with the sheriff more interested in retaining office than in upholding the law.

From the 1960s until the present time, police administration has focused on improving productivity through more inspired leadership and greater emphasis on improving the conditions and qualifications of police service. Other areas that have received attention are the analysis and improvement of police tactics and strategies, and the police agency's relationship with its community, and the increasing importance of forensics work in solving crimes.

Agency Organization

County sheriffs are their county's chief law enforcement officer and are elected for a four-year term. They have the authority to appoint a chief deputy, who assists with the office's duties and acts as chief coordinator. The sheriff reports to the county commission. To become a sheriff or deputy sheriff, an applicant must be not less than 21 years of age; have vision correctable to normal standards; have normal hearing in each ear; be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Alabama (or have stated an intention to become one upon being employed); have a current, active Alabama driver's license; be free from physical, emotional, or mental conditions that might adversely affect job performance; have no criminal record (minor traffic violations are excluded); not, by reason of conscience or belief, be opposed to using force when appropriate or necessary to fulfill required duties; pass a civil service examination and be certified by the county's Civil Service Commission; meet all Alabama Peace Officer Standards and Training Requirements; and pass a rigid background investigation (not only of the applicant but also of the applicant's family).

Municipal police chiefs are appointed by the town or city government and have general law enforcement authority within its boundaries, extending to an area of police jurisdiction outside the corporate limits. Municipal police forces vary in size from one or two officers to large city departments. To become a police officer, an applicant must possess the same qualifications as a deputy sheriff, although some police departments do not require applicants to take a civil service examination. In most departments, any deputy or police officer may perform any departmental function, whether the assignment is in the corrections field, the court system, or the law enforcement division. As a department grows in size and responsibility, it normally develops uniform procedures that guide officers in discharging their duties.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated function of the Local Law Enforcement Agencies in Alabama is all objectives that pertain to preventing, controlling, and reducing crime; enforcing criminal law and apprehending criminals; monitoring activities of the courts and related agencies having criminal jurisdiction;

and ensuring public safety. Although certain police activities (such as enforcing ordinances or directing traffic) relate to the Regulation and Public Services functions, they are primarily aspects of Law Enforcement and are so treated here. As such, it is one of the agencies responsible for performing the Law Enforcement and Emergency Powers function of Alabama government as described in the "Functional Analysis of Alabama Government."

In the performance of its mandated function, the Local Law Enforcement Agencies may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Maintaining Public Order and Security.** This subfunction covers most routine departmental patrol activities. County and municipal law enforcement agencies are permitted by statute (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-22-3) to take reasonable precautions against disruptions of the peace, to apprehend or prevent criminal behavior, to create procedures for dealing with law violations, to pursue general approaches to the crime problem (deterrence, incarceration, or rehabilitation), and to inform the public and enlist public support. The sheriff's or police department responds to all complaints and crimes within its jurisdiction. Officers patrol their "beats" to protect lives and property. Local law enforcement officers may join security details with other state or federal officers to guard U.S. or foreign dignitaries. Two specialized activities pertaining to this subfunction are:

  Enforcing local legislation. As noted in the functional analysis of municipalities, municipal police officers enforce local legislation passed by town or city councils. Such legislation is designed to abate nuisances or to regulate businesses for compliance with municipal, state, or federal laws.

  Controlling traffic. Police officers and sheriff's deputies conduct 24-hour road patrols as one of their routine duties. Periodically, officers may operate radar, direct traffic, issue citations for traffic law violations, investigate accidents, provide first aid, photograph accident scenes, notify next of kin, and file statistical reports as required by law. Officers provide escorts for caravans and oversize motor vehicles. They assist in funeral processions, direct traffic at public functions, and conduct patrols of public parks.

- **Communicating and Reporting Criminal Activity.** Law enforcement officers operate radio communications to surrounding counties, cities, states, and all county mobile units. Telephone communications may include multi-line systems (both in-watts lines and open lines), civil defense, and statewide warning points for severe weather warnings. Teletype or computer systems provide access to all state units of such organizations as the Alabama Criminal Justice Investigation Center (abbreviated as CJIC), the Alabama Bureau of Investigation's Criminal Information Center (CIC), the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS), and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

  According to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-9-2, vital information relating to certain crimes is to be accumulated, stored, analyzed, and disseminated in order to gauge

criminal activity across the state. A uniform crime reporting system has been created for periodically collecting and analyzing information on crimes committed within the jurisdiction of any criminal justice agency in the state. Local law enforcement officers feed information about persons they arrest into the system; in turn, CJIS provides sheriff's offices and police departments with statistical data and individual criminal histories upon request.

- **Investigating Crime.** This subfunction documents law enforcement agency investigations conducted after suspected or actual violations of the law. If citizen complaints or department patrol activities indicate that a crime has been committed, the sheriff's or police department's personnel may conduct an investigation. All felonies are investigated; misdemeanors may or may not require a full investigation. Investigations of suspicious deaths involve the county coroner, who issues an official certificate of death and files a report with the local law enforcement agency and the district attorney. Juvenile crimes are investigated regardless of whether they are felonies or misdemeanors. Internal affairs investigations of law enforcement personnel are also included under this subfunction. Local law enforcement agencies may obtain assistance in investigations from the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI), the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences (ADFS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), or other state and federal authorities.

- **Making Arrests.** This subfunction relates to procedures for arresting persons accused of crimes by local authorities. No person can lawfully be accused, arrested, or detained except for violations of the law and according to the form prescribed below: If a judge or magistrate is satisfied that an offense has been committed, s/he signs a warrant of arrest stating the substance of the complaint. The warrant is then directed to the proper law enforcement agent, and the suspect is arrested (there are exceptions to the requirement for a warrant, such as when an offense is committed in the presence of an officer). Persons charged with misdemeanors may be released by the officer on their own recognizance, which binds them to appear in court (or, in certain cases, to pay a fine) or face arrest. When someone is indicted for a crime by a grand jury, the judge issues a bench warrant for his or her arrest. If the suspect is not already in custody, a law enforcement officer will arrest and detain him or her. Anyone charged with, and arrested for, a felony before an indictment is issued has an absolute right to a preliminary hearing within 30 days of the arrest. Failure to appear will not invalidate the indictment.

- **Detaining and Booking Offenders.** When a warrant has been served, and a suspect is taken into custody and transported to a county or municipal jail, the booking process begins. The suspect is processed by an intake officer. His or her personal belongings are taken, identified, and assigned a number. Fingerprints and photographs are taken at this time. All the information taken is initially entered into the arrest record book, although other records are also generated to document arrest and booking.

- **Providing Assistance to the Courts.** Both sheriff's deputies and police officers may serve as bailiffs for the courts. Officers serve bench warrants and subpoenas, make arrests, and bring prisoners before the court. They assist officers of the state Board of

Pardons and Paroles in monitoring paroled prisoners, return fugitives from outside the state, secure extradition waivers on apprehended criminals from outside jurisdictions, and transport prisoners and patients by order of the court. Law enforcement officers may testify in court, with or without a subpoena. Their duties may require them to transport evidence to the crime lab for identification and analysis or to the court. Sheriff's deputies also serve original notices, writs, subpoenas, and orders for all Alabama district and small claims courts; collect judgments under execution, writs, attachments, and distress warrants; and arrange for the sale of property or the garnishment of wages and bank accounts as part of these collections.

