Critical Records Guidance

Version 1.0

Indiana Archives and Records Administration
Records and Information Management Division
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I. What is a Critical Record?

Indiana Code 5-15-5.1-1(d) defines Critical Records as records necessary to:

1) Resume or continue governmental operations;
2) Reestablish the legal and financial responsibilities of government in Indiana; or
3) Protect and fulfill governmental obligations to the citizens of the state.

More broadly, Critical Records are those records produced by your agency or office which have a vital function in State or County/Local government - vital not only to your agency or office’s day-to-day workings, but to the functioning of government, and to the citizens of Indiana. Critical Records are those without which government could not function, and those records which citizens must be able to access at any time.

These records need to be specifically identified when creating a Records Retention Schedule, so that proper steps can be taken to secure and preserve them, even beyond the usual steps taken to preserve valuable public records.

Records currently designated as Critical are listed in Appendix A. For more information, please use the Record Series Search on iara.in.gov.

II. Critical Records and You

As the staff of State agencies or County/Local offices, you work most closely with your records. You have the best understanding of the functions and programs of your agency or office and are invaluable in determining which records are critical to Indiana government.

Your legal staff should be involved with the determination, basing their suggestions on the state and federal codes that apply to your records.

Your administrative officers and Records Coordinator/Custodian(s) should work together with the legal staff to determine whether any of the records you produce:

1. Affect the administration of Indiana government.
   - If the records were unavailable, would the State of Indiana be unable to fulfill major duties or re-organize during / after a crisis?

2. Affect citizens at a basic level.
   - If the records were unavailable, would citizens be denied a critical service?

If you feel you have records which should have a Critical designation, but currently do not, please reach out to rmd@iara.in.gov (for State agencies) or cty@iara.in.gov (for County/Local offices) to discuss.

III. Critical Records and the Indiana Archives and Records Administration

What is the role of IARA in this identification process?

Indiana Code 5-15-5.1-12 says that IARA shall:

- establish and maintain a Critical Records program
- determine what records are essential to the continuity of government operations
- survey records to identify Critical Records
- plan and implement a program for protection of Critical Records through dispersal, duplication, or secure vault storage of those records.

While working with you to create or update a Records Retention Schedule, IARA’s Records and Information Management team will ask you to identify which of your agency or office's records may be critical to governing the State of Indiana.
If IARA agrees, this information will be written into the description of the record series, and appropriate retention and disposition instructions will be created to help ensure the preservation of your Critical Records in an emergency situation.

If you have questions at any time about records that are designated as critical on your Records Retention Schedule, please reach out to rmd@iara.in.gov (for State agencies) or cty@iara.in.gov (for County/Local offices).

IV. How to Manage Critical Records

Government entities can make the decision to retain Critical Records in an electronic-only format without a paper or microfilm copy when:

1. they are confident that their records repository meets the criteria of a Trustworthy, Accessible, Reliable Digital Information System and
2. the records do not meet two or more of the criteria listed in IC 5-15-5.1-1(d).

If Critical Records do meet two or more of the criteria listed in IC 5-15-5.1-1(d), IARA strongly recommends you consider maintaining at least one copy on microfilm or paper. Microfilm and paper remain time-tested, industry standards for permanent and critical records.

IARA can advise agencies and offices on readiness and make format recommendations, but the final decision rests with you.

V. Trustworthy, Accessible, Reliable Digital Information Systems (TARDIS)

Government entities that have met the criteria for Trustworthy, Accessible, Reliable Digital Information Systems (TARDIS) can confidently make decisions about the format(s) in which their permanent or critical records can be safely maintained.

Entities that decide they do not meet the criteria can work toward this status by strengthening their commitment to the recordkeeping systems they maintain or are seeking to develop, starting with a review of the criteria below.

These criteria were developed in accordance with industry standards, records and information management best practices, and to meet the needs of both agencies and records.

TARDIS Criteria

A government entity that has a Trustworthy, Accessible, Reliable Digital Information System meets the following criteria:

- has sufficient funds and personnel to stand up and maintain a storage system for electronic records;
- maintains their recordkeeping system(s) by patching, upgrading, fixing bugs, and working with the vendor and Information Technology or the Indiana Office of Technology (as needed) to ensure it is well maintained and secure;
- has a dedicated and adequately staffed IT department which is kept up to date about the data and records management needs of the agency;
- understands and follows their mandate with regards to public records;
- understands (including the IT staff) basic records management concepts;
- is able to commit resources (personnel, financial, policy, technical, et cetera) to care for electronic records for their lifespan;
- maintains trustworthy data and/or records;
- is able to guarantee access to records for the duration of their lifespan;
- is able to migrate records from the existing system to a new one as necessary;
- is able to dispose of records in accordance with Records Retention Schedules, including transfer to the Indiana Archives.
It may also be beneficial to walk through and record your answers to the following questions.

