Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters
Examining Board

Functional Analysis
&
Records Disposition Authority

Revision
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board

Sources of Information

- Representatives of the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board
- Code of Alabama 1907 § 19-3267
- Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-1 to § 34-37-18
- Alabama Administrative Code Chapters 720-X-1 to 720-X-13
- Archives Division, State Agency Files (1985-ongoing)
- Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention of the National Association of Master Plumbers of the United States of America. Louisville, Kentucky, 1907.

Historical Context

At the dawn of the twentieth century, much of Alabama considered the outhouse a dependable solution to the sanitation question. Yet, the new century brought new realities, and long before dripping faucets could plague most Alabamians, the state needed to experience significant urbanization, infrastructure development, and legislative investment. As these realities took shape, so did new associated trades like plumbing. While coalescing as its own vocation from similar tradecrafts, plumbing forged lasting alliances with the steam and gas fitting communities during these formative stages.1

In addition to forging alliances, the fledgling plumbing community needed to develop and formalize trade standards. Fortunately, early organizations like the National Association of Master Plumbers of the United States of America (NAMP) excelled in cultivating plumbing trade knowledge. Founded in 1883, NAMP sought to shape the growing craft into a standardized profession by providing the space to present the latest findings and report on the progress of plumbing from all over the country.2

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with NAMP within five years of the organization’s establishment, and subsequent years would see Alabama NAMP officers actively contributing to those conversations. At the 1907 NAMP National Convention, for instance, William Wilby of Selma, Dallas County, reported that:

There is no law governing plumbing or plumbers in his State as a State law; there is State and county license for plumbing. No examination [is] necessary, and only master plumbers are licensed. Inspection of plumbing work is not provided for, and no new laws are contemplated.³

Wilby’s summation demonstrates that while licensing for plumbers may have existed in Alabama, standardized qualifications for this licensing did not. Yet, even as Mr. Wilby rendered his stark reflection of Alabama’s plumbing standards at the NAMP convention in Kentucky, the political inertia in Montgomery gave way to a steady momentum.

With so many rural Alabamians drawing on wells, the need for waterworks infrastructure remained marginal for most of the nineteenth century. While legislators had faced select water and plumbing challenges as early as the 1890s, they had responded with piecemeal solutions. For instance, in the 1892 session, the Legislature revised the charter for Demopolis, empowering city authorities to supply the city with water and to license plumbers and gas fitters; provided for a Board of Water Works in the city of Cullman, which they explicitly empowered to regulate plumbing therein; and established the Alabama Girls’ Industrial School (a women’s college which later became the University of Montevallo), whose curriculum included, “plumbing, and such other practical industries.”⁴ Later, in 1900, the Legislature additionally granted the authority to build, maintain, and regulate infrastructure and waterworks to the Cities of Ensley and Bessemer in Jefferson County and the City of Greenville in Butler County.⁵ These sporadic examples suggest that no consistent infrastructure development approach existed within Alabama beyond the municipal level.

These scattered instances heralded more significant challenges, which became evident as the Legislature increasingly fielded bills about infrastructure at large rather than plumbing specifically. Attempting to expedite infrastructure development, legislators in 1903 incentivized corporations to furnish public utilities. Alabama Act 1903-63 enumerates the substantial rights corporations would enjoy in developing for-profit waterworks, and Act 419 of the same session extended those rights even further for water-related enterprises organized to produce hydroelectric power. These acts provide little mention of how local governments figure into the operation, maintenance, or regulation of these enterprises. This would not remain the case; in time, Alabama would come to assert more control over these private interests.⁶

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³ Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention of the National Association of Master Plumbers of the United States of America, 26.
⁴ These Demopolis’ plumbing and gas fitting licenses were set at twenty dollars each – a substantial sum. Alabama Act 1892-140; Alabama Act 1892-444.
⁵ Alabama Act 1900-110; Alabama Act 1900-163; Alabama Act 1900-438.
⁶ Alabama Act 1903-63; Alabama Act 1903-419.
The 1907 Code of Alabama afforded significant expansions of authority to municipalities, among them the power:

To prescribe the location and manner in which drainage from private premises may be disposed of, and to prescribe the manner in which plumbing shall be constructed, and to forbid the use of the same while out of order, or defective, and may discontinue or forbid the use of sinks, dry wells, and surface closets, and may regulate and compel the connection of private or public premises with the sewer system of the town or city […]\(^7\)

Since plumbing generally begins at water mains and stops at sewer connections, this legislation effectively authorized municipalities to compel the hiring of plumbers. What constituted a plumber, aside from usually paying a licensing fee, remained undefined in statewide legislation.