- **Incarcerating Offenders.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-47-7 states that all cities and towns shall have the power to establish, erect, maintain, and regulate jails, station houses, and prisons. Once an offender is sentenced, s/he is incarcerated in an appropriate minimum-, medium-, or maximum-security correctional facility. Two activities involved in post-sentencing incarceration are: (1) determining the type of punishment and care that the offender may require, and (2) arranging restitution to victims and society. For persons convicted in municipal court, a sentence cannot exceed one year's incarceration in the municipal jail. If a sentence exceeds one year, the prisoner is transported at the end of that time to the county jail. Correctional facilities may also be under county jurisdiction, and the sheriff and police chief have the same responsibility for providing jail security.

- **Managing Elections.** Pursuant to Title 17 of the Code of Alabama 1975, the county sheriff has several duties in the election process. The sheriff or their designee serves on the county appointing board for elections officials and the county canvassing board. Prior to an election, the sheriff is responsible for posting statutory notices and delivering supplies to voting locations. On Election Day, sheriffs are charged by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-9-1 to "preserve good order" at polling locations, including enforcing restrictions on campaigning at voting sites. After the conclusion of an election, the sheriff maintains ballots, voting machine result tapes, unused materials, and other related documentation until records are eligible for destruction. Additionally, county sheriffs' offices are responsible for delivering primary or primary-runoff election results to county party executive committees in accordance with the Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-13-14.

  For municipal elections, municipal police departments are charged with maintaining order on Election Day, but hold no record-keeping responsibilities. They may also assist with maintaining order in other elections. The municipal clerk is responsible for all record-keeping responsibilities in municipal elections, including of ballots, voting machine results tapes, and unused election materials, per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-46-46.

- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the Local Law Enforcement Agencies' work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency including:

  Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating,

scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

Managing Human Resources: Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; investigating and disciplining.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property managed by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property.

Records Appraisal of Local Law Enforcement Agencies

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by the Local Law Enforcement Agencies: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by local law enforcement agencies are discussed below:

- **Wrecker Logs (Lists of Approved Wrecker Vendors).** Local law enforcement agencies may utilize a list of approved wrecker vendors, also called a wrecker log, to request vehicle tows. Wrecker logs should be maintained for three years so that, if concerns are raised, law enforcement agencies can demonstrate a fair distribution of towing opportunities.

- **Wrecker Vendor Inspection and Authorization Records.** Local law enforcement agencies may inspect and authorize wrecker vendors before allowing them to interact with the public on the agency's behalf. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, background checks and driving histories of towing employees, equipment inspections, vehicle inspections, and business licenses. Wrecker vendor inspection and authorization records should be maintained for three years after last contact with the vendor so that agencies can demonstrate that proper vendor authorization procedures are being followed.

- **Conservatorship and Guardianship Records.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 26-2-27 through 26-2-50, sheriffs may serve as conservators or guardians of last resort within their counties. A person under guardianship (a minor or an adult) may be referred to as a ward, incapacitated person, protected person, or "individual subject to guardianship or conservatorship."

  A court appoints a conservator to manage money and property for someone else. A guardian is appointed to manage a person's healthcare and other personal decisions and is responsible for the person's health, support, education, and maintenance.

  Materials commonly associated with conservatorship or guardianships may include, but are not limited to, financial records (bank statements, expense reports, income records, investment statements, tax returns); legal filings (guardian or conservator appointment, orders, and bonds); Guardian Care Plans, Guardian Annual Status Reports, medical treatment records; asset inventories; correspondence; and associated accounting and periodic reporting materials.

These records are subject to audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts. Conservatorships and guardianships remain in effect until the court relieves the conservator or guardian of their duties, which may occur because a new conservator or guardian has been appointed, the ward has died, or the ward no longer needs a guardian or conservator. Therefore, these records should be retained for the duration of conservatorship or guardianship plus two years after last audit cycle.

- **Jewelry and Pawn Shop Tickets and Reports.** These records were originally appraised with a disposition of "Retain 2 years following audit." However, subsequent discussions with local police departments indicate that the records are merely reports, and copies of tickets, turned in by pawn shops to document items that have been pawned. Used only for informational purposes, they have no financial component and are not subject to audit. The required retention has therefore been changed to "Retain 3 years."

- **Coroner's Records.** These records document the county coroner's investigation of any death that occurred when the subject was not under a physician's care. The records include autopsy reports, background files on autopsies, and death certificates. Retention of the records is tied to final disposition of the case. The "Records Management Recommendation" proposed here does not affect the records' disposition. Rather, at the request of the Attorney General's Office and the Alabama Coroners' Association, it reminds departing county coroners that their records should remain at the coroner's office after they retire. Based on the reports we have received, the loss of such records has become a major problem in some counties. Text of the recommendation is as follows:

  Records Management Recommendation: Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-4, "All public officers of this state shall turn over to their successors… all current books, papers and documents pertaining to the business, affairs or transactions of their office…" The Alabama Coroners' Association reminds retiring county coroners to ensure that copies of all autopsy reports, investigation files, background files, and other records they created remain with the coroner's office after their departure.

- **Audiovisual Field Recordings.** These records may document interactions between local law enforcement agency employees and the public or may be created as part of the agency's routine public safety and investigative processes. Audiovisual recordings subject to this records retention include, but are not limited to, all content captured by body/vest cameras, in-car/dash cameras, and similar devices. The scope of this series may also include recordings that are exclusively audio or exclusively video.

  The records retention of audiovisual field recordings is determined by whether the recordings become part of a case file or records request. Recorded information that becomes part of a case file should be transferred to the investigation case file and retained according to the case file's retention. Recorded information that is subject to a received complaint or records request, but is not part of a case file, should be retained for six months or until the complaint or records request is resolved, whichever is longer. Recorded information that is not subject to a received complaint or records request and does not become part of a case file should be retained for three months.

- **Law Enforcement Copies of Records Documenting Other Charges, Orders, and Directives of the Courts – Docket Books.** These records document the law enforcement agency's response to charges, orders, and other directives of the courts. Disposition requirements for the agency copy of a record assumes retention of the court system's copy for the period specified in the Administrative Office of Courts' retention schedules for court records. Added to the schedule, in this edition of the RDA, are docket books kept by the law enforcement agency to track the receipt of court directives and the agency's response. Their disposition requirement parallels that for the individual records documented in the docket books.

- **Jail Surveillance Audiovisual Recordings.** This record series fulfills local law enforcement agencies' responsibilities to monitor the conduct, welfare, and safety of inmates and other detainees during incarceration. The records retention of jail/surveillance audiovisual recordings is determined by whether the recordings may become part of a case file or records request. Recorded information that becomes part of an investigation should be transferred to the investigation case file and retained according to the case file's retention. Recorded information that is subject to a received complaint or records request, but is not part of an investigation, should be retained for six months or until the received complaint or records request is resolved, whichever is longer. Recorded information that is not subject to a received complaint or records request and does not become part of an investigation should be retained for three months.

Permanent Records

The Archives Division has appraised the following records as permanent:

Maintaining Public Order and Security

Routine patrol activities that result in arrests are permanently documented in records of the courts. Law enforcement's role in enforcing local legislation (primarily through abating nuisances) is reflected in county commission or city council minutes. Statistical information from law enforcement activity reports impact upon the departments' annual budget requests and final appropriations in the county or municipal budget.

Communicating and Reporting Criminal Activity

Local, state, and federal police authorities work together to collect, evaluate, and disseminate criminal intelligence data through a nationwide, continually updated communications network administered by the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). While the information is constantly in flux, the network itself provides permanent documentation of this vital law enforcement function.

