



## Request to Retain Long Term Records in Electronic Form Other Than PDF/A

The policy that requires records with long-term retention (greater than 10 years) to be retained in paper or microfilm format has been expanded. Agencies may now retain long-term records electronically if they are:

1. Retained in the PDF/A format, and
2. Stored in an online environment (not on removable media, such as tape, disc, or thumb drive).

Details are found in the *Policy regarding agency long term records in electronic form* and the *Guidance* document that accompanies it.

Please note, PDF/A is not the equivalent of PDF; it is the *archival* version of PDF, designed to preserve electronic records for long periods of time. PDF/A documents can be created as easily as PDF using Adobe Acrobat and many other readily available tools.

***Agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction may petition the State Archivist to maintain permanent records electronically in a format other than PDF/A.*** For an exception to be considered an agency must either:

1) transfer the archival electronic records to the State Archives for permanent retention preservation within the state's Digital Archives. Such transfer shall be at the discretion of the State Archivist, who may negotiate appropriate charges to the agency to cover the cost of expenses beyond those normally borne by the State Archives (if any). Transfers of electronic records will conform to the State Archives' policies on the transfer of electronic records or,

(2) document, in writing to the State Archivist, the following elements in its electronic records procedures, which may be met by the agency itself or by a third party (such as the Office of Administration/Office for Information Technology (OA/OIT) or a vendor) actively managed/monitored by the agency. In either case, the agency is responsible for adherence to the standards, whether by itself or by a third party. Upon acceptance of the procedures by the State Archivist, the agency may retain the records within the agency in electronic form. The agency must retain written documentation of continuous adherence to these procedures, which the State Archivist may periodically review. The State Archivist may withdraw approval for electronic retention in the absence of such written documentation or in light of any evidence that the procedures are not being adhered to. Withdrawal of approval shall apply to records created subsequent to the withdrawal and will not apply to records retroactively. ***You may complete this form as a MS Word document and send it to [cbendroth@pa.gov](mailto:cbendroth@pa.gov).***



- c. The accuracy of the indexing process shall also be assured through procedures that visually verify indexes after they have been created, whether by keying, by optical character recognition, barcode or any other means. The index verification shall be documented on a continuing basis. *Explain how this will occur and attach any documentation:*

## **2. Maintenance and Retention of Documentation (all electronic records)**

Full and up-to-date process or system documentation shall be maintained throughout the life of the records. When processes or systems change, updated documentation shall be retained until the retention periods are met. See Manual 210.9, General Retention and Disposition Schedule, G007.004, Computer Systems and Data Documentation. *Describe or attach documentation:*

## **3. Audit Trails and Security (all electronic records)**

Audit trails documenting who accessed or used the system, when they used it, and what the results of use were shall be maintained. Security measures consistent with those set forth by OA/OIT ITPs Security (SEC) Domain shall be adopted and applied. See Manual 210.9, General Retention and Disposition Schedule, G007.014, Systems Users Access Files. *Explain how audit trails and security measures will be applied:*

## **4. Access to Records (all electronic records)**

All records in the approved system shall be able to be located, retrieved, opened, and read during the full retention period of the records. A sample of records shall be tested annually and the results documented. *Explain how this will be accomplished:*

## **5. Backup (all electronic records)**

A backup copy of all files, including indexes, shall be created at intervals determined by the frequency of update and the criticality of the system, as established by the creating agency. OA/OIT ITPS, System (SYM) Domain SYM003, Off-site Storage for Commonwealth Agencies, relating to continuity of Government shall be used to determine the frequency and means of backing up imaged records. Off-site backups shall be maintained. All backups shall be documented. *State how this will be accomplished and attach any documentation.*

## **6. Equipment Maintenance (all electronic records)**

An effective maintenance program ensuring that any equipment involved in the creation, storage, retrieval or accessibility of the records are properly housed and regularly maintained shall be in place. Equipment maintenance logs shall document the occurrence of regular maintenance. See Manual 210.9, General Retention and Disposition Schedule, G010.011, Facility Maintenance and Operational Files and G010.013, Fixed Assets Inventory Files. *Describe how this will be accomplished:*

## **7. Acceptable formats**

Acceptable formats for archival purposes are PDF/A, TXT, XML, and TIF Images must be exportable. *List the format(s) that will be used for the storage of these images.*

**8. Migration of Data (all electronic records)**

Migration paths for all records, including those stored offline, shall be identified and employed to ensure usability of records throughout their retention period. The method and frequency of migration shall be documented. *Explain how migration will occur.*

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**Submitted by:**

**Agency:**

**Name:**

**Title:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**State Archives Approval:**

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State Archivist

Date