

Middletown Public Library - Records Retention and Destruction Policy

Purpose

The Middletown Public Library creates and maintains records in the course of conducting Library business. The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the appropriate retention, protection, and destruction of those records while supporting accountability, privacy, security, and responsible records management.

The Library shall maintain and dispose of records in accordance with applicable federal and Rhode Island law, including the current Rhode Island Public Library Records Retention Schedule (LG13) and applicable General Records Schedules.

Scope

This policy applies to Library records regardless of format, technology, or storage location, including paper and electronic records, email, photographs, audio and video recordings, security footage, transcripts, and records created or maintained through current or emerging technologies.

The content, purpose, and function of a record determine its retention requirements, rather than the format or technology used to create or store it.

Working Materials

The Library recognizes that drafts, notes, recordings, transcriptions, summaries, and other working materials may be created or used as aids in preparing minutes, correspondence, reports, personnel or supervisory documentation, or other Library records.

When working materials are used to prepare documentation that requires continued retention, relevant information shall be incorporated into the appropriate record. Working materials may be disposed of when they have served their administrative purpose and their destruction is permitted under applicable records retention requirements.

The use of artificial intelligence, transcription services, recording devices, or other technologies to assist with note-taking, transcription, summarization, or preparation of records does not, by itself, change the retention requirements applicable to the information created.

Retention and Destruction

Records shall be retained for the period required by the applicable records retention schedule. Records designated as permanent shall be maintained permanently.

Records that have met their required retention period may be securely destroyed in accordance with applicable records management requirements, including completion and approval of a Certification of Records Destruction (CRD) when required.

Records containing confidential, personnel-related, patron-related, financial, security-sensitive, or other protected information shall be destroyed in a manner that prevents unauthorized access or recovery.

Suspension of Destruction

Records shall not be destroyed or permanently deleted when they are subject to an Access to Public Records Act (APRA) request, pending or reasonably anticipated litigation, investigation, grievance, audit, claim, or other legal or administrative preservation requirement.

Routine destruction may resume when the matter has been resolved and destruction is otherwise permitted.

Administration and Responsibility

The Library Director is responsible for administering this policy and may establish and update internal procedures and retention guidance consistent with applicable law and records retention schedules.

Staff are responsible for managing records they create or maintain in accordance with the Library's policy and procedures. The Library Director or designee provides guidance and authorizes destruction where required. Staff should not independently destroy or permanently delete records when the appropriate retention requirement is unclear.

Approved by the Middletown Board of Library Trustees on August 24, 2026