Investigating Crime

- **Investigations Files (files of permanent historical significance).** Prior to disposing of any investigation files, local law enforcement officials should determine whether any of the cases relate to public issues of permanent historical significance. The law enforcement agency should request assistance in evaluating the records from a Government Records Division archivist, or from another qualified state or local historian or archivist. Investigation files identified as having long-term historical significance should be retained by the agency permanently or transferred to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms set forth in a local government records deposit agreement.

Making Arrests/Detaining and Booking Offenders

Arrests that lead to prosecutions are permanently documented in the records of the courts. "Approximately 300 arresting and judicial agencies in Alabama submit criminal history information to the [D]epartment [of Public Safety]," which "maintains fingerprint files… repeat offender files and arrest dispositions… and provides criminal history information to law enforcement agencies throughout the nation" (Public Safety RDA, p. 1-7). Information in these files is periodically updated, but the arrangement provides permanent documentation of local law enforcement's arrest and booking function.

Providing Assistance to the Courts

- **Sheriff's Execution Dockets or Orders of Sale.** These records document the county sheriff's execution of court orders for the sale of property sold to satisfy a judgment. Information available includes the names of the parties, the character of the process, the date and amount of judgment, the principal and costs collected, the issuing court, and the attorney's name. The docket books are appraised as permanent, but the sheriff is directed to transfer them to the circuit court when they are filled. In this edition of the RDA, disposition is also provided for sheriff's department copies of court orders relating to the sales. Because the docket books permanently document the sheriff's role in executing court orders, the copies are assigned a retention period of: "Retain for useful life."

- **Sheriff's Sales Books.** These records document the actual, court-ordered sale of property by the county sheriff. Information available includes a brief description of the property and process, the date of the sale, the purchaser, and the price. Like those above, these books are appraised as permanent and earmarked for transfer to the circuit court (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-22-13).

Incarcerating Offenders

Permanent records of jail administration are discussed below under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction.

Managing Elections

The only permanent county or municipal election records are the official Records of Election Results, which are maintained by the county probate office and covered in its RDA.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

- **Administrative Policies and Procedures.** These records document the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the law enforcement agency.

- **Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions.** These records document the core activities, actions, and positions of the agency by senior-level officials. The scope of this series does not include materials documenting the routine financial, human resources, and facilities management activities which this agency performs. These records may include, but are not limited to, correspondence with public officials and other stakeholders, legal/advisory correspondence, organizational charts, and memoranda. The decision-making process of the agency and its leadership has long-term historical significance and should therefore be preserved.

- **Representative Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials.** These records include news releases, newsletters, brochures, periodicals, photographs, videotapes, audio tapes, speeches, and public service announcements created by law enforcement or agencies.

- **Websites.** Websites are developed to provide information to the public on departmental policies, programs, services, and administration, as well as public safety issues.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

- **General ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances (Only records created prior to 1975).** These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue, purchasing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting. Records created in or after 1975. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

- **Audit Reports.** These records document the law enforcement agency's overall financial conditions and the findings of the Examiners of Public Accounts (sheriff's departments) or an independent auditor (police departments) during each audit period.
- **Final narrative reports.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

- **Personnel or Pension Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document meetings, policies, and actions taken by the law enforcement agency's

personnel or pension board, along with the agenda of topics to be discussed at the meeting and any attachments or other documents provided to board members.

- **Employee Handbooks.** These records provide guidance to new law enforcement employees about personnel rules, policies, and procedures.

- **Job Classifications and Pay Plans.** Law enforcement agencies that conduct their own personnel administration.

- **Employee Newsletters.** These records are internal newsletters created for law enforcement agency employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information about individual employees.

- **Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires.** These records summarize overall law enforcement personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations.

- **Training Records.** Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.

- **"Drug-Free Workplace" Records.** Drug/alcohol abuse policy and procedures documentation.

Records No Longer Created

- **Election Officers' Certificates (pre-1900 only).** These records certified that the individuals named acted as inspectors or clerks during elections held in the county.

Permanent Records List
Local Law Enforcement Agencies

Investigating Crime

1. Investigations Files (files of permanent historical significance)

Providing Assistance to the Courts

1. Sheriff's Execution Dockets or Orders of Sale
2. Sheriff's Sales Books

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

1. Administrative Policies and Procedures
2. Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions
3. Representative Final Versions of Informational Promotional Materials
4. Websites

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

1. General Ledgers/Detailed Year-End Trial Balances (created after 1975)
2. Audit Reports
3. Final Grant Project Narrative Reports

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

1. Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets
2. Employee Handbooks
3. Employee Newsletters
4. Job Classifications and Pay Plans
5. Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires
6. Training Records – Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications
7. "Drug-Free Workplace" Records

Records No Longer Created

1. Election Officers' Certificates (pre-1900 only)

Local Law Enforcement Agencies Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through 24. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Local Law Enforcement Agencies. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value,

copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques, awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

Maintaining Public Order and Security

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

1.01 Activity Reports.

a. **Annual activity reports.** These records document departmental patrol activities on an annual basis. They take the form of statistical summaries for each category of crime, misdemeanor, or citation covered in the report.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 Years.

b. **Daily and monthly activity reports.** These records document daily and monthly patrol activities by individual uniformed officers in response to calls during routine patrol. They provide statistical summaries of patrol activities on a daily and monthly basis.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 Year.

c. **Field Investigation Reports.** This series documents interactions and observations conducted in the field by law enforcement agents regarding potentially suspicious scenarios, but which do not immediately result in arrest or prolonged detention. Such reports may document, but are not limited to, activities such as canvassing abandoned vehicles, assessing potential trespassing, conversing during checkpoints, or resolving complaints. This series may also include follow-up documentation regarding the field investigation.

    i. Field Investigations which become part of a case file
    Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain according to the appropriate case file designation.

ii. Field investigations which do not become part of a case file
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

1.02 Use of Force Records.

a. **Use of Force Investigation Files.** These materials include, but are not limited to, use of force reports which become part of investigations, use of force complaints and allegation forms, use of force administrative reviews, associated investigation materials, and decisions regarding final disciplinary proceedings.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after separation of the employee, or until final disposition of any resulting litigation, whichever is longer.

b. **Use of Force Reports which do not become part of an investigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

1.03 Alabama Uniform Incident/Offense Reports. These records document any incident or offense in which departmental personnel are involved, regardless of its nature.
Disposition: Retain one copy of I/O Report in the Arrest Case File, according to class of offense, for the following periods after final disposition of the case:

a. **Felonies.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years.

b. **Misdemeanors.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

c. **Offenses committed by juveniles.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until subject's age of majority.

d. **Offenses committed by youthful offenders.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain case file according to the retention policy for the most severe class of offense (felony or misdemeanor).

e. **Reports that do not result in an arrest.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

f. **Other copies of I/O reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

1.04 Records Documenting Traffic Accidents and Violations.

a. **Alabama uniform traffic accident reports.** These reports describe and report traffic accidents that occur within a law enforcement agency’s jurisdiction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

b. **Private property accident reports.** These records document traffic accidents that occur on private property. They are often kept separately from traffic accidents that occur on city streets.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

c. **Alabama uniform traffic ticket and complaint forms.** These are law enforcement copies of tickets issued to motorists for traffic violations that occur within an agency's jurisdiction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

d. **Voided Alabama uniform traffic ticket and complaint forms.** These are tickets that were not issued due to damage or other factors that made them unusable. Law enforcement agencies retain them for verification during audit.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following an audit.

e. **Alabama uniform traffic ticket and complaint receipt books.** These records document the issuance of Uniform Traffic Ticket and Complaint books to law enforcement officers for audit purposes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following an audit.

f. **UTC (uniform traffic citation) transmittal forms.** These records document each traffic ticket given. The form is sent to the district or municipal court, and a copy is returned to the department.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following an audit.

g. **Warning tickets.** These tickets are issued to motorists whose traffic offenses are not serious enough to warrant an enforceable citation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 days.