This notwithstanding, lawmakers first needed to enact measures to facilitate access to safe, affordable, and adequate water supplies; only then could Alabama’s leaders turn to face corollary challenges, like inconsistent plumber qualifications. By the conclusion of the 1915 session, the legislature had empowered two key government bodies that would help shape the prevalence of plumbing in Alabama. The Alabama Public Service Commission (formerly the railroad commission of Alabama) would regulate utility operations like water, gas, and electricity. More importantly the State Board of Health would exercise more explicit authority in regulating water quality and sanitation standards.\(^8\) In 1920, the “Alabama Public Utility Act” expanded the powers and jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission, and the 1927 “Municipal Public Improvement Act” consolidated and codified the powers of municipalities regarding the construction and maintenance of public improvements and betterments.\(^9\) With these acts and oversight bodies advancing infrastructure development, Alabama soon recognized the need to better regulate the trades associated with that growth—trades like plumbing.

While some Alabama municipalities had licensed plumbers as early as the late 1800s, those varying license mandates lacked a common set of expectations. Municipal licensing fees, like their qualification criteria, were also not standardized; if a plumber wished to practice in more than one city, multiple examinations and multiple licensing fees were required. There clearly needed to be a higher oversight authority.

Alabama first attempted to solve these issues via Alabama Act 1931-628, which created the Board of Plumbers Examination and Registration of Alabama. This first board consisted of five members (two master plumbers, two journeyman plumbers, and one state health officer); the Governor chose two of these five members. This legislation charged the Board to “provide for the examination, registration and licensing of master plumbers and of journeyman plumbers engaged, engaging or desiring to engage in the business or handicraft of plumbing within such counties and to fix the fees to be assessed of applicants for examination, registration and

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\(^7\) Code of Alabama 1907 § 19-3267.

\(^8\) Alabama Act 1915-746; Alabama Act 1915-619.

licensing.” 10 Interestingly, the Board’s authority extended only to counties with more than 100,000 inhabitants. This restriction placed only two counties (Jefferson and Mobile) under the Board’s oversight; this may account for why Alabama Act 1935-472 was passed four years later, extending the Board’s jurisdiction to counties with populations greater than 80,000 inhabitants.11 It also boasted a larger, nine-member board (four master plumbers, four journeyman plumbers, and one state health officer), all of whom were appointed by the governor.12

The end of World War II in 1945 permitted Alabama to shift focus to the domestic front. Dusting off much of the 1935 board language, legislators enacted Alabama Act 1949-529 to create a Plumbers Examining Board with statewide jurisdiction over examining and licensing plumbers. The Board’s scope remained unchanged until Alabama Act 1987-812 additionally charged the Board to oversee licensing of gas fitters in the state. This coupling made sense owing to plumbing and gas fitting’s longstanding professional association and similar tradecraft.13 The Board—now called the “Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board”—operated under these statutes in conjunction with the original provisions of Alabama Act 1949-529 until 1989 when, per Sunset Committee review, the surviving provisions of Act 1949-529 were repealed and replaced by Alabama Act 1989-406. This new act modified the appointment process for Board members and revised journeyman system terms.14

By 1996, the plumbing and gas fitting trades had witnessed increasing professional specializations. In this context, the Alabama Legislature differentiated general gas fitting from medical gas piping fitting, asserting that the latter warranted additional training and placing the associated testing and certification within the purview of the Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board.15 This diversification meant increased responsibilities for the Board, but a lack of enforcement mechanisms hampered the fulfillment of those obligations. The Board’s principal enforcement mechanism was revoking individuals’ certifications when egregious violations occurred. To refine the Board’s enforcement authority, legislators passed Alabama Act 2015-496, which empowered the Board16 to issue fines of up to $2000 per violation. The authority to issue fines augmented the Board’s spectrum of sanctions, now spanning from modest fines to revocation of a licensee’s certification.17

In addition to augmenting the disciplinary powers of the Board, Act 2015-496 also codified the roles of principal master plumber/principal master gas fitter and began the practice of entity

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10 Alabama Act 1931-628.
12 Alabama Act 1935-472.
13 Per this act, gas fitting entailed, “the installation, repair or replacement of pipes, fixtures or other apparatus necessary for supplying natural gas for residential or commercial use.” Alabama Act 1987-812.
17 Considering that the Board could now issue fines up to the bonding sum previously required of master plumbers, this same 2015 legislation also served to displace third-party bonding as the accountability mechanism for plumbers. The legislation was welcomed both by an empowered Board and by plumbers who no longer shouldered onerous bonding fees Alabama Act 2015-496, 24.
registrations. These two amendments complement one another with the goal of curtailing unprincipled plumbing and/or gas fitting operations. Since such entities often dissipate naturally or in the face of disciplinary threat, so with them dissipates any collective accountability. By requiring plumbing and gas fitting business to register as a legal entity and employ a principal master plumber/principal master gas fitter, the Board could more readily identify illicit plumbing and gas fitting operations.

