

Records Management Section
Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2023



Alabama DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

Records Management at the Alabama Department of Archives and History

The Records Management Section is a unit within the Archives Division of the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) whose role entails distilling complex archival theory into clear policies and actionable guidance for government agencies. We perform this work as support staff of the State Records Commission (SRC) and the Local Government Records Commission (LGRC). Under the auspices of these bodies, our primary duties include developing records management policies, composing and updating Records Disposition Authorities (RDAs), transmitting permanent government records into the ADAH collection, sanctioning records destruction activities, operating the State Records Center, providing records management training for state and local government officials, documenting compliance with state records law, coordinating the Commissions' agendas, and implementing the Commissions' decisions. The section also supports the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) in its mission to identify, preserve, and promote appreciation for Alabama's historical records.



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Year In Review

FY 2023 proved an exciting time for the Records Management Section, and as you read on, you'll see that our team broke some records this year. Rest assured, however, that all those records were eligible, and we documented their disposition!

One shattered record relates to the growth and experience of our staff. As of 2023, the Records Management Section boasts a staff of nine, including four "senior archivists." Senior archivists have invested years cultivating institutional knowledge and fostering inter-governmental rapport. Their collective experience came in handy this year as we tackled Records Disposition Authorities of unprecedented complexity.

The Records Management Section has also resumed staffing the State Historical Records Advisory Board, or SHRAB -- a body that helps identify, preserve, and provide access to Alabama's historical records. You can read more about our first SHRAB project a little later in this report.

Year In Review (cont.)

Outside the office, Records Management Staff teamed up with our Museum Division colleagues to provide on-site consultations to governmental and cultural institutions. Staff provided guidance regarding museum, records management, and archival concerns.

Records Management staff embarked on all of these new endeavors while continuing to offer our customary slate of services, including facilitating the destruction of eligible local and state government records, soliciting and compiling Annual RDA Implementation Reports, training and assisting government officials, developing and revising state and local retention schedules, and supporting the State and Local Government Records Commissions.

Overall, our mission remains simple - to demystify records management mandates, to empower stakeholders, and to inspire greater compliance. We are proud to have dared greatly this past year, and we are confident this report reflects our aspirations and successes.



State & Local Government Records Commissions

Since 1901, the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) has been collecting and preserving the historical materials of the people of Alabama. Staff in the records management section perform this work as support staff for the State Records Commission (SRC) and the Local Government Records Commission (LGRC).

The Code of Alabama states that no state or local official can destroy public records without first obtaining permission from either the SRC or LGRC. These bodies determine which records have permanent historical value and which are temporary and may be destroyed after a determined length of time. Documents called Records Disposition Authorities (RDAs) outline these decisions. Archivists identify state records with historical value to transfer to the ADAH, state and local records to be permanently preserved by their creating agencies, and temporary records that may be destroyed in accordance with retention periods informed by state or federal retention requirements, industry best practices, audit requirements, and agency use.

At biannual meetings in April and October, the SRC and LGRC approve new RDAs and revisions to existing state and local RDAs. State agency RDAs are created or revised by examining an agency's functions and drafting an entirely new document. The SRC typically approves six to eight state RDAs per year. Local government agency RDAs are revised via line-item memos as local government officials identify issues or omissions.

State Records Commission Updates

October 26, 2022



State Council on the Arts (Revision)

For more than fifty years, the Alabama State Council on the Arts has promoted and supported Alabama artists through grants, apprenticeships, educational programming, and extensive agency outreach. The State Records Commission last approved a revision to the Arts Council's RDA in 2006, but over time, agency staff noticed that very few temporary record series had been included.

This RDA revision encompasses the full breadth of the agency's records, whether temporary or permanent. Archivists and agency staff collaborated to expand the Historical Context section, and agency organizational changes over the last decade have also been incorporated.



Office of Prosecution Services (Revision)

The Office of Prosecution Services was established in 1975 to provide district attorneys' offices and law enforcement agencies with training, educational materials, and administrative assistance. As times and technologies have changed, the Office of Prosecution Services has also evolved its offerings to serve its criminal justice partners. The RDA revision accounts for transitions in the Office's programs, acknowledges changes in record-keeping practices, and expands record series and subfunction descriptions to clarify the agency's processes and duties.



