

Mission

The mission of the NYC Department of Records and Information Services is to foster civic life by preserving and providing access to the historical and contemporary records of New York City government, to ensure that City records are properly maintained following professional archival and record management practices and to make materials available to diverse communities both online and in person.

Government Records

The City Charter defines a record as information or content made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official city business. Records are format-agnostic, meaning they can be digital or physical. Most material created or received by an agency head or elected official is a City record including social media posts, email, and text messages.

Records Management

The Records Management Division at DORIS (DORIS RM) develops and sets citywide policies for records and information management. All City offices, including elected official offices, create records and are required to retain them for the retention period listed on the office Records Retention Schedule. Working with DORIS RM, the Records Management Officer (RMO) in each office defines the lifecycles of records and information and follows a charter-mandated process to authorize their disposition, including destruction, storage, or transfer to the Municipal Library or Archives.

The disposition process is triggered when a series of records reaches its designated retention period. For example, Agency Commissioner records are archival, and can be transferred to the Municipal Archives one year after the Commissioner leaves office. This ensures transition documentation for incoming agency heads.

The Municipal Library and Archives Collections

The Municipal Library collects, catalogs, and provides access to all NYC government publications (digital and physical) including annual reports, books, periodicals, advertisements, brochures, and other material. All publications are required to be transferred to the Government Publications Portal within 10-days of publication. The Municipal Library also collects, preserves, and makes accessible NYC.gov content such as website content.

The Municipal Archives acquires, preserves, and makes available multi-format, historically and culturally significant collections. The collections date from 1645 to the present. Among the most noteworthy collections are the original drawings of the Central Park and the Brooklyn Bridge, Mayoral Collections dating from 1826 through 2013, Dutch colonial manuscripts and the largest collection of records pertaining to the administration of criminal justice in the country

Managing and Preserving Your Records

Your work captures the initiatives, programs, and policies of your office. In cooperation with the Records Management and Information Technology teams at your office, DORIS will help to ensure this information is managed appropriately. Records should not be re-organized or revised before the transfer. The inherent organization is a critical aspect to maintaining a context for the work of the office. The Municipal Archives will formally acquire the records and maintain their original order. In the short term, archivists will provide information about the date spans, format types, and extents of the collections. Providing public access to collections requires archival review, and in some instances, legal review. Processing collections requires a substantial amount of time before the material is ready for public access, including a review for Personally Identifying Information (PII), legal holds, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) and other restrictions to access.