This same Act granted explicit freedom to the Board to “expend funds for purposes of public awareness of the board and its rules and regulations to include advertising, promotional materials, event exhibiting, and other means approved by the board.” It additionally allocates all money remaining at the end of each fiscal year exceeding 25 percent of the Board’s budget to be transferred to the Alabama Home Builders Foundation. While the first clause enables the Board to expend funds on recruiting individuals interested in trade careers, the second empowers the Board to assess the eligibility of plumbing and gas fitting apprenticeship programs applying for such funding.

As it has done for over seventy years, the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board continues to provide the necessary and thorough regulation required to ensure Alabamians enjoy the comfort, sanitation, and reliability afforded by highly skilled plumbers and gas fitters.

**Agency Organization**

The Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board (PGFB) comprises seven members, one from each congressional district, appointed by the Governor for terms of up to four years. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-3 stipulates that the Board must include a master plumber, a journeyman plumber, a master gas fitter, a journeyman gas fitter, a registered professional engineer, a municipal or county building official, and a member of the public. The Board meets at least once annually and appoints an executive director and a deputy director to carry out its daily operations. In addition to clerical staff, the Board also hires compliance officers to facilitate observation of rules and regulations, usually by citing violations.

**Agency Function and Subfunctions**

The mandated function of the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board is to examine, certify, and regulate plumbers, gas fitters, and medical gas piping fitters on a statewide basis. As such, it is one of the agencies responsible for performing the Regulatory function of Alabama government as described in the “Functional Analysis of Alabama Government.”

In the performance of its mandated function, the Board may engage in the following subfunctions:

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18 Registration extending beyond the individual apprentices and licensees, to include registration of, “all corporations, professional corporations, limited liability companies, and all other legal entities engaging the business of plumbing and/or gas fitting within the State of Alabama.” Alabama Act 2015-496, 8, 12–13.
19 Alabama Act 2015-496, 8.
20 Alabama Act 2015-496, 11.
**Promulgating Rules and Regulations.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-2 authorizes the Board to adopt rules and regulations governing licensure as a plumber, gas fitter, or medical gas piping fitter in Alabama. This subfunction encompasses the Board’s work in developing, implementing, and managing the registry and regulatory system for persons registered as plumbers, gas fitters, or medical gas fitters in the state of Alabama.

**Registering.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-1(14) defines “registering,” within the context of the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board, as “the process of application to the board by apprentice plumbers, apprentice gas fitters, [and] all corporations... engaging in the business of plumbing or gas fitting.” Registering, while similar to certifying (discussed below), is a distinct process which only occurs in two scenarios.

First, apprentices must register with the Board because they do not yet meet the educational and/or experience qualifications needed to be certified. To become registered, apprentices must file an application with the Board and pay a fee. Once an apprentice gains the required educational and/or experience qualifications, the apprentice will become certified as a journeyman plumber or gas fitter (discussed below). The registration documentation for that individual will be transferred to his/her certification file.

Secondly, businesses or other corporate entities must register in order to practice plumbing lawfully in the State of Alabama. Businesses and other corporate entities must also file applications with the Board and pay fees in order to become registered. These business entity registrations must be renewed annually. Corporate entities must also designate a principal master plumber or principal master gas fitter, “who is actively and continuously connected with the conduct of the business.” The principal is legally responsible for the company’s workmanship and can be held accountable by the Board. The principal master plumber or principal master gas fitter registration must be renewed annually.

**Certifying.** The certifying subfunction entails three processes: confirmation that individuals possess adequate practical experience; examination of individuals using standardized tests; and issuance of certificates to those who possess adequate hands-on experience and pass the examinations.

The experience requirement ensures applied competency and may be satisfied one of several ways. These include through acquiring sufficient time in class through the traditional apprenticeship system, through participation in PGFB approved classes/training programs, or by PGFB acknowledgment of an equivalent certification, licensure, or registration as issued by another state. Within the traditional

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22 The PGFB does not maintain reciprocal certification agreements with any other state. However, an examinee who is currently certified/licensed as a plumber and/or gas fitter in another state may be able to take the examination for an equivalent classification in the State of Alabama.
apprenticeship system, aspiring plumbers or gasfitters begin as apprentices who assist experienced plumbers and gas fitters in a hands-on capacity. The experience tiers beyond apprentice are journeyman and then master. Apprentices become journeyman by completing two years of apprenticeship (or completing a Board-approved training program) before passing an examination and paying a fee. Subsequently, journeymen may achieve a master certification by working at least one year as a journeyman before passing an examination and paying a fee. Medical gas piping fitters are uniquely certified by the addition of an endorsement to an existing journeyman or master plumber/gas fitter’s certificate.