Women's Hall of Fame (New RDA)

The Women's Hall of Fame, established in 1970, is one manifestation of Alabama's traditions of honoring the accomplishments and contributions of its citizens. As its name suggests, the Hall celebrates the diverse achievements of women significant to the Yellowhammer State's history and culture.

Archivists began working on a Women's Hall of Fame RDA in 2021 following the closure of Judson College, which had served as the Hall's host institution since its inception. The new RDA will guide the agency's new host institution, the University of West Alabama, in supporting the Women's Hall of Fame's operations.



State Records Commission Updates

October 26, 2022

The State Records Commission permits line-item revisions to the RDAs for Public Colleges, Public Universities, and District Attorneys' Offices by line-item memo. Staff of those bodies notify the Records Management Section as they identify issues with the RDAs, helping archivists make these documents more comprehensive and usable.

At the October 26, 2022, meeting of the State Records Commission, the Commission passed the following series:

Record Series	Revision/Addition	Applicable RDA
Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances	Added standard financial record series and updated retentions in accordance with current archival practice	District Attorneys' Offices, Public Colleges of Alabama, Public Universities of Alabama
Informational and Promotional Materials	Standardized language and added permanent record series for representative, final materials	Public Colleges of Alabama, Public Universities of Alabama
Withdrawal Records	New record series to encompass student course withdrawals	Public Colleges of Alabama, Public Universities of Alabama
Employee Personnel Files	Updated description to include performance review prepared by supervisors	Public Universities of Alabama
Grant Records	New record series to address grant programs administered by district attorneys' offices	District Attorneys' Offices

State Records Commission Updates

April 19, 2023



Alabama Crime Victims' Compensation Commission (Revision)

Established in 1984, the Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission offers victims of violent crimes and their dependents compensation for expenses incurred due to criminal acts committed by others. The Commission requested that its RDA be updated to permit them to lawfully dispose of records that had not been included in the RDA's revision in 2014. In addition to these changes, the Historical Context section has been expanded to document the Commission's creation amid changing attitudes toward crime and its consequences during the twentieth century.



State Health Planning and Development Agency (Revision)

The State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) ensures that Alabama citizens have access to quality healthcare facilities, services, and equipment. The agency compiles data from medical facilities, analyzes the data to identify gaps in healthcare availability, and grants Certificates of Need to facilities to create new or expand existing infrastructure.

Since the State Records Commission last revised SHPDA's RDA in 2009, new legislation and administrative procedures have substantially changed the agency's record keeping practices. The new RDA includes an expanded Historical Context section, updated series descriptions, and new record series.



Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (Revision)

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs connects Alabama's servicemembers and their families with well-earned benefits, such as pensions and educational opportunities. Since the State Records Commission last approved the Department's RDA in 2000, the agency has undergone significant changes to its programs, including various legislative amendments to the G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program and the opening of the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Spanish Fort in 2012. The revised RDA reflects the agency's current programs and updates the document according to modern archival standards.

