

La Porte County Library Records Retention Policy

Definition:

The La Porte County Public Library's ("LPCPL" or the "Library") records consist of information documented in performance of the Library's official business. Any information documenting official business, in any format, may constitute a record. Official records are generally considered to be those that document decisions, policies, procedures, resource expenditures, operations or delivery of services.

Purpose:

This Records Retention Policy will serve as a guideline for Library staff that ensures compliance with federal and state record retention requirements. The policy will also ensure the proper storage, labeling, and organization of records.

This policy outlines LPCPL's records management which includes definitions, schedules and retention of public records in accordance with IC 5-14 (Public Records and Public Meetings) and IC 5-15 (Preservation of Public Records).

A Public Record is "any writing, paper, report, study, map, photograph, card, tape recording, or other material that is created, received, retained, maintained, used or filed by a public agency and which is generated on paper, paper substitutes, photographic media, chemically based media, electronically stored data, or any other material, regardless of form or characteristics." These records will be maintained by Library staff.

Records Retention:

The Library follows both the County & Local Government Records and Public Library Retention Schedules which are located on the Indiana Archives and Records Administration website. The schedules provide a list of Record Series which include detail of what records and how long to retain. These schedules should be consulted before any documents are destroyed.

Retention is based upon content, not storage media.

Documents will be separated into relevant categories as defined in the retention schedule and scheduled for destruction or archiving. All documents that are eligible for destruction will be destroyed following the required notification process.

Paper copies of permanent records are stored in their designated area. No documents will be retained beyond their scheduled destruction date unless they are reasonably needed as reference materials. In all cases, multiple copies of documents are discouraged and retention can be limited to one copy of each relevant document. All other copies may be destroyed at any time.

Electronic documents will be retained as if they were paper documents. Therefore, any electronic files that fall into one of the document categories on the retention schedule will be maintained for the appropriate amount of time. If a user has sufficient reason to keep an email message, the message should be moved to an "archive" e-mail folder. All e-mails discussing projects, procedures and policies should be retained. E-mails that are of a temporary nature that do not serve to formalize or perpetuate knowledge, set policy, establish procedures, certify a transaction, or serve as a receipt may be considered transitory and may be deleted after it is read. Backup and recovery methods will be tested on a regular basis.

All physical documents will be stored in designated areas in clearly marked boxes, binders, or bound volumes.

Certain public documents such as Library Board meeting minutes and agendas and library policies will be maintained on the library website so that they are easily accessible to the public.

The Library Director is responsible for the ongoing process of identifying records which have met the required retention period and overseeing their destruction. Members of the administrative staff may be appointed to assist in records management. Annually, the Library's Finance Professional will review records to determine which records need to be retained and which can be destroyed, based on the retention schedules. A Records Management System which includes, location, box number/file drawer and type of file, will be updated by the Financial Professional. For records that can be destroyed, the Notice of Destruction of County/Local Government Records (State Form 44905) will be completed.

Any documents slated for destruction that contain confidential financial or personal information will be shredded.

Confidentiality of Library Records:

The Library protects the privacy and confidentiality of its customers and staff as required by state and federal law. Confidential Library records that include personally identifiable information shall not be released or made available to a federal agent, law enforcement officer, or other person unless an official court order is presented.

Requests for Public Records:

All requests for Public Records will be sent to the Library Director. Unauthorized staff should not disclose information of any kind unless special permission is given. In the case of a legal request for confidential records, the Library Director will consult appropriate legal counsel before providing the records.