PGFB examinations ensure individuals command the plumbing or gas fitting education required to augment their practical skills. These exams are administered by a third-party (PSI Services, LLC as of 2022) on a rolling basis. With respect to the tests’ content, PSI Services, Inc. supplies a question bank related to the 2015 International Plumbing Code and/or the 2015 International Fuel Gas Code, and these questions are reviewed and adjusted for Alabama standards by PGFB staff. The examinations are open-book and evaluate candidates’ familiarity with the 2015 International Plumbing Code and/or the 2015 International Fuel Gas Code. Examinations are scheduled by the examinee and are available at multiple testing centers throughout Alabama as well as selectively outside Alabama for out-of-state examinees wishing to obtain certifications within Alabama.

The Board issues certificates once individuals possessing adequate practical experience have passed the required examination(s). Certifications are recorded on the PGFB website for public review, as well as recorded in the certification files maintained at PGFB. Certificates must be renewed annually, and plumbers and gas fitters are required to always have current certifications with them when they are on the job. Although by statute the Board contracts out the administration of the examinations, it facilitates testing, collects any fees, and maintains test scores. The Board maintains certification files for all masters and journeymen and maintains registration files for apprentices.

- **Investigating.** Compliance officers and the Investigative Committee fulfill the investigating subfunction for the PGFB. Compliance officers conduct routine checks throughout the state to ensure that individuals performing plumbing and gas fitting work are certified, carrying their certificates, and otherwise complying with Board regulations. Officers document violations, issue citations, and provide clarification and information to the Investigative Committee during the committee’s deliberations. The PGFB Investigative Committee hears violation incidents and may escalate egregious violations to the full Board for disciplinary action.

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23 PSI, Inc. is an international testing conglomerate providing assessment and talent management solutions in over 50 languages in 160 countries. They provide services for both private public industries, and their professional licensure examinations are approved by the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies.  
25 As of 2022, the Investigative Committee consists of a single official Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board member.
Approving Plumbing and Gas Fitting Education Programs. Per the provisions of Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-5, this subfunction documents any educational programs approved by the Board. These records relate to the PGFB’s consideration of certain instructional programs as substitutes for traditional apprenticeship requirements. As of 2022, approved program agreements exist with the Alabama Community College System and the Construction Education Foundation of Alabama. Policy decisions regarding the review and approval of education programs are reflected in policy correspondence and minutes of the Board.

Administering Internal Operations. A significant portion of the agency’s 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, workers’ 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; and investigating and disciplining.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities include inventoring 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 Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board

The following is a discussion of the two major categories of records created and/or maintained by the Board: Temporary Records and Permanent Records.

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 the Board are discussed below:

- **Register of Administrative Rules.** According to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-22-6 through § 41-22-7, agencies must compile and maintain “an official register of regulations which shall be compiled, indexed, published in loose-leaf form, and kept up to date…” This “official register of regulations” is known as “The Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board Code” and must be made available upon request to all persons. Since the register must be updated on an ongoing basis, it is to be retained until superseded.

- **Administrative Rule Change Working Files.** The Alabama Administrative Procedure Act (Code of Alabama 1975 Title 41 Chapter 22) details the steps which an agency must follow when updating its administrative rules. Working files are produced in the course of the proposal, adoption, amendment, and/or repeal of administrative rules. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, the following: received public comments, economic impact statements, and business impact analyses. A retention of one year after adoption, amendment, repeal, or rejection of an administrative rule permits review by staff when considering similar rules.

- **Business Registration Files.** These materials document the registration of plumbing and gas fitting businesses/legal entities in Alabama, which must seek registration separately from the plumbers and gas fitters they employ. Business registrations must be renewed or updated periodically (once per year minimally). Information in these files may include, but is not limited to, the business owner’s name, the business address, and roles of employees at the time of registration. These materials are closely associated with, but distinct from the Principal Master Plumber/Principal Master Gas Fitter Registration Files. With respect to the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-6-5-221 to 222 outlining the statutes of limitations for construction and engineering suits, these records should be retained for seven years after their date of expiration.

- **Principal Master Plumber/Principal Master Gas Fitter Registration Files.** Per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-2 and the Alabama Administrative Code Chapters 720-X-12-.02 and 720-X-13-.02, principal master plumbers and principal master gas fitters are responsible for the business conducted by the legal entity to which they are actively and continuously connected. These materials are often created in conjunction with
business registration files but remain distinct since a business may change names but retain the same principal master plumber/gas fitters. Conversely, a principal master plumber/master gas fitter may become affiliated with a new business. These materials are closely associated with, but distinct from business registration files. With respect to the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-6-5-221 to 222 outlining the statutes of limitations for construction and engineering suits, these records should be retained for seven years after their date of expiration.

- **Apprentice Registration Files.** These materials result from the registration of individuals as apprentices. These registration files may include materials documenting name, address, contact information, employment information, and work eligibility. Files for apprentices who subsequently achieve journeyman status will be transferred into their certification files. Since individuals must reapply with the Board upon each failure of an examination, files for apprentices who do not successfully achieve journeyman status only need to be retained for three years after the date of last contact to facilitate Board reference.