State Records Commission Updates

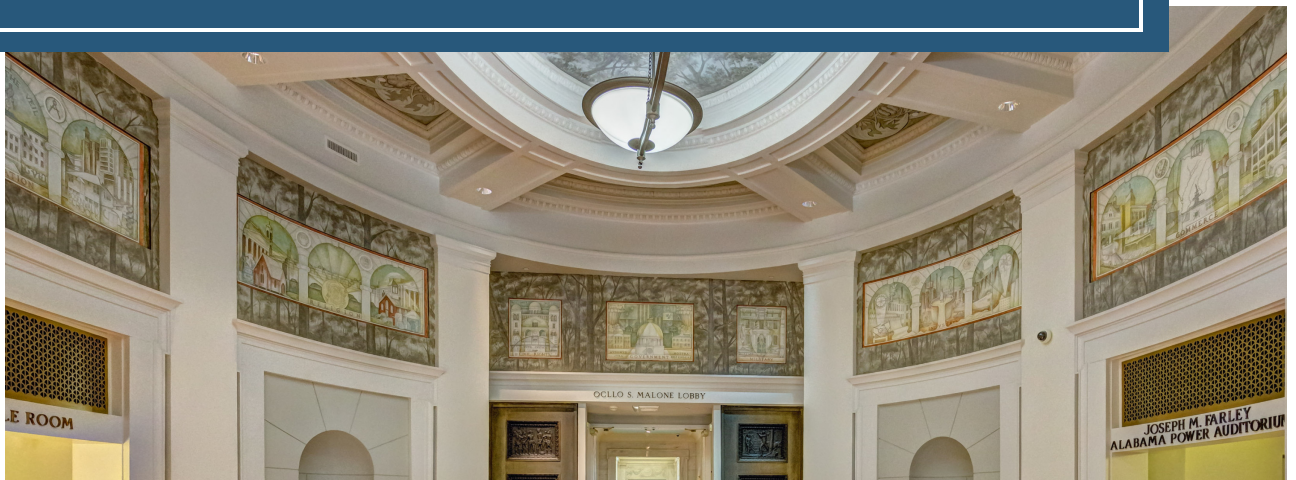
April 19, 2023

The State Records Commission approved the following revisions to state Records Disposition Authorities (RDAs) at their April 19, 2023, meeting:

Record Series	Revision/Addition	Applicable RDA
Inventory Records	Updated Retentions in accordance with current archival practice	District Attorneys' Offices, Public Colleges of Alabama
Strategic Plans	New record series documenting the goals and priorities of public institutes of higher education	Public Colleges of Alabama, Public Universities of Alabama

Find all current RDAs on our website:

<https://archives.alabama.gov/manage/>



Local Government Records Commission Updates October 26, 2022

Record Series	Revision/Addition	Applicable RDA
Comprehensive Plans	New record series documenting long-term plans for local development	Multiple Local Government Agency RDAs
Internal Audits	New record series encompassing process audits used to ensure quality control	Multiple Local Government Agency RDAs
Student Records	Comprehensive overhaul to clarify which student records must be maintained permanently	Boards of Education
Senior Center Administrative Reports and Files	Added note that routine senior center financial records are addressed under "Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances" subfunction	County Commissions
Statements and Reports, Including Amendments, Required of Principal Campaign Committees and Political Action Committees	Revised in accordance with Alabama Act 2021-314, which transferred responsibility for campaign filings to the Secretary of State	County Probate Offices
Evidence and Supporting Documentation	Updated to reflect evidence retention requirements outlined in Act 2021-481	Law Enforcement Agencies
Activity Reports - Field Investigation Reports	New subseries including low-level patrol activities, such as traffic checkpoint interactions	Law Enforcement Agencies

Local Government Records Commission Updates

April 19, 2023

Record Series	Revision/Addition	Applicable RDA
Computer Systems Documentation	Comprehensive overhaul to distinguish critical computer systems documentation from routine records, such as warranty information	All Local Government Agency RDAs
Payroll Records and Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Records	Updated to reflect 29 CFR § 516.5 and IRS Publication 15 retention requirements	All Local Government Agency RDAs
Motor Vehicle Title Records	Lengthened retention to conform with Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 810-5-75-.42	Multiple Local Government Agency RDAs
English Language Learner Records	Multiple series added to address English Language Learner student and program records	Boards of Education
Standardized Examination Records and Testing Materials	New subseries to encompass records related to test administration, such as seating charts and test booklets	Boards of Education
Business Entity Records (formerly Corporation Records)	Revision in accordance with Alabama Act 2020-73, which designated the Secretary of State's Office as the centralized repository for incoming business records	County Probate Offices
Use of Force Records	New record series to reflect that use-of-force documentation is maintained separately from case files	Law Enforcement Agencies
Annexation Opt-Out Forms	New record series to capture citizen applications to opt out of municipal annexations	Municipalities

State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB)

The Alabama State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) supplies leadership and guidance to identify, preserve, and provide access to Alabama's historical records. The Board also promotes a strengthened awareness of the importance of historical records to policymakers and the public, and it serves as the agent of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) in Alabama.

