

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

SUBJECT	Number 85.30	Issue 1	Page 1 of 4
VITAL RECORDS RETENTION AND PRESERVATION	Effective Date January 30, 2015		

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To establish procedures for the retention and preservation of Vital Records which are records necessary to reconstruct and continue the City's operations in the event of a disaster or emergency.
- 1.2. To assign responsibility to all City departments to identify their Vital Records.
- 1.3. To ensure that City department records that are determined to be Vital Records are retained and preserved in accordance with procedures approved by the City Clerk.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This regulation applies to all independent and Mayoral departments.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. City Record – any recorded information of any kind and in any form, created or received by the City that is evidence of its operations. Records include paper and electronic documents, electronic databases, electronic mail, correspondence, forms, photographs, film, sound recordings, maps, and other documents that have administrative, legal operation, fiscal, or historical value requiring retention of the record for a specified period of time.
- 3.2. Vital Record – any recorded information that is essential to continue a department's core functions in the event of a disaster or to protect the rights of the City and its citizens. Vital Records are records that have significant value to the City, and the consequences of losing the information is so severe, that their special protection is justified.

There are three general areas in which the *City's Vital Records* fall:

- 3.2.1. Records that protect the rights and interests of individuals – for example, vital statistics, land and tax records, license registers and Articles of Incorporation; and

(New Administrative Regulation 85.30, Issue 1, effective January 30, 2015)

Authorized

[Signature on File]
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

SUBJECT	Number 85.30	Issue 1	Page 2 of 4
VITAL RECORDS RETENTION AND PRESERVATION	Effective Date January 30, 2015		

3.2.2. Records necessary to conduct emergency operations – for example, utility systems maps, locations of emergency supplies and equipment, emergency operations plans and procedures, lines of succession, lists of safety personnel, lists of regular and auxiliary personnel, among other documents; and

3.2.3. Records necessary to re-establish normal functions and protect the rights and interests of government – for example, Constitutions and charters, statutes and ordinances, court records, official proceedings and financial records. This would include, but not be limited to, the San Diego Charter and San Diego Municipal Code; meeting minutes, ordinances and resolutions of the City Council; materials published by the City Attorney, such as Memorandum, Reports, or Opinions; and the annual budget adopted by the City.

3.3. Disaster – an unexpected occurrence inflicting widespread destruction and distress, having long-term adverse affects on operations (such as a hurricane or earthquake).

3.4. Emergency – a situation or an occurrence of a serious nature, developing suddenly and unexpectedly, and demanding immediate action. This is generally of short duration. For example, an emergency may interrupt normal City operations for a week or less, for reasons such as the failure of an electrical transformer or due to minor flooding caused by broken pipes.

4. GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1. *Vital Records* generally makeup only two to five percent of an organization’s total volume of records.

4.2. To determine if a record is a *Vital Record*, departments may consider the following:

4.2.1. Is the information available from another source?

4.2.2. What consequences would the City face if the record is destroyed? Will any employee or citizen suffer a loss of rights or be severely inconvenienced if the records were lost?

4.2.3. If the records must be reconstructed, what would the cost be in terms of time, money, or labor? Would the information in the records need to be reconstructed or could operations be maintained without the information?

4.3. *Vital Records* that contain static information are kept permanently. However, some *Vital Records* that have short-term retention, such as annual budget records, bank reconciliation

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

SUBJECT	Number 85.30	Issue 1	Page 3 of 4
VITAL RECORDS RETENTION AND PRESERVATION	Effective Date January 30, 2015		

files, and certificate of sales. Such *Vital Records* are to be kept until superseded by new information and then may be discarded.

4.4. All hard copy *Vital Records* should be stored in fire-resistant and water resistant containers or vaults if kept in the same location. The Records Management Industry standard for *Vital Records* is microfilm and offsite storage.

4.5. Electronic records should be backed up on a regular basis and stored off-site.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

5.1. City Clerk's Responsibilities

5.1.1. The Office of the City Clerk is responsible for implementing this regulation as it relates to Administrative Regulation 85.10 - Records Management, Retention and Disposition, and San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 2, Article 2, Division 26.

5.2. Department Directors' Responsibilities

5.2.1. Department Directors are responsible for their *Vital Records* program to ensure retention and preservation of *Vital Records* in a manner consistent with Administrative Regulation 85.10 - Records Management, Retention and Disposition, and San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 2, Article 2, Division 26.

5.2.2. Departments are responsible for the cost of managing their *Vital Records* program and will reimburse the City Clerk in accordance with an established Memorandum of Understanding or other appropriate arrangement for any costs incurred in assisting with microfilming *Vital Records*.

5.2.3. Department Directors should work with their department Records Coordinators to ensure a list of records and their locations is maintained for all *Vital Records* and kept in a separate location where it will be easy to retrieve during an *Emergency*, Disaster, or other catastrophic event.

5.2.4. Department Directors should have an *Emergency* or *Vital Records* protection plan in place. The plan should include the following:

- a. Instructions about where *Vital Records* are stored in the office and off site;
- b. A priority list showing what records should be recovered first; and

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

SUBJECT	Number 85.30	Issue 1	Page 4 of 4
VITAL RECORDS RETENTION AND PRESERVATION	Effective Date January 30, 2015		

- c. Lists of professional recovery services and phone numbers if records are recoverable, and information about where to find copies of *Vital Records*, if the originals are unrecoverable.

APPENDIX

Legal References

Administrative Regulation 85.10 – Records Management, Retention and Disposition
San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 2, Article 2, Division 26
California Government Code § 34090 – 34090.7

Subject Index

City Record(s)
Vital Record(s)

Administering Department

Office of the City Clerk