- **Masters and Journeymen Certification Files (Active and Inactive).** These records contain apprentice registration/information, original applications, examination scores, pertinent correspondence, and certification cards. Additionally, if a licensee applies for inactive status, this inactive status will be printed and reflected in their certification file. To reapply, inactive individuals must submit applications for active status; these applications are also maintained in the certification files. These records should be retained for twenty-five years after the end of the fiscal year during which either the certification expires or during which the individual filed for inactive status to ensure the availability of this information during the professional career of the licensee.

- **Emergency Certification Files.** These records document the provisional and temporary certification of qualified out-of-state plumbers and gas fitters within the context of a state of emergency. When a state of emergency is declared by the Governor of the state of Alabama pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975 §31-9-8, the Executive Director is authorized to waive requirements for the issuance of a certificate for journeyman plumber, journeyman gas fitter, master plumber, or master gas fitter for an out-of-state applicant, provided the applicant can produce a current equivalent license or certificate. While these emergency certifications are valid for a maximum of sixty days, they should be retained for twenty-five years after the end of the fiscal year during which the certification expires in order to provide documentation for any legal, administrative, or licensing renewal considerations.

- **Complaint and Violation Investigative Case Files Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions.** “Investigative case files” is an umbrella term encompassing, but not limited to, consumer complaints (submitted by consumers relating to work conducted by contractors), uncertified plumber and/or gas fitter complaints (submitted by non-

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26 Individuals may wish to apply for inactive status if they are not actively performing plumbing work – for instance, if one becomes a municipal building department official. Doing so prevents inactive individuals from incurring back dues or fines for illegal work upon reactivation of their status.
consumers who suspect plumbers and/or gas fitters of operating in an unlicensed capacity), violation files (violations documented by compliance officers), administrative hearing files, and settlement agreements. Complaints and violations may be resolved at various stages; for example, a consumer complaint file may escalate to a violation file and a violation file may, in turn, escalate to a hearing file. Alternatively, depending on the severity of the violation, or the voluntary forfeiture of the settlement agreement option, a violation scenario may directly proceed to an administrative hearing. Investigations and corrective actions in response to complaints or violations may also be levied against individuals who are not certified by the PGFB. For this reason, case files are maintained separately from certification files. With respect to the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-6-5-221 to 222 outlining the statutes of limitations for construction and engineering suits, these records should be retained seven years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created to document any complaints or potential violations which may have subsequent legal significance, administrative value, or licensing ramifications. This retention serves to document any complaints or suspected violations which may have subsequent legal significance, administrative value, or licensing ramifications.

- **Complaint and Violation Investigative Case Files Not Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions.** These instances include, but are not limited to, contractor responses to a PGFB-issued notice of consumer complaint. A notice of consumer complaint summarizes a consumer complaint which has been verified by a compliance officer and outlines how the recipient may satisfy the complaint. If the contractor acts to correct these issues in good faith, the matter is resolved at the complaint stage without ever escalating to a violation or formal disciplinary action. With respect to the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 13A-6-5-221 to 222 outlining the statutes of limitations for construction and engineering suits, these records should be retained seven years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created to document any complaints or potential violations which may have subsequent legal significance, administrative value, or licensing ramifications.

- **Approved Apprentice Program Records.** Per the provisions of Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-37-5, these records relate to the PGFB’s consideration of certain instructional programs as substitutes for traditional apprenticeship requirements. Instructional providers wishing for their curriculum to replace the traditional apprenticeship requirements may submit proposals to the Board outlining the content of their programs. These records commonly include, but are not limited to, course outlines, syllabi, and curriculum overviews. Decisions regarding such programs, if approved, are reflected in Board meeting packets at the time such programs are approved. Approved training programs become candidates for select funding from the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Alabama Home Builders Foundation. As of 2022, approved program agreements exist with the Alabama Community College System and the Construction Education Foundation of Alabama. These records should be retained for two years after the audit of the fiscal year during which the program ceased operation. This is to facilitate examinations by the Examiners of Public Accounts.
Permanent Records

The Archives Division has appraised the following records as permanent:

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

- **Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Board.** Information in meeting minutes, agendas, and packets may include reports from the Board’s officers and various internal committees/task forces, actions of the Board, Board-approved training program decisions, and disciplinary actions. These records are the best source of information about the functions of the Board and the creation of its policy. *(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Files)*

- **Certified Copies of Administrative Rules.** The Alabama Administrative Code is a compilation of the rules of all state agencies covered by the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act. Each agency covered by the Act may propose and adopt revisions to its administrative rules. According to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-22-6, “each agency shall have an officer designated as its secretary and shall file in the office of the secretary of the agency a certified copy of each rule adopted [by the agency].” *(Bibliographic Title: Not Applicable) (Maintained by the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board)*

