

Racine Public Library

Records Retention Policy

I. Introduction

Wisconsin legislative policy favors the broadest practical access to government. Providing citizens with information on the affairs of the government is one of the strongest declarations of policy found in the [Wisconsin statutes](#).

The Racine Public Library Board of Trustees recognizes its responsibility to maintain the public records of the library and to make such records available for inspection and reproduction. The Racine Public Library hence recognizes the importance of orderly management, retrieval, and disposal of all official public records, and the need for a documented records retention schedule adopted in accordance with the [Wisconsin Public Records Law for local municipalities](#).

II. Implementation

The Racine Public Library Board has adopted and will adhere to the records retention schedule [Records Retention Schedule for Wisconsin's Public Libraries](#), as recommended by the Wisconsin Public Records Board. This retention schedule establishes the timeframe for the disposal of records that are no longer required for administrative, financial, or legal purposes. The adoption of the schedule also enables the Racine Public Library to dispose of records without prior approval of the Wisconsin History Society.

Records created by the Racine Public Library that are not included in the adopted *Record Retention Schedule for Wisconsin's Public Libraries* will then follow the City of Racine's records retention schedule.

The official records of the Library are retained at the Library business office located at 75 7th Street, Racine, Wisconsin or at the city offices located at 730 Washington Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin. The official custodian of Library records is the Executive Director.

The definition of a public record is found in [Chapter 19.32 \(2\)](#) of Wisconsin Statutes, and includes any document in any format that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of, the Racine Public Library, that documents the organization, function, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Library. All records of the Library meeting this definition are public unless they, or parts of them, are specifically exempt from disclosure under Wisconsin or federal law.

Records created and stored electronically are subject to the same retention schedule as their paper counterparts, along with the hardware and software necessary to access them. Duplicate files, duplicate copies, library materials, and community forms, booklets, or pamphlets originally intended for distribution are not considered to be official public records.

A public record may not be destroyed if any litigation, claim negotiation, audit, public records request, administrative review, or other action involving the records is initiated before the expiration of the retention period set in the Records Retention for Wisconsin's Public Libraries and Public Library Systems.

Upon request, all public records responsive to the request, and not exempt from disclosure, will be prepared within a reasonable amount of time and made available for inspection to any person during regular business hours at the Library. Copies of requests may also be mailed or sent electronically. The requester of public records will be charged the actual cost of reproducing and delivering the information.

Whenever there is a doubt as to whether information may or may not be released in response to a public records request, the Executive Director will seek the counsel of the City Attorney's office. Any denial of a public record request will include an explanation, including legal authority. If a public record contains information that is confidential or exempt from the duty to permit public inspection or to copy the public record, the Executive Director will redact the confidential or exempt information and will make available all the information within the public record that is not exempt or confidential.

Approved by: RPL Board of Trustees

Approved Date: April 20th, 2023

Review Schedule: Annual.

Next Review Date: April 2024