1.05 Records of Chemical Tests for Intoxication. These records document the administration of tests to establish the blood-alcohol content of motorists stopped on suspicion of drunken driving. They are retained in a variety of formats, including cards and computerized records systems.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years or until final disposition of the case, whichever is longer.

1.06 Impoundment and Auction Records. These records document the seizure or impoundment, and release or sale, of motor vehicles and other confiscated or unclaimed property taken into custody by law enforcement officers.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

1.07 Vehicle Door Damage Waivers. These records document waiving of damages that may occur when law enforcement officers are asked to open vehicle doors of motorist who have their locked their keys inside a vehicle or otherwise cannot gain access.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

1.08 Wrecker Logs (Lists of Approved Wrecker Vendors).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

1.09 Wrecker Vendor Inspection and Authorization Records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contact with the vendor.

1.10 Records Documenting Non-Traffic Violations.

a. **Alabama uniform non-traffic citation and complaint forms.** These are law enforcement copies of Uniform Non-Traffic Citation and Complaint Forms (ARJA 20) issued by law enforcement officers.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following an audit.

b. **Voided Alabama uniform non-traffic citation and complaint forms.** These records maintain accountability for Alabama uniform Non-Traffic Citation and Complaint Forms (ARJA 20) that have not been issued due to error, damage, or other factors.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following an audit.

1.11 Licensee Inspection and Investigation Records. Staff with municipal police departments or county sheriff's offices may conduct inspections to ensure that license- or permit-holders are in compliance with state, county, or municipal regulations. Inspections may be routine or may be initiated in response to a complaint. Records within this series may include inspection reports, complaints, violation case files, and supporting materials for findings.

a. **Records of significant findings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years.

b. **Records of inspections or investigations without significant findings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

1.12 Courtesy Security Reminders. These records document the distribution of courtesy security reminders during patrol operations. Their purpose is to notify home or business owners of unsafe conditions on the property, such as unlocked doors, inadequate lighting, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

1.13 Alarm System Registration Records. These records pertain to the registration and permitting of alarm systems, including but not limited to burglary, fire, robbery, panic, or duress alarms. Their purpose is limiting the occurrence of false alarms and ensuring accurate emergency contact information.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after permit expires.

1.14 Conservatorship and Guardianship Records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. After the conservatorship or guardianship concludes and the final audit is completed, retain for 2 years.

1.15 Law Enforcement Agency-Owned Animal Records. These records document the purchase, training, ownership, care, and deployment of animals owned by the law enforcement agency. Examples of such animals may include, but are not limited to, K9 officers, mounted units (horses), cadaver dogs, bomb detection dogs, drug detection dogs, and search and rescue dogs. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, animal purchasing records, training certifications, animal microchip information, use and assignment records, and animal veterinary records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the retirement, death, or transfer of animal from the agency.

Note: If records related to law enforcement agency-owned animals become relevant to criminal prosecution or litigation, the records should be maintained through resolution of the case.

1.16 Parade Permit Application and Permits. These records document the application for, and issuance or denial of, permits to organizations that wish to conduct parades within a law enforcement agency's jurisdiction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: If the denial of a permit, or events during a parade, result in criminal prosecution or litigation, the application and permit should be held through resolution of the case.

1.17 Door-to-Door Solicitation Permits and Application Materials. These records document the application for, and issuance or denial of, permits to individuals, groups, or organizations who peddle, solicit, or canvass door-to-door within a law enforcement agency's jurisdiction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

1.18 Permitting and Licensing Records, Other. Local governments regulate a wide range of activities through permits and licenses. While many types are explicitly addressed within this RDA, local governments may also issue permits or licenses that are not specifically described. This record series provides retention guidance for all such permitting or licensing records not otherwise covered in this RDA.

a. **Permits with fees.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years after audit.

b. **Permits without fees.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year or for the validity of the permit, whichever is longer.

Communicating and Reporting Criminal Activity

2.01 Law Enforcement/911 Dispatch Cards or Log Books. These records document the assignment of law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical service personnel to calls for assistance.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last entry.

2.02 Radio/Telephone Recordings. These records document calls for emergency assistance to a law enforcement or 911 department dispatcher and the agency's response. They include recordings of radio communications between dispatchers and vehicles in the field.

a. **Recorded information that does not become part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months.

b. **Recorded information that becomes part of a case file.**
Disposition: Retain until final disposition of all cases for which recording provides evidence.

2.03 Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) Entry Cards and Validation Documents. These records document the entry of data on crime and criminal offenders by local law enforcement agencies into the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) database.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain entry cards and validation documents until corresponding information in the database has been updated or deleted.

2.04 Criminal History Logs. These records document the compilation of information on criminals or motorists obtained from LEDS and other criminal data sources. The logs record officers' requests to the department's records division for such information. An entry on a log may include the subject's name, date of birth, description, and criminal history, as well as the date of the inquiry and the initials of the department's records clerk.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

2.05 Ex-Felon Registration Records. These records document the registration (subject to the requirements of Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-11-181 through 13A-11-185) of ex-criminal offenders who take up residence within a county. They may include registration books, information on forms or in computer databases, and registration cards issued to ex-felons. Information in the records may include offenses committed by ex-felons, time and place of convictions, and places of residence within the county.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after last term of incarceration ends. For juveniles, retain until subject's age of majority.

2.06 Sex Offender Registration Records. These records document the registration of persons convicted of specified sexual offenses who take up residence within a county. Registration (subject to the terms of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-11-200 through § 13A-11-204) is a lifelong requirement for non-juvenile offenders. The sheriff maintains a register of sex offenders and also provides information on them to the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after offender's residence in county ends, or 5 years after verification of offender's death. For juveniles, retain 10 years after release, or until subject's age of majority, whichever is longer.

Investigating Crime

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

3.01 Investigation Files (including internal affairs files). These records document the investigation of crimes in the community by the sheriff's office or police department. Investigation files may also document death investigations (such as investigations of drug overdoses, suicides, and vehicular accidents) and internal affairs investigations of departmental personnel.
Disposition: Retain case files, according to the class of offense, for the following period after final disposition of the case, or until verification of the death of the subject or alleged participant.

a. **Felonies.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years.

b. **Misdemeanors.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

c. **Offenses committed by juveniles.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until subject's age of majority.

d. **Offenses committed by youthful offenders.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain case file according to the retention policy for the most severe class of offense (felony or misdemeanor).

Note: According to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 15-19-7, "The fingerprints and photographs and other records of a person adjudged a youthful offender shall not be open to public inspection unless the person adjudged a youthful offender is treated as an adult sex offender according to the Code of Alabama [1975] § 15-20A-35; provided, however, that the court may, in its discretion, permit the inspection of papers or records."

e. **Investigations that do not result in criminal charges.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the applicable statute of limitations for the charge or action.