Registering

- **Annual Roster Reports of Registered Businesses and Principal Master Plumbers/Principal Master Gas Fitters.** This record series documents the Board’s regulation of corporations, partnerships, and other legal entities engaging in the business of plumbing and/or gas fitting in the State of Alabama. The series records when plumbing and/or gas fitting business entities, corporations, or partnerships register with the Board. Information included in this series includes, but is not limited to, the business entity name, entity registration status (active or expired), and lists of employees associated with the entity. This registration process demonstrates that the organization is complying with state regulations in the licensure of its employees. These rosters are exported from files which are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*

- **Annual Roster Reports of Registered Apprentices.** This record series documents the Board’s regulation of plumbing and gas fitting apprentices in the State of Alabama. Information includes but is not limited to the names, registration statuses (active vs. inactive), issue dates, expiration dates, and registration number for apprentices. These rosters are exported from files which are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*
Certifying

- **Annual Roster Reports of Certified Journeymen, Master, and Specialty Designations of Plumbers and Gas Fitters.** This record series documents the Board’s regulation of the profession of plumbing and gas fitting in the State of Alabama. Information includes but is not limited to the names, certification/licensure statuses (active vs. inactive), issue dates, expiration dates, license numbers, and business addresses of licensees. These rosters are exported from files which are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*

Administering Internal Operations

- **Policies and Procedures - Policies and procedures governing core functions and services.** These records document the agency's role in promulgating policies governing critical operations, such as changes in licensing, violation remediation, or approval of educational programs. The scope of the series does not include policies concerning the administration of routine, internal operations. *(Bibliographic Title: Policies and Procedures)*

- **Administrative Files that Document Policy, Process, and Procedure.** These records, which include official correspondence of the agency, document actions and positions of the agency. They do not include correspondence dealing with routine matters. These records include, but are not limited to, correspondence with state officials, legal/advisory correspondence, subject files, and other correspondence *(Bibliographical Title: Administrative Files)*

- **Annual and Other Periodic Reports.** These records include reports created by the agency that document its critical activities. Some agencies must submit an annual report to the Governor and/or the Legislature by statute. The frequency of report publications may vary (annual, biannual, quarterly, etc.). Interim reports that contain the same substantive information as a corresponding annual or other periodic report need not be retained permanently. Where no agency annual report exists, or where the agency annual report does not adequately document activities of the agency, then division annual reports should be retained. *(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)*

- **Special Reports.** These records include reports created by the agency pertaining to a specific topic or subject area. Special reports may be prepared on an irregular schedule. Interim reports that contain the same substantive information as a corresponding special report need not be retained permanently. *(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)*

- **Newsletters.** The agency publishes newsletters which provide recipients with information regarding the activities of the department; highlights of agency projects and programs; news and announcements; and upcoming events. These publications document the agency’s outreach to key stakeholders and the public. *(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)*
- **Representational Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials.** These records are created to build public awareness about a variety of issues and department-related activities. Examples of these records include, but are not limited to, press releases and brochures. The publications document the activities of the Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board and how it views these activities. *(Bibliographic Title: Publicity Files)*

- **Selection of Representative Photographs (Including High-Quality and/or Published Photographs).** This series includes photographs taken by department staff or contractors for informational and promotional purposes. A selection of the department's representative photographs, including high-quality photographs and/or photographs published in informational and promotional materials, provides visual documentation of the department's significant activities. This selection is to be retained permanently. Photographs outside of this representative selection, including duplicative and poor photographs, are to be retained for useful life. Copyright and reproduction records including, but not limited to, use agreements, release forms, service request forms, and requests for permission to reproduce or publish photographs, are to be retained for the life of the photograph and may be permanent if related to photographs with a permanent retention. Photographs taken for internal or reference use are to be retained for useful life. *(Bibliographic Title: Photographs)*

- **Final and/or Edited Audiovisual Materials.** This series includes audio and/or video recordings taken by department staff or contractors for informational or promotional purposes. Final and/or edited recordings document the department's activities and are to be retained permanently. Copyright and reproduction records including, but not limited to, use agreements, release forms, service request forms, and requests for permission are to be retained for the life of the recording. Stock or raw footage is to be retained for useful life. Recordings taken for internal or reference use are also to be retained for useful life. *(Bibliographic Title: Audiovisual Recordings)*

- **Board Member Files – Biographical and Historical Information.** These records include biographical description and other historical data related to the agency's Board members. These records provide important documentation of the Board's composition. *(Bibliographic Title: Board Member Biographical Files)*