Board members represent a diverse group of state and local agencies, records repositories, and heritage institutions from across the state. Together, they utilize their collective experience in the administration of government records, historical agencies, and archives to support a strategic vision for preserving and providing access to historical records based on the following activities outlined in the Code of Alabama:

- Developing state priorities for historical records as part of a state board plan under program guidelines from the NHPRC
- Promoting an understanding of the role and value of historical records in Alabama
- Fostering and supporting cooperative networks and programs dealing with historical records
- Advising the state archives and other statewide archival, records, or information agencies
- Providing programs for Alabama repositories to assist them in efforts to preserve and promote appreciation for Alabama's historical records



State Historical Records Advisory Board Updates

March 1, 2023 Meeting & Local Government Records and Needs Assessment Project

On March 1, the newly reconstituted State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) met for the first time after a temporary hiatus. During this inaugural meeting, members endorsed a Local Government Records and Needs Assessment. SHRAB's goal with this project is to bolster solidarity with well-provisioned local agencies and evaluate how best to support those lacking resources to preserve these historical records.

The Board chose to launch the assessment with county probate offices. County probate courts create and maintain records that not only protect personal, political, and property rights but also document the history of our local communities. The project was introduced to probate judges and their staff at the Probate Judges Association Basic Law Training Course session on April 18, 2023. Every probate office in Alabama was invited to schedule an assessment session with Records Management Staff.

To optimize responsiveness, project speed, and scheduling opportunities, the assessments were conducted using videoconferencing and conference call technologies, and each session was scheduled for 90 minutes. During the assessments, probate office staff provided feedback to a questionnaire that focused on several areas including storage capacity, environmental issues, availability of resources, and disaster preparedness essential to successfully managing and preserving historical records.

As of September 30, 2023, Records Management staff have met with 35 probate offices from across the state, and we are immensely pleased by this cooperation from our dedicated probate judges and their staff. Assessments have revealed that Alabama probate offices pride themselves on customer service and professionalism, while common challenges such as a lack of storage can make it difficult to care for their older historical records.

Plans are underway to conduct an assessment of Alabama Circuit Courts. Stay tuned for additional details as we dive deeper into the project results over the coming year!

Permanent Records Transmittals

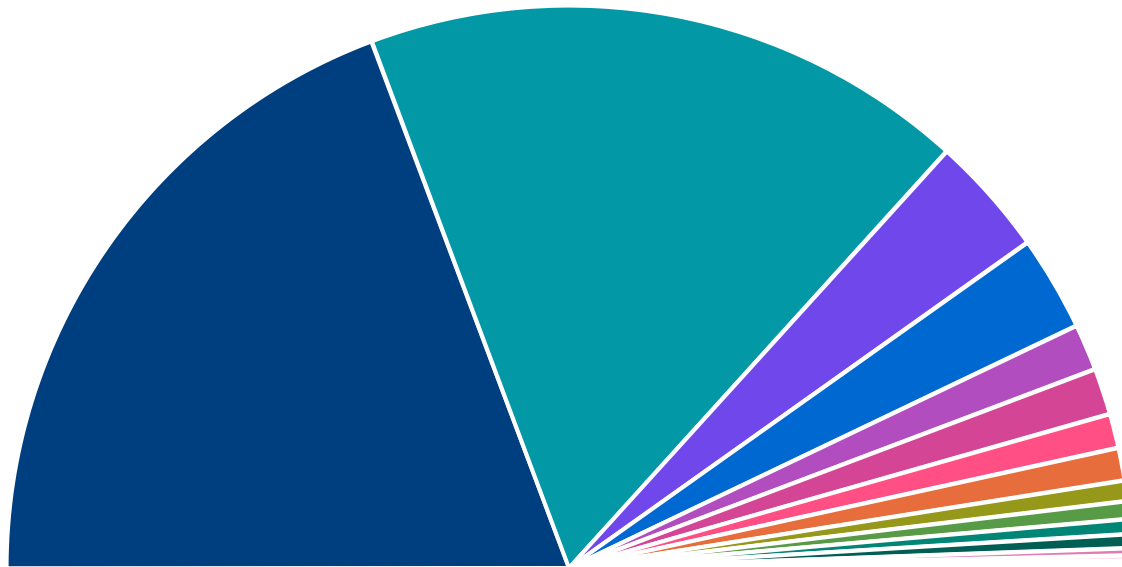
One of the core responsibilities of the Records Management Section is to facilitate the transmittal of permanent state agency records into archival holdings. Permanent records are documents that the State Records Commission has determined have enduring historical value and should be preserved to reflect agencies' work for future Alabamians. Most permanent records listed in an agency's RDA are eligible for transfer to the Alabama Department of Archives and History for preservation. Transferring permanent records helps ensure that records are preserved for years to come and facilitates access by agency staff and researchers for decades to come.