Note: Prior to disposing of investigation files, the law enforcement agency should determine whether any cases relate to public issues of long-term historical significance. The agency should request assistance in evaluating the records from an ADAH Archives Division staff member prior to conducting records destruction activities. Any record having historical significance should be retained by the agency or transferred to a local

library, archives, or historical society under a local government records deposit agreement.

f. **Death investigations.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years after the investigation is closed.

3.02 Jewelry and Pawn Shop Tickets and Reports. These records inform law enforcement agencies of items pawned, thus assisting in the recovery of stolen goods**.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

3.03 Annual Pistol Applications and Permits. These records document applications for, and issuance or denial of, pistol permits within each local government jurisdiction. Pistol applications must be annually renewed.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

3.04 Records of Firearms Sold by Dealers. These records document the retail sale of firearms in each local government jurisdiction. They are used to determine whether persons may legally purchase firearms, and to monitor dealers' compliance with state and federal regulations. It may also include correspondence related to the denial of firearm applications due to Brady Bill considerations.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 20 years (27 CFR 178.129).

3.05 Background Investigation Files. These files document the law enforcement agency's background investigations on behalf of other organizations. Law enforcement may perform background checks for counties, municipalities, other government agencies, and/or private entities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after completion of investigation.

3.06 Unidentified Latent Prints. These records document prints taken during law enforcement investigations that are never identified. They therefore do not result in an arrest or become a part of a case file.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until expiration of the applicable statute of limitations for the charge or action.

3.07 Coroner's Records. These records document the county coroner's investigation of any death that occurred when the subject was not under a physician's care. Disposition of the records is as follows:

a. **Autopsy reports.** These records document autopsies performed by county coroners or the state Department of Forensic Sciences.

i. Coroner's copy.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after final disposition of the case.

ii. Law enforcement copy.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain in the case investigation file for the period required.

b. **Coroner's background files on autopsy reports.** These are preliminary notes by county coroners about their investigation of suspicious deaths; they are used in preparing autopsy reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

c. **Certificates of death (coroner's and law enforcement copies).** Official certificates of death are filed with the state Bureau of Vital Statistics.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Making Arrests

4.01 Arrest Warrants/Unexecuted Arrest Warrants (law enforcement copies). These records document the implementation of written orders, signed by a magistrate, to apprehend suspected criminal offenders. Unexecuted warrants cannot be recalled except by action of the court, even though the statute of limitations for the crime may have expired.

a. **Executed warrants.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

b. **Unexecuted warrants.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until executed or recalled by the appropriate court. After 10 years, ask the court to review unexecuted warrants.

4.02 Arrest Case Files and Indices. These records document the arrest and booking into custody of offenders by departmental personnel.
Disposition: Retain case file, according to the class of offense, for the following periods after final disposition of the case, or until verification of subject's death:

a. **Felonies.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years.

b. **Misdemeanors.**
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 10 years.

c. **Offenses committed by juveniles.**
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain until subject's age of majority.

d. **Offenses committed by youthful offenders.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain case file according to the retention policy for the most severe class of offense (felony or misdemeanor).

e. **Arrest case file indices.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the life of the indexed records.

Note: Prior to disposing of arrest case files, the law enforcement agency should determine whether any cases relate to public issues of long-term historical significance. The agency should request assistance in evaluating the records from an ADAH Archives Division staff member prior to conducting records destruction activities. Any record having historical significance should be retained by the agency or transferred to a local library, archives, or historical society under a local government records deposit agreement.

4.03 Audiovisual Field Recordings. These records may document interactions between local law enforcement agency employees and the public or may be created as part of the agency's routine public safety and investigative processes. Audiovisual recordings subject to this records retention include, but are not limited to, all content captured by body/vest cameras, in-car/dash cameras, and similar devices. The scope of this series may also include recordings that are exclusively audio or exclusively video.

a. **Recorded information that becomes part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Transfer to investigation case file.

b. **Recorded information that is subject to a received complaint or records request but is not part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months or until the complaint or records request is resolved, whichever is longer.

c. **Recorded information that is not subject to a received complaint or records request and does not become part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 months.

Detaining and Booking Offenders

5.01 Records Documenting Arrest and Booking.

a. **Arrest/booking logs.** These records document the date and time of booking of persons taken into law enforcement custody.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years, or until disposition of all cases documented in the log.

b. **Fingerprint cards.** Fingerprint cards provide a long-term means of identifying persons arrested and checking their criminal histories against existing fingerprint files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years or until verification of subject's death.

c. **Mug shots.** Photographs of persons arrested (mug shots) are also taken at the time of booking.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years or until verification of subject's death.

d. **Indices to fingerprints and mug shots.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of the indexed records.

Note: Prior to disposing of arrest and booking records, the law enforcement agency should determine whether any cases relate to public issues of long-term historical significance. The agency should request assistance in evaluating the records from an ADAH Government Records Division archivist, or from another qualified state or local historian or archivist. Any record having historical significance should be retained by the agency or transferred to a local library, archives, or historical society under a local government records deposit agreement.

Providing Assistance to the Courts

6.01 Bench Warrants and Subpoenas (law enforcement copies). Bench warrants authorize law enforcement officers to apprehend suspected criminal offenders who fail to appear in court after posting bond. Subpoenas may be issued for various purposes including, but not limited to, compelling the provision of documents and summoning witnesses to appear during civil and criminal proceedings.

a. **Executed warrants and subpoenas.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

b. **Unexecuted warrants and subpoenas.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until executed or recalled by the appropriate court. After 10 years, ask the court to review unexecuted warrants and subpoenas.

6.02 Law Enforcement Copies of Records Documenting Other Charges, Orders, and Directives of the Courts. These records document all other charges, orders, and directives issued by the court that require action by law enforcement officers in reference to specific cases. The disposition set forth here applies only to the law enforcement copies of such records and assumes retention of court copies for the periods specified in schedules established by the Administrative Office of Courts.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

a. **Law enforcement copies of individual charges, orders, and directives.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of the case.

b. **Docket books (used to track receipt of/response to court directives).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of all the cases recorded in the docket book.

6.03 Evidence and Supporting Documentation. These records include evidence in law enforcement custody that has not been released to its original owners.

a. **Evidence and supporting documentation introduced as exhibits during court proceedings.** These exhibits become of the property of the civil or criminal court. Disposition mut be directed by written order of the court, following the provisions of Section D (Exhibits) of the Court Records Retention Schedules (2009 edition) published by the Administrative Office of Courts.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after final disposition of the case and until written consent for disposal is received from the district attorney and the judge who presided over the case. If the judge who presided over the case is retired or inactive, the consent of the current presiding judge may be obtained in lieu of the trial judge's consent.

b. **Evidence and supporting documentation not introduced as exhibits during court proceedings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after final disposition of the case and until written consent for disposal is received from the district attorney and the judge who presided over the case. If the judge who presided over the case is retired or inactive, the consent of the current presiding judge may be obtained in lieu of the trial judge's consent.

c. **Sexual assault kits and supporting documentation from offenses perpetrated against adults.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 15-23-121 requires that sexual assault evidence collection kits, associated test results (including DNA profile matches), and information on the kit contents must be preserved "for at least 20 years." Upon written request by the survivor, the items outlined above must be preserved for an additional twenty years. Investigative files should be preserved for the same length of time as these items.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 20 years; upon written request by the survivor, retain an additional 20 years.

d. **Sexual assault kits and supporting documentation from offenses perpetrated against juveniles.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 15-23-121 requires that sexual assault evidence collection kits, associated test results (including DNA profile matches), and information on the kit contents must be preserved "until the survivor reaches 40 years of age if the survivor was a minor when the [sexual] assault occurred." Upon written request by the survivor, the items outlined above must be preserved for an additional twenty years. Investigative files should be preserved for the same length of time as these items.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the survivor reaches 40 years of age; upon written request by the survivor, retain an additional 20 years.

