

# Introduction to Records Management for Managers & Supervisors

*Wisconsin Public Records Board ( PRB) : Protecting the legal,  
financial and historical interests of the state in public records.*

# Wisconsin's Records Laws

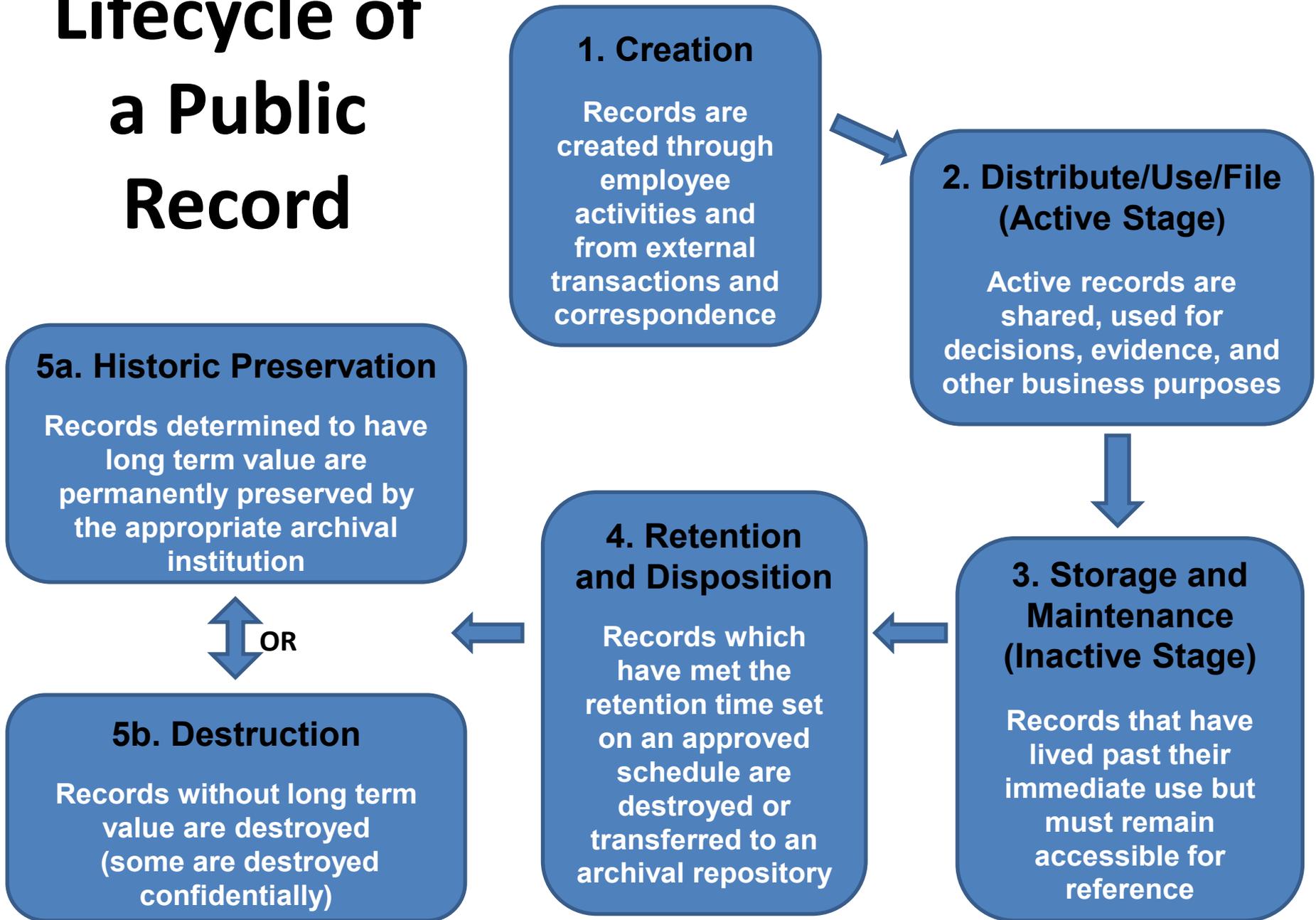
- Wis. Stat. § 16.61(2)(b) defines “public records” for the purposes of records retention and disposition
- Wis. Stat. § 19.32(2) defines “records” for purposes of the records access and disclosure provisions of Wis. Stat. §§ 19.31-19.39 (known as the public records law or the open records law)

# What is Records Management?

The practice of maintaining your agency's records throughout their lifecycle

- Agency records management programs manage organizational information to ensure it is useable, cost-effective, timely, accurate, complete and easily accessible.
- Better information, at the right time, makes better business.

