

## **RECORDS RETENTION POLICY**

### **Purpose**

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition serves the journalists, government employees, and the public, and has a responsibility to preserve the records for administrative, historical, and public educational purposes. The goals of this records retention policy are: 1) to identify documents that must be retained permanently or temporarily due to federal or state legal requirements or for valid administrative reasons, 2) provide for the routine and timely disposal of documents which need not be retained for legal or administrative reasons and have no historical or educational value.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to The North Carolina Open Government Coalition

For the purpose of this policy a NCOGC document or record is any paper, book, map, photograph, electronic file, original microfilm, cassette or video tape or other documentary material regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, produced, executed or received by any staff member or person in connection with the transaction of NCOGC business.

### **Retention Schedules**

The schedule has guidelines for the appropriate retention of numerous types of records. Records will ordinarily be kept pursuant to this policy. If, after consulting this policy and the schedule attached, there exists a question regarding the proper disposition or retention of a particular document or class of documents, it shall be the responsibility of the President, Director, or Office Administrator in possession of the document to determine the proper disposition of the item or items. Because this policy is designed to facilitate the routine, orderly and timely archiving or disposition of documents by staff, if it becomes apparent that this policy fails to address certain classes of documents, this should be brought to the attention of the President, Director, or Office Administrator.

### **Personal records**

Documents and materials collected by NCOGC employees that do not affect NCOGC activities are considered personal items if they relate to personal affairs. Such materials are considered private property and are not owned by the NCOGC . They should be kept separate from official NCOGC records. Examples of personal items include: documents accumulated by an individual prior to employment by the NCOGC , materials relating specifically to private activities such as outside business and professional or political affiliations, journals, and correspondence that is not created or received through conducting NCOGC activities or business.

### **Storage of records**

Records that are ready to be put in storage, based on the attached schedule, should be kept in the designated areas until the time that they are archived or disposed of. Records must be labeled using the procedures in effect at the time of storage, which will include, but are not limited to the subject, date, and related filing category.

### **Archival of records**

Records created through official NCOGC activities are the property of the NCOGC .

These include, but are not limited to: papers, correspondence, official printed material, minutes, committee files, financial and associated records in any form or format.

Inactive records that may be considered of permanent, historical, educational, or legal value which should be transferred to the NCOGC archives in compliance with this records management schedule are: important administrative and legal files; office files of principal administrators including NCOGC board correspondence and records relating to NCOGC procedures and; board meeting minutes and reports and related files; long-term planning records. See Attached: Records Retention and Destruction Schedule

The School of Communications front office shall be the primary repository of official and other NCOGC -related records.

#### **Disposal of non-permanent records**

Records will be disposed based on the attached schedule. Sensitive, financial or confidential records should be shredded before disposal.

NCOGC will destroy records pursuant to the attached schedule on a semi-annual basis.

#### **Responsibility for records**

The President shall designate individual staff members to be responsible for the semi-annual disposal of non-permanent records and the transfer of those documents to be permanently maintained in the NCOGC archives.

### **RECORDS RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION SCHEDULE**

The First Amendment NCOGC shall retain records for the period of their immediate or current use, unless longer retention is necessary for historical reference or to comply with contractual or legal requirements. Records and documents outlined in this policy includes paper and electronic files (including e-mail) regardless of where the document is stored, including network servers, desktop or laptop computers and handheld computers and other wireless devices with text messaging capabilities.

In accordance with 18 U.S.C. Section 1519 and the Sarbanes Oxley Act, the NCOGC shall not knowingly destroy a document with the intent to obstruct or influence an "investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of any department agency of the United States . . . or in relation to or contemplation of such matter or case." If an official investigation is underway or even suspected, document purging must stop in order to avoid criminal obstruction.

In order to eliminate accidental or innocent destruction, the NCOGC has the following document retention schedule:

#### **Keep Permanently**

- Annual audited financial statements, audit reports, general ledgers, and internal audit reports, trial balance journals
- Articles of Incorporation, Charter, Bylaws, board meeting minutes and other incorporation records
- Contracts, mortgages, loan documents and notes, and leases (still in effect)
- Correspondence (legal and important matters)

- Asset Depreciation schedules
- Insurance policies, records, current accident reports, claims (still in effect)
- Cancelled checks for important payments
- End of the year: financial statements, general ledger, variance reports, trial balances
- Tax returns and worksheets and other documents relating to determination of income tax liability and tax exempt status
- Legislative files
- Important Special Event files and projects. Note: Important Special Events files such as Anniversary events should be kept until the next similar, major event.

### **Keep 7 years**

- Accounts receivable and payable ledgers and schedules, cancelled checks, expense analysis and distribution schedules (budgets)
- Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired)
- End of year Sales and Member Reports
- Invoices (to customers, from vendors)
- Personnel files (employee information & payroll summaries/compensation records)
- Personnel files of terminated employees (7 years after termination)

### **Keep 3 years**

- Bank Reconciliations
- Bank Statements, deposit records, electronic fund transfer documents
- Correspondence (general)
- Correspondence (with customers and vendors)
- Employment applications (from making the record or taking the personnel action)
- Insurance policies, records, accident reports, claims (expired)
- Internal reports (miscellaneous)
- Special event files and projects. Exs: Sunshine Recognition Luncheon, June NCOGC /FPF fundraiser, board meeting events and reception, and any other similar such event.

### **Keep 1 year**

- Duplicate deposit slips
- Hotline correspondence and/or requests for assistance
- Quarterly Sales and Member Reports
- Sales/Inventory records, i.e. GITS, and FPRH order forms submitted by customers (such records may be destroyed the year following the order).