6.04 Sheriff's Execution Dockets or Order of Sale. These records document the county sheriff's execution of court orders for the sale of property. They include both docket books and copies of court orders.

a. **Sheriff's execution dockets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Transfer to circuit court clerk when book is filed.

b. **Copies of court orders.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

6.05 Sheriff's Sales Books. These records document the actual, court-ordered sale of property by the county sheriff.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Incarcerating Offenders

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

7.01 Monthly Reports to the State Department of Corrections. These reports detail information on the number, race, sex, and physical condition of prisoners in county or municipal jails; any visits by local health authorities; and other information listed on standard Department of Corrections forms.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.02 Records of Jail Operations.

a. **Daily jail censuses, inmate rosters, and related statistical records.** These records (which may vary in title and format among law enforcement agencies) provide statistical information on inmates housed in local jails, broken down by such factors as sex, race, criminal history, and "state" vs. "county" jurisdiction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years.

b. **Daily shift logs.** These records are daily reports of jail activities, providing a running chronology of events on each shift. They document such matters as observation of prisoners, admission of persons in or out of the facility, daily menus and dispensing of medications to the prison population, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

c. **Jail visitor records**. These records document visitors to prisoners at the jail. They may be kept in various formats (cards, logbooks, electronic, etc.) and contain such information as: the date of the visit; the inmate's name and identification number; the visitor's name, address, and telephone number; the type of identification given; the name of officer who registered the visitor; and other comments.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after release of inmate.

7.03 Jail Surveillance Audiovisual Recordings.

a. **Recorded information that becomes part of an investigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Transfer to investigation file.

b. **Recorded information that is subject to a received complaint or records request but is not part of an investigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months or until the complaint or records request is resolved, whichever is longer.

c. **Recorded information that is not subject to a received complaint or records request and does not become part of an investigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 months.

7.04 Jail Inspection Records. These records document the periodic inspection of every county or municipal jail, almshouse, or prison in the state to ensure the just, humane, economic, and efficient management of these facilities. Records in this series include Department of Corrections Form 914.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the date of inspection. For cities and towns of less than 10,000 people, retain 10 years after date of inspection.

7.05 Jail Incident Reports. These records document all unusual instances involving inmates, such as infractions of jail rules, and subsequent actions taken by guards or other law enforcement personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after release of inmate.

7.06 Feeding Prisoners Account Books. These records document the amount paid to the law enforcement agency by the State of Alabama for feeding prisoners in county or municipal jails.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.07 Records of Incarceration (Inmate Files). These records document the incarceration of individual inmates in county or municipal jails. Basic information in the includes, but is not limited to, names, physical descriptions, charges, convictions, sentencing details, date of commitment, and date of release. Other records documenting incarceration may include, but are not limited to, records summarizing an inmate's criminal history, medical files, educational and/or vocational training files, mental health and/or substance abuse counseling files, personal property receipt/disposal forms, request forms (such as requests to deduct money from inmate accounts or requests for additional funds), inmate complaint forms and agency responses, court information files, parole information, work release files, emergency pass and/or leave files, inmate conduct reports, and disciplinary files.

a. **Inmate medical files (records documenting medication issued to individual inmates and medical care provided by doctors, dentists, mental health professionals, nurses, or other medical professionals).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the term of incarceration ends.

b. **All other records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the term of incarceration ends.

7.08 Inmates' Personal Property. This item provides for the disposition of clothing and other personal belongings taken from prisoners at the time of their incarceration. It covers articles that, for whatever reason, cannot be returned to prisoners or their families after their incarceration ends. It does not pertain to articles that become evidence in court (see "Exhibits of Evidence").
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after release of inmate.

7.09 Inmate Commissary Files. These records document the request for and receipt of goods from the commissary of a correctional facility. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, commissary order forms and delivery confirmations.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Note: For financial records pertaining to the commissary, please refer to "Administering Internal Operations – Managing Finances."

Managing Elections

8.01 Ballots and Records of Election. Sheriff's offices are tasked with maintaining ballots after the conclusion of an election, including spoiled, provisional, and absentee ballots. As part of this responsibility, they may also receive the "Records of Election" containers produced by voting precincts, voting machine testing and certification records (Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 307-X-1-.04), and voting machine memory cards. County probate offices maintain official election results.

a. **Ballots and Records of Election for elections with no federal office on the ballot.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months after the election (Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-12-7).

b. **Ballots and Records of Election for elections with a federal office on the ballot.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 22 months after the election (52 U.S.C. § 20701).

Note: If the election is contested or results in litigation, retain all materials until the contest is resolved, litigation has terminated, and all appeals have been exhausted.

8.02 Unused Election Materials.

a. **Unused absentee ballots and election materials with no federal office on the ballot.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 18 months after the election (Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-11-19).

b. **Unused absentee ballots and election materials with a federal office on the ballot.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 22 months after the election (52 U.S.C. § 20701).

c. **Unused election-day ballots and related election materials.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the results of the election have been certified.

8.03 Copies of Election Results for Political Party Primaries and Primary Runoffs. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-13-14 requires that county sheriffs' offices deliver primary or primary-runoff election results to each party's county executive committee by 10 AM the day following the election.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Transfer to the county party executive committee.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

9.01 Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records document the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the law enforcement agency.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.02 Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions. Records within this series document high-level decision-making processes and organizational changes and may include, but are not limited to, correspondence with public officials and other stakeholders, legal/advisory correspondence, organizational charts, and memoranda.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.03 Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the law enforcement agency; they serve only as a reference source of information on law enforcement issues.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

9.04 Representative Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials. These records are created to build public awareness about a variety of issues and government related activities. Examples of these records include, but are not limited to, press releases, brochures, guides, magazines, news articles, advertisements, and posters. The publications document the activities of the local government agency and how it views these activities.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.05 Informational and Promotional Working Files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

9.06 Internal Ballots and Related Files. Records within this series document the results of internal elections.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

9.07 Routine Correspondence. This correspondence documents the day-to-day conduct of law enforcement operations. It does not relate to policy- or rule-making decisions.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 years.

9.08 Attorney General's Opinions. These records document opinions of the Attorney General regarding questions posed by law enforcement officials.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded, obsolete, or no longer useful.

9.09 Legal Case Files. These records document legal proceedings where the law enforcement agency is a party. These include, but are not limited to, litigation, arbitration, mediation, facilitation, and other legal remedies not otherwise addressed in this RDA.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 6 years after the case is closed.

9.10 State Board of Adjustment Files. These materials relate to involvement in Board of Adjustment proceedings, and include, but are not limited to, claims, supporting documentation, evidentiary materials, findings, decisions, consents, settlements, and other dispositions by the Board.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after final disposition of claim.

