



RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

SECTION I: PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding record retention including, but not limited to those listed in RSA 33-A; while simultaneously recognizing the Town of Chesterfield administrative need to manage its records and provide for their systematic destruction after said legal requirements have been met and the record no longer has value to the Town of Chesterfield or its constituents.

SECTION II: AUTHORITY:

This Policy is adopted in accordance with the following governing laws of the State of New Hampshire: RSA 33-a.

SECTION III: APPLICABILITY:

This Policy applies to all physical records generated in the course of the Town of Chesterfield's operation including original, reproduced, and electronic documents.

SECTION IV: DEFINITIONS:

RECORD – As used herein, shall refer to all municipal documentary materials, whether in paper, electronic or any other form, prepared or received by the Town of Chesterfield in connection with the conduct of its official governmental function. A department that creates a record shall be considered the primary owner of that particular record.

SECTION V: MUNICIPAL RECORDS RETENTION COMMITTEE:

- A) In accordance with RSA 33-A:3, the Town of Chesterfield will establish and maintain a Records Retention Committee charged with governing the retention and disposition of municipal records. Said Committee shall be comprised of the following: Selectboard representative, Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Police Chief and Tax Collector shall constitute a committee to govern the disposition of municipal records. The Town Clerk shall chair the committee.
- B) As shown in Appendix A & B, the Town has adopted a Record Retention Schedule detailing the initial maintenance, retention, and disposal for municipal records of the Town of Chesterfield. To ensure that this Schedule is followed, the Committee shall:

- 1. Monitor local, state and federal laws affecting record retention and;

2. modify the Record Retention Schedule as necessary to ensure that it complies with local, state and federal laws and/or addresses the appropriate document and record categories for the Town of Chesterfield.
- C) The Committee shall monitor compliance with this Section VI, A) of this policy and, if necessary, develop additional operational procedures to ensure that records are properly stored and accessible.
1. Any such additional procedures will be developed in a manner which takes into account the organization's operational capabilities. The Records Retention Committee may elect to use electronic methods of document storage, where appropriate.
 2. Any such additional procedures and/or storage processes will be incorporated as an Appendix to this Policy and be periodically reviewed by the Committee in order to ensure their level of efficiency and adequacy.
- D) The Committee shall monitor compliance with Section VI, C) of this policy and, if necessary, develop additional operational procedures to ensure that records are consistently disposed of in a proper manner.
1. Any such additional procedures shall take into account:
 - a) Statutory requirements
 - b) The Town of Chesterfield's operational capabilities.
 - c) That certain records contain sensitive and/or confidential information, and as a result must be destroyed and eliminated with particular care.
 2. These destruction processes will be periodically reviewed in order to ensure their adequacy and level of efficiency.
- E) The Committee shall review periodically the Record Retention Policy as a whole and recommend amendments as appropriate to comply with regulatory requirements and/or procedural changes.

SECTION VI: STORAGE, RETENTION, AND DISPOSAL OF MUNICIPAL RECORDS:

- A) *Retention of Documents:* The Records Retention Schedule (Appendix A & B) details the retention period for specific types and categories of records in order to ensure legal compliance. In addition, this schedule is designed to accomplish other objectives such as the preservation of confidential and valuable administrative information, cost effectiveness, and space management. Scheduled records are those that, by state statute and administrative rules or the Code of Federal Regulations, need only be retained for a stated period.

The Records Retention Committee may determine that such records are to be maintained by the Town for a period longer than the minimum required period. If so, such determination shall be made a matter of record by incorporation into the Townwide Records Retention Schedule.

- B) *Destruction of Documents:*

Documents to be destroyed shall first be reviewed by the applicable Department head to determine if any portion(s) of those records should be retained due to their historical value. If no reason exists to maintain the record beyond the retention schedule, then the documents shall be destroyed as follows:

- a) Non-confidential documents – shall be disposed of with other paper recycled products or shredded.
- b) Confidential documents – shall be shredded.
- c) Electronic files – shall be deleted from the individual’s computer as well as from any backup or permanent media storage.

Documents being shredded in mass quantities shall be done so by authorized shredding services. Town official will either verify shredding by visibly watching and writing/signing dated statement or by a stamped receipt acknowledging that the identified documents were shredded and the date of which the shredding occurred.

- C) *Unauthorized Activities*: All Municipal Records belong to the public in perpetuity and shall not be destroyed, maliciously damaged, or retained by any person not entitled to do so by local, state, and/or federal regulations.

SECTION IX: SUSPENSION OF RECORD DISPOSAL:

In the event any official or employee of the Town of Chesterfield is served with any subpoena or Right-to-Know request; or becomes aware of an investigation or audit concerning the Town of Chesterfield or the commencement of any litigation against or concerning the Town of Chesterfield; such individual shall ensure that all records are preserved, regardless of the Retention Schedule, until the Town’s legal counsel determines that the records are no longer needed.

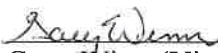
SECTION VI: AMENDMENTS:

This Policy may, from time to time, be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen at a regularly scheduled Selectmen’s meeting.

SECTION X: ADOPTION:

The Town of Chesterfield has adopted the Record Retention Policy adding Appendix B effective September 3, 2025.


Fran Shippee, Chairman


Gary Winn (Vice Chairman)


Judy Idelkope


Mary Ewell


Michelle Hilger

APPENDIX A

RECORDS:

1. The records of the boards, committees, and departments shall be kept by the Clerk and made available for public inspection at Chesterfield's Town Office Building in accordance with RSA 41:58.
2. Minutes of all public bodies are required to include names of board or committee members, persons appearing before the board, a brief description of the subject matter, and any final decisions reached, or action taken; and shall be open to public inspection with five (5) business days of the public meeting. (RSA 91-A:2, II)
 - A. Minutes shall be provided, in hard copy, to the Selectmen's Office for retention within ten (10) calendar days of their approval.
 - B. When forwarding approved minutes to the Selectmen's Office, there shall be no alterations, markings, or strikeouts of any kind thereon. These documents are permanent records, and it is the Town of Chesterfield's responsibility to preserve the integrity of same.

APPENDIX B

ELECTRONIC RECORDS RETENTION:

Electronic Records Retention will be adopted by the Town of Chesterfield to reduce the size of physical storage areas required. The Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Town Administrator, will begin to archive selected documents for electronic storage.

All files electronically archived will adhere to RSA 33-A:5-a which allows for PDF/A archival electronic storage of documents before any physical documents are no longer held by the town.

Any document that is held electronically will be located on

1. The Town Server which is administered under contract with the town to be backed up daily.
2. Two physical external hard drives
 - a. One drive will be stored in the main fire-rated storage area for physical town documents.
 - b. The second drive will be stored in a burn proof cabinet in the Town Clerk's Office.
3. Every five years per RSA 33-A:5-a the Retention Committee will review this policy for any updates required.