When state agencies are ready to transfer custody of permanent records to the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Records Management Archivists coordinate with employees to identify and organize records to facilitate future access.

In FY 2023, Records Management archivists transmitted **752.35 cubic feet** and **233,350.866 MB** of records from **89 agencies.**

Permanent Records Transmittals

FY 2023 Permanent Paper Records Transmittals (in cubic feet)



- Court of Civil Appeals (290 cf)
- Supreme Court (262 cf)
- Legislative Services Agency (52 cf)
- Secretary of State's Office (41.26 cf)
- Court of Criminal Appeals (20 cf)
- Department of Commerce (20 cf)
- Home Builders Licensure Board (15 cf)
- Public Service Commission (14 cf)
- Department of Education (9 cf)
- State Auditor's Office (7.6 cf)
- Office of Information Technology (6.5 cf)
- Department of Revenue (6 cf)
- Governor's Office (3 cf)
- Department of Corrections (2.27 cf)
- Board of Dental Scholarship Awards (1 cf)
- Legislature - House of Representatives (1 cf)
- State Health Planning and Development Agency (1 cf)

77% of records transmitted in FY 2023 originated with courts in the Alabama Judicial System. In 2023, archivists enacted an agreement with the Circuit and Supreme Courts to receive court records for years to come.

Agencies Transmitting Less than 1 Cubic Foot of Records

- Board of Optometric Scholarship Awards (0.5 cf)
- Department of Mental Health (0.2 cf)
- Alabama Public Television (0.01 cf)
- Board of Dental Examiners (0.01 cf)

Permanent Records Transmittals

Summary of Paper Records Transmittals

Alabama Public Television	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Audio/Visual Recordings	2021	0.01
Board of Dental Examiners	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Registers and Rosters	2005	0.01
Board of Dental Scholarship Awards	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	2006-2017	1
Board of Optometric Scholarship Awards	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	2006-2017	0.5
Court of Civil Appeals	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Court of Civil Appeals Case Files	2013-2022	290
Court of Criminal Appeals	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Court of Criminal Appeals Case Files	2022	20
Department of Commerce	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	2010-2018	15
Monitoring Final Reports	2012-2018	2
Policies and Procedures	2011-2015	2
Board Member Files - Biographical and Historical Information	2000-2009	1
Department of Corrections (via ADAH)	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Convict Records	1877-1947	2.27
Department of Education	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	2015-2019	6
Legal Case Files	2001-2005	3
Department of Mental Health	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	1860-1897	0.15
Alabama Insane Hospital Financial Records and Reports	1866-1867	0.05
Department of Revenue	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Land Sale Records	2021-2022	6
Home Builders Licensure Board	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	1992-2018	15

Permanent Records Transmittals

Summary of Paper Records Transmittals

Legislative Services Agency	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Legislation Project Files	2018-2019	52
Legislature - House of Representatives	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
House Member Files	1995-2018	1
Office of Governor Fob James (care of Michael Waters)	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Legal Advisor Administrative Files	1974-1981	3
Office of Information Technology	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Y2K Compliance Records	1999-2000	6.5
Public Service Commission	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Case Files	1950-2018	11
Meeting Files	1990-2012	3
Secretary of State's Office	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Bills and Resolutions - Senate Records	2015-2022	10
Bills and Resolutions - House Records	2022-2023	8.51
Administrative Files	2014-2022	5.75
Engrossed Acts	2022-2023	5.5
Commission Registers	1951-2011	4.19
Election Files	2012-2018	4
Enrolled Acts	2021-2022	2.52
Trademark Registration Records	1926-1980	0.62
Land Records	c. 1820s to 1830s	0.17
State Auditor's Office	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Appointment Files	2003-2019	6
Administrative Correspondence	1999-2022	1.5
Publicity Files	2000-2004	0.1
State Health Planning and Development Agency	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Meeting Files	2019-2022	1
Supreme Court	Date Range	Total Cubic Feet
Supreme Court Case Files	2015-2022	262



Ongoing Electronic Records Collection Initiatives

Records Management Archivists collect certain electronic records on an ongoing basis. This includes state publications, registers and rosters, organizational charts, and meeting files. While electronic records make information more accessible than ever, electronic formats are uniquely susceptible to records loss due to staff turnover, data corruption, and data migration. Records Management staff request that agencies transfer these targeted records on an annual basis to ensure that critical documentation is preserved for future research.