9.11 Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses for the purpose of office mail-outs.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

9.12 Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

9.13 Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for law enforcement personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

9.14 Records Management Documentation.

a. **Local Government Records Destruction Notices and Letters of Eligibility.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

b. **Agency copies of the approved RDA.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

c. **File listings, records management plans, and other records documenting implementation of the locality's approved RDA.** This documentation primarily serves an internal purpose and should be transferred to the records custodian's successor.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

9.15 Open Records Requests and Related Documentation. This series encompasses requests to view records in accordance with Open Records laws and any related correspondence or other documentation related to the fulfillment or denial of the request(s).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit. If litigation is initiated during this period, retain until litigation is concluded.

9.16 Local Government Records Deposit Agreements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.

Note: Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact the ADAH.

9.17 Computer Systems Documentation. These records document the addition, modification, and removal of software and/or hardware from an agency's computer systems. Documentation in this series may include, but is not limited to, the following record types: current source code, dataset inventories and layouts, hardware/software specifications and changes (including operating system details, server names, IP addresses, and software lists), hardware/software warranties, input/output specifications, instruction manuals (including user guides and vendor-supplied documents), licensing information, local and/or wide area network schematics, operational logs (including audit logs, dataset logs, job logs, programming logs, system development logs, and update logs), performance reports, system backup reports, and system overviews.

a. **Core computer systems documentation.** This series includes documentation that enables the continued use of data and records contained within computer hardware and software systems.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the life of the system.

Note: Agencies should ensure that they maintain documentation that allows them to migrate their data.

b. **Routine computer systems documentation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the duration of administrative value.

c. **Warranties and Licenses.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until expiration.

9.18 Websites. Websites are developed to provide information to the public on departmental policies, programs, services, and administration, as well as public safety issues.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

10.01 Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a budget request package for the county commission or municipal council, reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.

a. **Departmental budget estimates and requests.** These records contain information submitted by the law enforcement agency to the county or municipal government during budget preparation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle.** These records include budgeted vs. actual revenue/expense reports, investment reports, encumbrance reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.02 Accounting Records.

a. **Routine accounting records**. These are records of original entry or other routine accounting transactions, including journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, and other supporting documentation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under Grant Project Files.

b. **General ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances.** These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue, purchasing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.

i. Records created prior to 1975.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ii. Records created in or after 1975.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

10.03 Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods and services, and authorizing payment for products. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, purchase orders, quotes, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after audit.

10.04 Audit Reports. These records document the law enforcement agency's overall financial conditions and the findings of the Examiners of Public Accounts (sheriff's departments) or an independent auditor (police departments) during each audit period.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

10.05 Contracts, Leases, Franchises, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, franchises, and agreements entered into by the law enforcement agency, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-33).

10.06 Records of Formal Bids. These records document the bid process, including the law enforcement agency's requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses from service vendors.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-4e).

10.07 Grant Project Files. These records document the agency's application for, and conduct of, grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Financial records, interim narrative reports, and supporting documentation.** These records include background materials, financial reports, interim reports and other supporting documentation for grants that have been awarded. Also included are records relating to rejected grant applications.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.

b. **Subsidiary financial records.** These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports (see federal rule 1354).
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.

c. **Final narrative reports.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

10.08 Travel Records. These records document requests by law enforcement personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms, and itineraries.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.09 Employer Tax Returns and Related Files. These records include, but are not limited to, employer state tax returns, federal tax returns, local tax returns, monthly and quarterly tax reporting forms such as federal Form 941, unemployment quarterly reports, and Federal Forms 1099. These records do not pertain to individual employees but instead describe the local government agency as a whole.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.10 Sales Tax Exemption Documentation. Government agencies are legally exempted from paying sales tax per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 40-23-49. Since agencies must occasionally demonstrate their tax-exempt status when dealing with vendors or other contacts, the Alabama Department of Revenue provides proof of sales-tax-exempt status on request.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

11.01 Personnel or Pension Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document meetings, policies, and actions taken by the law enforcement agency's personnel or pension board, along with the agenda of topics to be discussed at the meeting and any attachments or other documents provided to board members.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-44-22).

11.02 Personnel or Pension Board Hearing Files. These records document various types of hearings held by the department's personnel or pension board, such as demotion hearings, hardship rules hearings, grievance hearings, dismissal appeals, discrimination appeals, layoff appeals, pension-related disputes, and citizen complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

11.03 Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new law enforcement employees about personnel rules, policies, and procedures.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

11.04 Employee Newsletters. These records are internal newsletters created for law enforcement agency employees in order to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information about individual employees.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

11.05 Job Classifications and Pay Plans. These records document job classifications for all positions covered by the law enforcement agency's personnel system. They include the title, qualifications, duties, and pay range for each position.

a. **Law enforcement agencies that conduct their own personnel administration.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Law enforcement agencies whose personnel administration is conducted by another county or municipal department.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

11.06 Examination Records. These records document the development and administration of examinations for employment in department positions.

a. **Examination history files.** These files document the development of employment examinations. They include questionnaires, comparison studies, final copies of examinations, and job announcements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after examination is no longer in use.

b. **Examination administrative files.** These records document the administration of examinations to applicants for positions. They include rating forms, answer sheets, and lists of applicants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

11.07 Certification Records. These records document the process of certifying applicants for employment. They pertain to individuals deemed qualified for department positions after submitting an application and taking an employment examination.

a. **Employment registers.** These records are lists of individuals declared qualified for certain positions. They include job classifications, names of eligible applicants, and their ranking on the certification list.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after superseded.

b. **Employee certification files.** These records document the certification process with individual job applicants. They include questionnaires, training and experience records, grades, notifications, and returned postcards and letters.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

11.08 Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the law enforcement agency to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the position is filled.

11.09 Employment Applications. These records document applications for employment that are maintained for consideration when vacancies arise. They may also include rejected applications, applications for transfer, and applications for promotion.

a. **Successful applications.**
Disposition: Move the information to the employee personnel file.

b. **Unsuccessful applications.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

c. **Supplemental data forms of successful applicants.** Information on these forms may include, but is not limited to, the job applicant's name, Social Security Number, date of birth, race, sex, and recruitment source. The form may be filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Move the information to the employee personnel file.

d. **Supplemental data forms of unsuccessful applicants.** Information on these forms may include, but is not limited to, the job applicant's name, Social Security Number, date of birth, race, sex, and recruitment source. The form may be filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

e. **I-9 forms.** These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Employers must keep a completed I-9 form on file for all employees. The forms must be kept for as long as the employee works for the agency, and for a certain amount of time after separation. The minimum required retention of the employing agency's copy is provided by 8 CFR § 274a.2 (Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act).

    i. If the employee worked for less than two years.
    Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain their form for three years after the date you entered in the First Day of Employment field.

    ii. If the employee worked for more than two years.
    Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain their form for one year after the date they stop working for you.

f. **E-Verify case verification numbers.** Guidelines from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Citizenship and Immigration Services state that employers must record or print and file the E-Verify case verification number for each corresponding I-9 form.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 years after the date of hire, or 1 year after the date employment ends, whichever is later.

11.10 Equal Opportunity Employment Commission Files. These records document the agency's compliance with regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Note: "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought to the Attorney General – [retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31, 1602.20).

