

Office of Research: Record Retention and Destruction Procedure

Related Tennessee Tech Policy

The retention schedule shown in the table below is from the Record Retention and Disposition policy (Policy No. 113). Retention periods and disposition requirements apply to Records regardless of format. Custodians must follow all applicable laws and external agency regulations that may supersede the retention periods in the table below.

Retention & Disposition Schedule				
Record (regardless of format)	Custodian	Retention Period	Disposition	Related RDA
research Records including steps taken and results (correspondence, project descriptions, final reports or deliverables, data, applications, contracts, invoices, asset documentation, monitoring documentation, evaluations, photographs, close-out documents, and related documentation)	Principal Investigator and Research & Economic Development	10 years	transfer final reports and deliverables to University Archives and destroy the rest 10 years after the project ends or for the duration specified by grant, whichever is longer	SW-U07: College/University Research Records
intellectual property Records: including, but not limited to trademark, copyright and patent Records, correspondence, forms, documents and materials relating to application for and granting of same	Principal Investigator, in collaboration with Research & Economic Development and/or Communications and Marketing	permanent	transfer to University Archives at end of fiscal year	SW-U05: Trademark, Copyright, Patent Records, Printed Materials, and Publications
temporary Records: copies for convenience or distribution, drafts, worksheets, routine memos, junk mail, notes, voicemails, text messages, emails; correspondence with short-term administrative value; non-university publications unrelated to Tennessee Tech.)	Office of Origin	until no longer needed	destroy	SW-16: Temporary Records

<https://www.tntech.edu/library/records-management.php>

The Office of Research primarily deals with three types of records:

- Research records for funded projects, including information related to any work done by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), should be retained for 10 years from the end date of the project or for the duration specified by grant, whichever is longer. At that time, final reports and deliverables should be transferred to University Archives and all other records destroyed. A note about project reports will be added to the close-out form to inform PIs of this requirement. The PI is responsible for transferring the final report and any deliverables to University Archives.
- Intellectual Property records (invention disclosures, intellectual property agreements, non-disclosure agreements) should be transferred to University Archives at the end of each fiscal year.
- Temporary records (unfunded proposals and invention disclosures for which we do not have a provisional application) should be retained for three years after the submission date or date of disclosure and then destroyed.

Transferring Records to Archives: If the Retention Schedule indicates a Record is to be transferred to University Archives, please call Megan Atkinson (x3537) to arrange the transfer. Tennessee Tech utilizes Preservica software for digital preservation. Information in the digital files can be accessed upon request and items can be marked as confidential to restrict access.

Please note:

- Archives will accept up to four copies of a Record if available; do not specifically make copies to transfer to Archives. Then destroy all extra copies you do not send to Archives.
- Archives would prefer the original computer file of a Record instead of a printed copy if possible.

Destroying Records

Grant records and contracts are considered Level III records, which are defined as confidential records containing PII and are not otherwise covered in levels I, II, or IV. Examples: student records, grades and tests, **grants, contracts**, HR documentation, etc.

Level III Records are destroyed as follows:

- Electronic Records: contact your department's IT person to coordinate destruction of these electronic records. Per Chris Robbins: Items on the shared drive can just be deleted, but if there is data on a flash drive or external drive, it should be given to him.
- Physical Records: shred these yourself or deposit in a locked secure Cintas shredding bin.

Note about extra copies: destroying extra copies is the only type of destruction that does not need to be documented because it is not destroying the Record, just duplicates. This applies to extra copies of any format. For example, if you have 10 copies of a marketing brochure for your department, you can destroy 9 of those copies without documenting it because those are extra copies or if you digitize paper copies of documents, you can destroy the paper copies because those are just extra copies now.

Any time records are destroyed, it must be documented. This documentation helps create TTU's annual report to the State of Tennessee. There is a simple online form to do so:

<https://fs26.formsite.com/xDqYjm/rmdcod/index.html>.

- Agency: Tennessee Tech University
- Division: Office of Research
- Address/Location: 5164 or 5036
- Allotment Code: 33260
- Record Series Title: Grant Proposal documents or Grant Award documents
- RDA Number: SW-U07
- Date range of records disposed: The month and year the records began and ended.
- Volume & Volume Type: This is how much space the Records took up prior to destruction. This is measured in cubic feet for physical items; one cu ft is approximately the size of one regular paper box. Electronic items are measured in GB, which can be viewed in the file details before deleting; 1 GB = 1000 MB.
- Destruction type: select the method you used; purging is for deleting electronic records.
- Date of Records Destruction: the date Records were destroyed
- Contact Name, Title, Email, and Signature: This is you, the person destroying the Records
- Agency Records Officer: Sharon Holderman
- Agency Records Officer Email: sholderman@tntech.edu

Once the form is submitted, a copy will be received via email, Sharon Holderman will receive a copy, and the State of Tennessee's Division of Records Management receives a copy.

Files to be destroyed: All files to be destroyed on the shared drive will be found in either the PreAward or Closed projects folders. A list of all relevant projects will be pulled from database.

First destruction date: July 2019

- All final reports or deliverables for funded projects that ended prior to and including June 30, 2009 should be transferred to University Archives.
- All other documents related to the funded projects that ended prior to and including June 30, 2009 should be destroyed according to the procedure described above.
- All documents related to unfunded or pending projects that were submitted on or before June 30, 2016 should be destroyed according to the procedure described below.
- Intellectual property Records (including, but not limited to trademark, copyright and patent Records, correspondence, forms, documents and materials relating to application for and granting of same) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019 (and all prior fiscal years) should be transferred to University Archives.