1. Do you manage the recordkeeping system or is it managed by a third party?
2. Do you have a strategy for migrating records and any associated metadata from the system in the event the vendor goes out of business or there is a similar issue with access?
3. Are the records geographically backed up?
4. Do you have a disaster recovery plan?
5. Do you feel confident that the records will remain accessible in electronic-only format for as long as they are scheduled?
6. Do you want to avoid microfilm solely due to cost, storage, accessibility or another similar reason?
7. For records that are scheduled to come to the Indiana Archives: can the records be transferred to the Archives and do you have a plan in place to do so?

If you wish IARA to review your answers, please reach out to erecords@iara.in.gov.

VI. How to Get Started

Both State Records Retention Schedules and County/Local Records Retention Schedules can be found at iara.IN.gov under Services For Government, or requested from IARA’s Records and Information Management team.

- Review your current Records Retention Schedule(s), to see which, if any, records are listed as Critical.
- Examine those Record Series not listed as critical. If you believe that the Record Series should be re-classified as Critical Records, contact IARA, and the Records and Information Management team will work with you to update your Records Retention Schedule(s).
- Survey any records being created by your agency or office that are not listed on your Records Retention Schedule(s). Contact the Records and Information Management team to add these items, and explain that they should also be considered for Critical Record status.
- In general, review all records being created by your agency or office, and keep your agency’s records retention program up-to-date. This is the best way to protect not only your Critical Records, but all public records.
# APPENDIX A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Series</th>
<th>Record Series Title</th>
<th>Agency or Office</th>
<th>Level of Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CL 13-01</td>
<td><strong>Marriage Records</strong></td>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN 10-01</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN 23-06</td>
<td><strong>Historical Data on Government Buildings and Properties</strong></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN 23-10</td>
<td>Ordinances</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD 23-17</td>
<td><strong>Pre-1907 Birth Records</strong></td>
<td>Local Health Departments</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD 23-18</td>
<td><strong>Pre-1900 Death Records</strong></td>
<td>Local Health Departments</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPA 14-01</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Private/Public Agreement Operators</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPA 14-02</td>
<td>Policy Files</td>
<td>Private/Public Agreement Operators</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-01</td>
<td>Entry Book</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-02</td>
<td><strong>Original Instruments Not Returned to the Public</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-03</td>
<td><strong>Original / Official Deed Record &amp; Index to Original / Index to Official Deed Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-04</td>
<td>Cemetery Deed Record</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE 10-05</td>
<td>Sheriff’s Deed Record</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-06</td>
<td><strong>Tax [Sale] Deed Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-07</td>
<td><strong>Quiet Title Record / Index to Quiet Title Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-08</td>
<td>Tract Book</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-09</td>
<td>Plat Book / Plat Book General Index / Plats</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE 10-11</td>
<td><strong>Dormant Mineral Interest Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-12</td>
<td><strong>Original / Official Mortgage Record &amp; Index to Original / Index to Official Mortgage Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-13</td>
<td><strong>School Fund Mortgage Record</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-19</td>
<td><strong>Armed Forces Discharge Record (DD214)</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE 10-20</td>
<td>Articles of Association and Incorporation Record</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-22</td>
<td>Resolutions of Corporations and Associations</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE 10-23</td>
<td>Revocations</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-24</td>
<td><strong>Co-Partnership Record / Partnership Agreements</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-25</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Record</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE 10-26</td>
<td>Register of Farm Names</td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE 10-28</td>
<td><strong>Official Bond Register</strong></td>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>County/Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-3.1-02</td>
<td><strong>Will Record</strong></td>
<td>Judicial</td>
<td>Not managed by IARA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-3.1-03</td>
<td>Transcript Will Record / Original Will Record Ledger</td>
<td>Judicial</td>
<td>Not managed by IARA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-3.1-05</td>
<td>Index to Will Record</td>
<td>Judicial</td>
<td>Not managed by IARA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-3.1-04</td>
<td><strong>Clerk’s Report of Wills Probated in Vacation</strong></td>
<td>Judicial</td>
<td>Not managed by IARA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2008-34  Child Protection Service Assessment-Substantiated  DCS  State
78-916  Foreign Adoption Program  DCS  State
91-17  Environmental Review Mitigation Documentation  DNR  State
GRADM-1  Minutes  General  State
84-50  Approved Records Retention and Disposition Schedules  IARA  State
80-1003  Historical Data Summary  IDOA  State
79-3660  Physicist / Inspector Application  IDOH  State
81-237  Marriage Index  IDOH  State
81-239  Birth Index  IDOH  State
81-238  Birth Certificates  IDOH  State
81-240  Record of Adoption Form  IDOH  State
81-241  Certificate of Death  IDOH  State
81-242  Death Index  IDOH  State
85-167  Radiology License Files  IDOH  State
89-204  Record of Marriage  IDOH  State
90-52  Adoption Case Files  IDOH  State
2004-11  Excess Land Records  INDOT  State
84-894  Right of Way Records  INDOT  State
84-907  HRM Staff (Human Resources Management System)  SPD  State