11.11 Employee Personnel Files. These records document each law enforcement employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. The files may include information on employee background checks, training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, awards, leave, and salary. These records may be case files maintained by a central city/county personnel office or internal files maintained by a law enforcement agency that are not duplicated elsewhere.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

11.12 Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all law enforcement employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.13 Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires. These records summarize overall law enforcement personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

11.14 Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of agency personnel, both generally and for individual employees.

a. **Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets).** These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **Employee cumulative leave/attendance records.** These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the separation of the employee.

c. **Employee leave donation records.** These records document the donation of leave to their colleagues by agency employees.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.15 Payroll Records. These records document payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.

a. **Employer annual payroll earnings reports.** These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and wage and tax statements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.

b. **Records documenting employee payrolls.** These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years, or 1 year after audit, whichever is longer.

c. **Records documenting employee payroll deduction authorizations.** These records document payroll deduction authorizations for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement contributions, and similar deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

d. **Records documenting employee payroll deductions.** These records document taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years, or 1 year after audit, whichever is longer.

11.16 Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files (applications, correspondence, enrollment cards, and related files). These records document participation in "cafeteria plans" as provided by the Internal Revenue Code § 125.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program.

11.17 Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the law enforcement agency's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs, in accordance with established guidelines.

a. **General information on the program.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

b. **Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after termination of the program or separation of employee.

c. **Employee claims files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.18 Exposure to Hazardous Substances Compliance Files. These records document the agency's compliance with regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and/or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). See 29 CFR § 1910 and 40 CFR § 311.

a. **Records documenting employee exposure to hazardous substances.** Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, the following documents: employee exposure to hazardous substances records; summaries of background data relevant to environmental monitoring and measuring activities; and analyses using exposure or medical records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the duration of employment plus 30 years (29 CFR § 1910.1020[d][1][ii] and 40 CFR § 311.1).

b. **Records documenting employee workplace safety training and risk reduction measures.** Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, the following documents: written certifications of hazard assessments, written certifications documenting the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE), materials used to train employees in the proper usage of PPE, and certifications that the employees understood the PPE training.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the duration of employment (29 CFR § 1910.132 and 40 CFR § 311.1).

11.19 Workers' Compensation Insurance Claim Files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by law enforcement employees (see Code of Alabama 1975 § 25-5-4).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.

11.20 Unemployment Compensation Records. These records provide documentation on law enforcement employee claims for unemployment compensation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the transaction occurred.

11.21 Employment Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various assistance programs and subsequent services provided.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the transaction occurred.

11.22 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the Family Medical Leave Act program, include leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.23 Affordable Care Act Compliance Files. These records encompass the documentation submitted to the federal government to demonstrate compliance with the Affordable Care Act.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission.

11.24 Training Records. These records document in-service training and professional development for law enforcement personnel. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources.

a. **Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the law enforcement agency's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to law enforcement personnel and volunteers. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.

b. **Training administrative files.** These records document the process of conducting training for law enforcement personnel and volunteers. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

11.25 "Drug-Free Workplace" Records. These records document the law enforcement agency's substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of employees. Under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files. They are generally governed by the requirements of 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). The types of records to be maintained include:

Retention periods for "Drug-Free Workplace" records are as follows:

a. **Drug/alcohol abuse policy and procedures documentation.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee refusals to take tests, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of annual MIS reports submitted to FTA.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

c. **Records related to the collection process and employee training**.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years

d. **Negative employee drug or alcohol test results.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

11.26 Community Policing Volunteer Records. These records document the local law enforcement agency's use of volunteers to serve in community policing initiatives including, but not limited to, Citizen Observer Patrols, Neighborhood Watch, and Citizens Police Academies. Records in this series include, but are not limited to, volunteer application materials, such as application forms, background checks, and any other supporting documentation; work histories; credentialing information; records related to citizen complaints against the volunteer; and documentation of training.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after last contact with the volunteer.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

12.01 Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay of the law enforcement agency on an annual basis.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

12.02 Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of law enforcement agency property by employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

12.03 Facilities/Building Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in law enforcement buildings or other facilities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

12.04 Facilities/Building Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of law enforcement buildings, facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

12.05 Security Audiovisual Recordings. This record series consists of security recordings created to monitor activities and document incidents. They may include, but are not limited to, video recordings, audio recordings, and images from security or surveillance cameras. Security setups vary, and recordings may be continuous, stop-frame, or random use. Recordings or images may capture date and time indexing information, which should be retained contextually with recordings.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 days.

Note: Security audiovisual recordings associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

12.06 Facility Access Control Authorization Records for Individuals. These records include, but are not limited to, documentation surrounding the issuance and accountability of identification badges, access badges and tokens, physical keys, and related assigned-access credentials for buildings and other facilities. Biometric facility access control records also fall within the scope of this series.

a. **Access Control Authorization Records Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after credentials are updated, superseded, or terminated, but in no instance fewer than 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Access Control Authorization Records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after credentials are updated, superseded, or terminated.

12.07 Facility Access Control Master Lists. This series consists of centralized lists that define who has access to specific areas or resources within facilities and their designated levels of access.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until updated, superseded, or terminated.

12.08 Facility Access Registers and Logs. These materials include logs, registers, and reports documenting access to buildings and other facilities. Such records include, but are not limited to, gate logs, guard logs, access registers, and similar routine admission registers or security logs.

a. **Facility Access Registers and Logs Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Facility Access Registers and Logs.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Note: Facility access registers and logs associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

12.09 Visitor Sign-in Records.

a. **Visitor Sign-in Records Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Visitor Sign-in Records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Note: Sign-in records associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

12.10 Facilities/Buildings Safety Plans and Training Files.

a. **Safety plans.** These records document the manner in which agency staff are directed to respond in emergencies. Examples of safety plans include, but are not limited to, fire evacuation protocols, severe weather plans, and active shooter protocols.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

b. **Training files.** These records document the training and practice undertaken by staff to implement safety plans. Examples of training and practice include, but are not limited to, fire drills, tornado drills, and bomb threat drills.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

12.11 Motor Pool Use Records. These records document use of police or emergency vehicles by agency employees. They include gasoline usage records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

12.12 Vehicle and Equipment Ownership and Maintenance Files. These records document the ownership, maintenance, and repair of all vehicles or other equipment owned or operated by the law enforcement agency. Examples of equipment subject to ownership, maintenance, and repair within this series include, but are not limited to, the following: tasers, firearms, body armor, audiovisual devices, and radar devices. Records may include titles, bills of sale, repair records, certificates of calibration, and related correspondence.

a. **Ownership records (titles, bills of sale, etc.).**
Disposition: Temporary Records. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.

b. **Maintenance files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: These records may include, but are not limited to, the following: work orders, repair records, related financial records.

12.13 Parking Records. These records document the use of parking facilities by law enforcement employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.

a. **When parking fee is charged.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **When no parking fee is charged.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after permit expires.

12.14 Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the law enforcement agency's long-distance telephone systems by its employees during working hours.
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 2 years following audit.

12.15 Insurance Policies and Claims.

a. **Insurance policies.** These policies document all insurance policies carried by the agency.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.

b. **Insurance claims**. These records document insurance claims filed by the local government agency.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was settled.

c. **Certificates of liability.** These records provide proof of insurance. Certificates are typically valid for a period of one year or less.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

d. **Certificates of insurance for vendors.** These certificates are provided by vendors that are providing goods and/or services to a local government agency. The records list the local government as being additionally insured.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23, "no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any. . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission." This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission's staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency's approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency's custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis – for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA's provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records' permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA's requirements, the office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-

mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this revised Records Disposition Authority on April 22, 2026.

_____ _____

Steve Murray, Chair Date
Local Government Records Commission

By signing below,the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by this Records Disposition Authority.

_____ _____

Sheriff/Chief of Police Date

_____

Name of Law Enforcement Agency

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