Retrieving Records from the State Records Center

Effective Date: October 1, 2008
Last Revised: August 18, 2021

(Procedure VSARA00003)

I. OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION

The State Records Center provides low-cost, secure storage for records that must be maintained for audit, fiscal, legal, or administrative needs, but are no longer used frequently enough to justify storing the records on-site, which is generally more expensive. Services of the State Records Center are available to all state agencies and include box pick-up, storage, retrieval, and destruction.

For records stored in the State Records Center, both legal control and control of access to the records are retained by the agency until the records are either transferred to the State Archives or destroyed. Unless there is a formal agreement between the agency and the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA), the State Records Center does not have the authority to release records to the public under any circumstances or respond to public record requests. Therefore, if a private citizen or staff member from another agency contacts the State Records Center to access records, they are referred to the appropriate agency Records Officer.

In lieu of retrieving records from the State Records Center, records officers and liaisons may send private citizens or staff members to the VSARA's Reference Room to research agency records by submitting a VSARA-03 (Authorization to Access Agency Records through the Reference Room) prior to the citizen or staff member's arrival. All forms must be faxed directly to VSARA. The Reference Room is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM.

This procedure is for retrieving records from the State Records Center and applies to both original paper records and records that have been converted to microfilm. *It is important to note here that the State Records Center is not the same as the State Archives; the State Archives accepts transfers of state archival records and assumes legal responsibilities for providing access and preserving the records.*

II. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

State Archivist: Maintains a records center to hold inactive records in accordance with records schedules approved by the State Archivist (3 V.S.A. § 117).

Agency/Department Head: Implements and sustains a record schedule in accordance with requirements established by VSARA as part of the agency/department's records management program (3 V.S.A. § 218).

Records Officer: Designated by the agency/department head to serve as the agency or department's records officer and carry out the agency/department records program (3 V.S.A. § 218).

Records Liaison: Appointed by the records officer to help manage and carry out the agency/department records program within a division or district office.

State Records Center Supervisor: Accepts, stores, retrieves, and re-files records in the State Records Center based on an approved records retention schedule.

III. PROCEDURE STEPS/CHECKLIST

A. Records Officer or Records Liaison

1. Upon receiving a request for records that are stored at the State Records Center, submits a records request to the State Records Center Supervisor using the online Record Request Form.

   IMPORTANT NOTE: *In the event the requested records are now on microfilm, the records officer or liaison submitting the request will be notified. If the records can be readily located on the film, VSARA can search the film and provide copies. There is a charge for service.*

   If records were microfilmed out of order and/or have little or no discernible identifiers to efficiently locate the file or record requested, VSARA cannot fulfill the record request. A records officer or liaison may subsequently request the film; visit VSARA's Reference Room to research the film; or authorize a private citizen or staff member to research in the film.

2. Upon receiving original paper records from the State Records Center:

   i. Monitors the records until their return to the State Records Center or, if retention requirements have been met, their destruction.

   ii. Promptly returns records to the State Records Center when they are no longer needed within the agency and retention requirements have not yet been met.

   IMPORTANT NOTE*: If additional records have been added to a file, the file may not be able to be returned to its original box for two reasons (a) the retention requirements for file have changed due to the inclusion of newer records; and/or (b) the file may no longer fit into its assigned box. Please contact the Records Center Supervisor for advice prior to returning a file that has been expanded from its original size and content.*

iii. Promptly notifies the State Records Center Supervisor if the records will not be re-filed at the Center unless already noted in the original request.

3. Upon receiving copies of records from microfilm:

i. Monitors the records from the time of receipt into the agency until they are delivered to the appropriate party.

IMPORTANT NOTE*: Copies of records from microfilm should not be returned to the State Records Center. Instead, agencies should dispose of the copies when they are no longer needed administratively. If the copies have been used to create a new file that includes additional records, please contact the Records Center Supervisor for advice prior to sending the file to the State Records Center for storage*.

B. State Records Center Supervisor

1. Upon receiving a request to retrieve records, confirms that:

i. The individual making the request is a designated records officer or an appointed records liaison for the records being requested.

ii. The request contains the correct information for efficiently and effectively locating the records.

iii. The records officer is notified if the request is for records that are on microfilm and/or if the request cannot be fulfilled.

iv. The request, if capable of being fulfilled, is entered into the queue for either a box or file retrieval or a microfilm lookup.

v. The records are appropriately checked out in the Versatile system, where applicable, and all associated records used for tracking records are generated.

vi. Prepares the records for pick-up, mailing or agency review at the State Records Center.

2. Upon receiving returned records, confirms that:

i. The records returned are the same as those that were retrieved.

1. Files that have been expanded from their original size or content if records officer or liaison did not contact the State Records Center prior to their return will be rejected for refiling.

ii. The records are appropriately checked into the Versatile system and all associated records used for tracking are complete.

iii. The records are refiled in their appropriate location in the State Records Center.

IV. GETTING HELP

The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) provides records training, assistance and services to public agencies. For help, please contact:

- State Records Center: sos.recordscenter@vermont.gov or 802-828-3280
- Records Management: sos.rim@vermont.gov or 802-828-3897

V. APPLICABILITY AND AUTHORITY

This procedure is for retrieving paper and microfilm records stored at the State Records Center in Middlesex, Vermont and supersedes any State of Vermont practices in existence prior to its effective date.

The Vermont State Archivist is the statutory authority for maintaining a records center and for this procedure on retrieving records from the State Records Center. This procedure was reviewed and approved by the Vermont State Archivist on September 30, 2008.

The State Archivist reviewed and approved the current version of this procedure on August 18, 2021. The next review date is August 2023, or sooner at the discretion of the State Archivist.

Revision History	
2021-08-18	Updated form link and next review date.
2018-03-07	Updated email addresses to @vermont.gov due to email migration and revised "Getting Help" section.
2014-06-04	Updated section III A 1 to link to the online Record Request form in the new website.
2010-10-22	Added sections called "IMPORTANT NOTE" to ensure that expectations for requests are known and understood.
2010-10-12	Updated contact information in "Getting Help" section
2009-02-04	Records Liaison added under *Areas of Responsibility* and *Procedures/Steps*