- **Website(s) and Social Media Page(s).** The Board has a website at http://pgfb.alabama.gov/ and social media page with Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/Alabama-Plumbers-Gas-Fitters-Examining-Board-169466113754862/). Information on the website includes testing dates, renewal reminders, solicitation for input Board decisions, and job postings. ADAH staff capture and preserve the agency’s website(s) and other social media page(s) via a service offered by the Internet Archive [Archive-It]. Any content behind password protection or login would not be captured by the ADAH. Check with the ADAH website at https://archive-it.org/organizations/62 to ensure that your agency’s website(s) and social media page(s) are captured and preserved. If your agency’s website(s) and social media page(s) are not
being captured by the service, please contact the Archives Division at 334-242-4452 to get them included. (Bibliographic Title: Website and Social Media Sites)
Permanent Records List
Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

1. Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Board
2. Certified Copies of Administrative Rules*

Registering

1. Annual Roster Reports of Registered Businesses and Principal Master Plumbers/Principal Master Gas Fitters
2. Annual Roster Reports of Registered Apprentices

Certifying

1. Annual Roster Reports of Certified Journeymen, Master, and Specialty Designations of Plumbers and Gas Fitters

Administering Internal Operations

1. Policies and Procedures – Policies and procedures governing core functions and services
2. Administrative Files that Document Policy, Process, and Procedure
3. Annual and Other Periodic Reports
4. Special Reports
5. Newsletters
6. Representational Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials
7. Selection of Representative Photographs (Including High-Quality and/or Published Photographs)
8. Final and/or Edited Audiovisual Materials
9. Board Member Files – Biographical and Historical Information
10. Website(s) and Social Media Page(s)

*indicates records that the Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board determined should be retained permanently and that ADAH anticipates will remain in the care and custody of the creating agency. All other permanent records are to be transmitted to the ADAH once they are no longer in active use by the Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board.
Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board
Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the State Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-20 through 21. 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 Agency. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It identifies records which must be maintained permanently and ultimately transferred to the ADAH; establishes retention periods for temporary records; and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement destruction of eligible records.

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 State Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

**Promulgating Rules and Regulations**

**MEETING MINUTES, AGENDAS, AND PACKETS OF THE BOARD**  
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

**CERTIFIED COPIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**  
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

**Register of Administrative Rules**  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

**Administrative Rule Change Working Files**  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after adoption, amendment, repeal, or rejection of the rule.

**Registering**

**Registration Database.** Contains rosters of apprentices, businesses, and principal master plumber/principal master gas fitters  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

**ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF REGISTERED BUSINESSES AND PRINCIPAL MASTER PLUMBERS/PRINCIPAL MASTER GAS FITTERS**  
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

**Business Registration Files**  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 7 years after date of expiration.

**Principal Master Plumber/Principal Master Gas Fitter Registration Files**  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 7 years after date of expiration.

**ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF REGISTERED APPRENTICES**  
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
Apprentice Registration Files

a. Apprentice registration files upon successful achievement of Journeyman status
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Transfer to individual’s certification file.

b. Apprentice registration files upon unsuccessful achievement of Journeyman status
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after date of last contact.

Certifying

Certification Database. Contains rosters of active and inactive master plumbers, master gas
fitters, journeyman plumbers and journeyman gas fitters
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF CERTIFIED JOURNEYMEN, MASTER, AND
SPECIALITY DESIGNATIONS OF PLUMBERS AND GAS FITTERS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Masters and Journeymen Certification Files (Active Licensees and Licensees Filing
Inactive Status)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years after the end of the fiscal year during which
either the certification expires or during which the individual filed for inactive status.

Examination Files of Unsuccessful Applicants
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after date of examination.

Emergency Certification Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 25 years after the end of the fiscal year during which the
certification expires.

Investigating

Complaint and Violation Investigative Case Files Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the
records were created.

Complaint and Violation Investigative Case Files Not Resulting in Formal Disciplinary
Actions
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the
records were created.

Compliance Officers’ Working Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.
Approving Plumbing and Gas Fitting Education Programs

Approved Apprentice Program Records
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years after the audit of the fiscal year during which the program ceased operation.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

Policies and Procedures

a. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING CORE FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. Policies and procedures concerning internal operations, including the administration of finances, personnel, properties, facilities, and resources
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

ADMINISTRATIVE FILES THAT DOCUMENT POLICY, PROCESS, AND PROCEDURE
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ANNUAL AND OTHER PERIODIC REPORTS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

SPECIAL REPORTS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

NEWSLETTERS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

REPRESENTATIONAL FINAL VERSIONS OF INFORMATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

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

Photographs

a. SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS (INCLUDING HIGH-QUALITY AND/OR PUBLISHED PHOTOGRAPHS)
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. Photographs Outside of Representative Selection (Including Duplicative and Poor Photographs)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.
c. Copyright and Reproduction Records for Photographs
   Disposition: Retain for life of photograph.