# Lifecycle of a Public Record



# Why Records Management?

- Ensure statutory and regulatory compliance
- Support discovery and public records requests
- Preserve the rights of citizens to access public records
- Support better decision making
- Safeguard vital information
- Preserve organizational memory
- Reduce operating costs
- Minimize litigation risk



# What Public Records Responsibilities Might You Have?

- Ensure your program area business activities and decisions are documented, as appropriate
- Know program area public records and ensure they have an approved records schedule
- Safeguard confidential, sensitive, and personally identifiable information (PII)
- Ensure public records are filed for safe storage and efficient retrieval
- Ensure public records are only disposed of in accordance with an approved schedule

# What Public Records Responsibilities Might You Have? (continued)

- Establish methods to address legal holds and halt public records disposition
- Identify and transfer public records prior to employee departures
- Ensure staff is knowledgeable about records management
- Communicate records roles and responsibilities to employees

# What are Your Staff's Records Management Responsibilities?

- Recognize and manage public records created as part of their job duties
- Protect and save public records they create and use
- File paper and electronic documents so they are readily accessible (use agency file plan if applicable)
- Maintain confidential and sensitive information appropriately
- Dispose of information that is not a public record
- Retain public records for the appropriate length of time and then dispose or transfer
- Know where to go for help

This information is presented to new state employees via the “Introduction to Records Management for State Employees”

# What Is A Record?

Recorded information, in any format (paper, electronic, audio/visual, calendars, maps) created or received by a state employee and/or agency in the transaction of business\*

**Information content** determines what is a record and **not** the format in which the information is generated. Records may be textual, pictorial, paper, electronic, audio, video, etc.

*\*full definition found in Wis. Stats. §16.61*

# Where Might Public Records Occur?

- Email and voicemail
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.
- Websites
- Videotapes/DVDs
- Webcasts/Webinars
- Calendars
- Documents, spreadsheets, databases
- Personal devices if used for agency business
- Audio recordings
- Maps and blueprints



# Public Records Are:

- Created in the course of business
  - *Correspondence, memos (paper and electronic), agreements, studies, reports*
- Received for action
  - *Information or open records requests, controlled correspondence*
- Mandated by statute or regulation
  - *Statutorily required programs, administrative records, dockets, equal rights complaints*

# What Qualities Do Public Records Have?

- Document state activities
  - *calendars, meeting minutes, project reports*
- Support financial obligations or legal claims
  - *grants, contracts, litigation case files, or audits*
- Communicate agency requirements
  - *guidance documents, policies, procedures*

# What Public Records Might You Have?

Examples are:

- Information pertaining to advisory boards, councils and committees
- Program, policy and procedure development documentation
- Program area activity, production and employee reports and files
- Business-related memos or correspondence
- Open records requests and responses
- Reports to senior management
- Calendars, schedules and daily activity logs
- Meeting materials
- Project files



# What Is Not a Public Record?

- Reference materials and stock copies
  - *vendor catalogs, phone books, agency publications, blank forms*
- Duplicate copies
  - *copies of records (paper or electronic) used for convenience or reference purposes only*
- Drafts or working papers
  - *draft documents without substantive comments, rough notes, calculations*
- General announcements and unsolicited email (internal or external)
  - *reminders received by all staff, listserv messages, spam*

# How To Manage Public Records

- Policies-Records schedules:
  - Identify public records and how long to keep them
  - Know what to do with them afterwards
- Filing
  - Use or develop a filing system to organize and categorize public records
- People
  - Communicate public records roles and responsibilities
  - Know your Records Officer or Coordinator. Contact them with questions.

# What Is A Retention Schedule?

Retention schedules:

- Group and describe related public records.
- Mandate **how long** public records are kept (retention).
- Mandate **what happens** to public records at the end of that time period (disposition).
- Are promulgated as policy via statewide General Records Schedules (GRS) or agency specific Record Disposition Authorization (RDA)

# Retention Schedules

- Valid for ten years
- Updated, amended and revised as needed
- Changes are approved by the Public Records Board
- Schedules may be extended beyond 10 years in accordance with PRB policy statement *Extension of period of effectiveness of approved RDAs pending their revision and renewal* (issued May 2010)

# PRB Approved General Records Schedules

- Administrative Records
- Budget and Budget-Related Records
- Facilities Management and Related Records
- Fiscal and Accounting Related Records
- Fleet and Aircraft Related Records
- Forms Management Program and Related Records
- Human Resources and Related Records
- Information Technology Business Records
- Library Operations
- Mail and Messenger Services and Related Records
- Payroll and Related Records
- Purchasing and Procurement Related Records
- Records Management Program Records and Related Documents
- Risk Management and Related Records

\* *As of November 2014*

# Summary

- Protect and save the public records your agency creates and uses
- Safeguard confidential and sensitive information appropriately
- Know that public records consist of all forms of media
- Be familiar with the retention schedules which relate to your programs
- Do not destroy any public record unless you are following a retention schedule
- File all public records according to a consistent filing plan
- Learn to manage public records as part of your job duties
- Ask records staff for assistance
  - Records Coordinators
  - Records Officer
  - Legal counsel