Meeting Files

The Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-4 requires all governmental bodies, including state agencies, to "maintain accurate records of its meetings... setting forth the date, time, place, members present or absent, and action taken at each meeting." These records typically come in the form of minutes and may be accompanied by agendas and packets; collectively, these materials are referred to as "meeting files." The ADAH collects meeting files for preservation to ensure that future generations of Alabamians can access information about how agency decisions are made.

In FY 2023, 34 agencies transmitted electronic meeting minutes from 1985 to 2022, totaling 2,549,384 megabytes, to the ADAH.

State Publications

State Publications consist of newsletters, annual reports, and special reports that agencies publish for wide consumption by the public. Staff collect electronic state publications to document how agencies represent their work to their stakeholders.

In FY 2023, staff collected 870 state publications from 104 state agencies and public colleges and universities, totaling 3,152,208 megabytes.

Ongoing Electronic Records Collection Initiatives

Registers and Rosters

The State of Alabama licenses over one hundred and forty different occupations. Licensing boards create registers and rosters to document which individuals may practice a profession in the state of Alabama. Archivists view rosters as valuable genealogical resources for future researchers and documentation of industry regulation in the state.

In FY 2023, staff collected registers and rosters from 30 licensing boards, totaling 78.740 megabytes.

Organizational Charts

Records Management Staff began collecting organizational charts from state agencies and public colleges and universities in FY 2021. Organizational charts offer insight into agency structure, programs, and staffing, making them a valuable tool for researchers.

In FY 2023, 32 entities transmitted organizational charts to the ADAH Electronic Records Collection, totaling 31.654 megabytes.

COVID-19 Records

At the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Records Management staff advised agencies to save records documenting their agency's or institution's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. State agencies were encouraged to transmit permanent electronic records relating to their agency's COVID-19 response beginning in 2022. Public colleges and universities were also given the opportunity to transmit COVID-19 records.

In FY 2023, 9 agencies, 2 public colleges, and 1 district attorney's office transferred electronic COVID-19 response records totaling 107.768 megabytes.



All these records (and more!) can be found in the Electronic Records Collections on the ADAH website.

Permanent Records Transmittals

Summary of Other Electronic Records Transmittals

Coastal Alabama Community College	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Course Catalogs	2017-2022	35.904
Policies and Procedures	2022-2023	6.605
Publicity Files	unknown	0.089
Department of Public Health	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Publicity Files	2021-2022	58.202
Administrative Files	unknown	0.173
Examiners of Public Accounts	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Audit Reports	2019-2022	1,590.997
Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Publicity Files	2020	2.946
Health Planning and Development Agency	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Certificates of Need	2022	4.231
Legislative Services Agency	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Special Reports	2021	3.193
Legislature - House of Representatives	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Photograph	2017	0.066
School of Fine Arts	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Publicity Files	2021-2022	5.915
School of Mathematics and Science	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Publicity Files	2019-2022	68.712



Permanent Records Transmittals

Electronic Records Transmittals Summary

Secretary of State's Office	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Business Entity Database	2023	209,215.142
Trademark, Trade Name, and Service Mark Database	2023	10,209.082
State Campaign Disclosure Report Files	2023	3,909.907
Publicity Files	2020-2022	1,897.012
Voter Registration Database	2023	1,593.259
Statutory Filings Database	2023	104.404
Legislative Acts Database	2023	99.273
Resolutions	2016-2022	38.493
Senate Journals	2021	32.199
Meeting Files	2019-2022	9.433
Notaries Database	2023	4.815
House Journals	2023	2.952
Boards and Commissions Database	2023	0.794
Administrative Files	2013-2022	0.788
Snead State Community College	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Course Catalogs	2021-2022	42.723
Student Handbooks	2018-2020	8.796
Space Science Exhibit Commission	Date Range	Total Megabytes
Publicity Files	2016-2022	1,174.851

Oversized Items Transmittals Summary

Department of Archives and History	Date Range	Total Items
Publicity Files	unknown	2
Secretary of State's Office	Date Range	Total Items
Publicity Files	2015-2022	12

Transmittal Highlight: Alabama Judicial System Case Files

In 2023, the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) accessioned over 500 cubic feet of transmitted case files from the Alabama Supreme Court, the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, and the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals. These are the three types of appellate courts in Alabama, meaning they review decisions already made by trial courts; there are no juries or witnesses involved. The contents of the case files vary based on the court and by case, but common contents include orders or briefs issued by the court, submissions made by parties to the case, and petitions to the court.