d. Photographs Taken for Internal or Reference Use
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Audiovisual Recordings

a. FINAL AND/OR EDITED AUDIOVISUAL RECORDINGS
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. Footage (Including Stock and Raw Audiovisual Recordings)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

c. Copyright and Reproduction Records for Audiovisual Recordings
   Disposition: Retain for life of recording.

d. Audiovisual Recordings Taken for Internal or Reference Use
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Board Member Files

a. BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. Board Appointment Letters
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit after the term expires.

c. Other Files about Board Members
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Routine Correspondence
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Administrative Reference Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Legislative Files (drafts of proposed agency-sponsored legislation, tracking files and records)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Records documenting the implementation of the agency’s approved RDA (copies of transmittal forms to Archives or State Records Center, evidence of obsolete records destroyed, and annual reports to State Records Commission)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.
Signed Copies of Approved RDA
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Computer Systems Documentation (Hardware/Software Specifications and Warranties)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain documentation of former system 1 year after audit for the fiscal year in which the former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to a new system.

WEBSITE(S) AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE(S)
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: ADAH staff capture and preserve the agency’s website and other social media pages via a service offered by the Internet Archive [Archive It]. Any content behind password protection or login would not be captured by ADAH. Check with the ADAH website at https://archive-it.org/organizations/62 to ensure your agency website(s) and social media page(s) are captured and preserved. If your agency’s website(s) and social media page(s) are not captured by the service, please contact the Archives Division at 334-242-4452 to get them included.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

Records documenting the preparation of a budget request package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records documenting the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records of original entry or routine accounting transactions, such as journals, registers, ledgers, and receipt books, and records of funds deposited outside the state treasury
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Purchase and Repair Order Documents
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of warranty.

Records documenting requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business and other related materials, such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.
Records documenting contracts for services or personal property
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the contract.

Records documenting the bid process (including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 10 years after the award of the contract.

Agency Audit Reports
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting the application for, award of, receipt and disbursement of, and reporting of expenditure of federal funds received through grants and federal funds
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final expenditure report.

Records documenting the unsuccessful application for grants and federal funds
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

Job Recruitment Materials
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Application Materials
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Position Classification Questionnaire
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after reclassification of the position.

Records documenting payroll (e.g., pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm.

Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (including Form 941)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Personnel File - Records documenting an employee’s work history - generally maintained as a case file
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.
Records documenting employees’ daily and weekly work schedules  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records documenting employee hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records Documenting Leave Donations  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records of Final Leave Status  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain record of individual employees’ cumulative leave 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files (Applications and Correspondence)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program.

Records documenting the State Employee Injury Compensation Trust Fund (SEICTF) Claims  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Charges of Discrimination  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after final dispensation.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Case Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Employee Administrative Hearing Files  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records Documenting Employee Grievances (Internal Complaints)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting complaints against the agency and its employees from outside the agency (made by members of the public, officials, or supervisees, etc.)  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.
Records (maintained separately from employee personnel file) documenting employee disciplinary proceedings and appeals of formal reprimands, demotions, transfers, or terminations resulting from a grievance or complaint
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting the administration of the unemployment compensation program
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after conclusion of eligibility.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

Semiannual Property Inventory Lists
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-16-8[1]).

Agency Copies of Transfer of State Property Forms (SD-1)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after property audit.

Property Inventory Cards and/or Computer Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after property audit.

Property Inventory Affidavits
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after property audit.

Receipts of Responsibility for Property
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

Records documenting the use, maintenance, ownership, insurance, and disposition of vehicles owned by the agency
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the vehicle was removed from the property inventory.

Real Property Renting/Leasing records
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the termination of lease or rental agreement or until agency is audited and audit report is released, whichever is longer.

Facilities/Building Security Records (including visitor logs)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Motor Pool Vehicle Use Records
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Insurance Policies/Risk Management Records
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of policy or membership.
**Building Maintenance Work Orders**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Records Documenting Vehicle Use/Mileage**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.
Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-21, “no state officer or agency head shall cause any state record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining approval of the State Records Commission.” This Records Disposition Authority constitutes authorization by the State Records Commission for the disposition of the records of the Agency as stipulated in this document.

One condition of this authorization is that the Agency submit an annual Records Disposition Authority (RDA) Implementation Report on its activities, including documentation of records destruction, to the State Records Commission.

Unless otherwise stipulated in this document, the Agency must transmit all permanent records which are no longer in active use to the ADAH.

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. ADAH archivists are available to work with Agency staff in determining the best location and storage conditions for permanent records.

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 State 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. For more information, please call the ADAH Archives Division at 334-242-4452.

The State Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority on April 20, 2022.

_____________________________________________    _________________
Steve Murray, Chairman                      Date
State Records Commission

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

_____________________________________________    _________________
James M. Morgan, Executive Director     Date
Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board