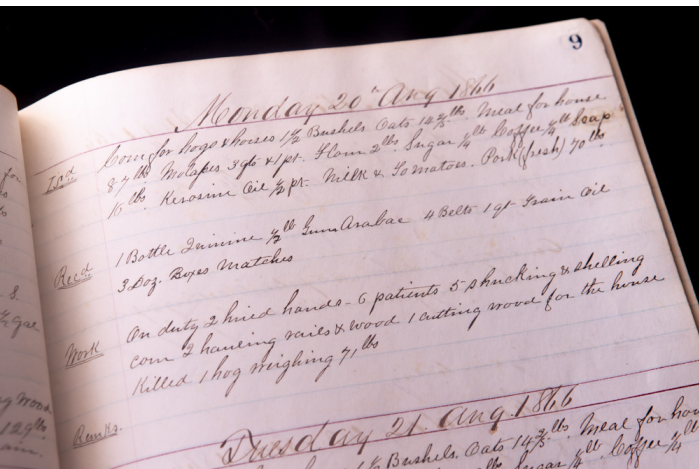
The high volume of case files stems primarily from our accession of Court of Civil Appeals case files from 2013-2022 and Supreme Court case files from 2015-2022, but we also received Court of Criminal Appeals case files from 2022. These case files provide primary documentation of important court cases and will be of interest to legal history researchers.

The former Judicial Building, at right, which housed the Alabama Supreme Court and State Law Library from 1940 to 1994.



Transmittal Highlight: Bryce Hospital Diary

In June 2023, the Department of Mental Health transmitted a diary from the Farm Department of the former Alabama Insane Hospital (now known as Bryce Hospital) to the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Between August 1866 and October 1867, Farm Department supervisors created daily entries with the following headings:



- “Issued”: A list of the goods distributed to patients, workers, farm staff, and farm animals each day.
- “Received”: A list of the goods received by the Farm Department each day.
- “Work”: Tells how many patients and “hired hands” were working each day and the tasks they performed.
- “Remarks”: Any notable information, including anyone who was admitted to the hospital, any patients suffering from physical illnesses, whether it rained that day, and sensational news.
- “Correspondence”: A list of who the Farm Department sent a letter to that day (does not appear in each entry).

The diary offers a glimpse into the day-to-day management of the hospital’s farm. For example, Farm Department staff distributed large quantities of corn, oats, and fodder mix to its farm animals and supplied patients and workers with meat (usually pork or beef), molasses, flour, sugar, coffee, salt, milk, and tobacco most days. Perhaps more importantly, however, the diary shows the kinds of work patients were expected to perform as part of their treatments. In 1866 and 1867, the Alabama Insane Hospital was supervised by Peter Bryce, whose philosophy of “moral treatment” rejected the handcuffs-and-straitjackets-based treatment plan to which many of his contemporary physicians subscribed but upheld labor as the primary path to wellness. As such, and also due to fiscal difficulties that required the hospital to produce its own goods, patients were strongly encouraged to work, and many of them worked on the hospital’s farm. Common tasks listed in the diary include “cutting wood,” “planting and preparing ground,” “work in the garden,” and “getting in” crops like turnips and sweet potatoes. Patients worked six-day weeks—they always had Sunday off—and were not off for holidays.

This diary shows how perceptions of mental illness and treatment philosophies have evolved since the mid-nineteenth century. Although harsh and coercive by contemporary standards, Bryce’s labor-intensive treatment plan was considered progressive for its time because it allowed patients opportunities for physical activity, whereas previous treatments enforced a restrictive idleness on those perceived to be mentally ill. Anyone interested in medical history, especially the history of mental health, will find the diary enlightening.



Transmittal Highlight: Fob James Legal Records

In September 2023, the Office of the Governor transmitted the administrative files of Michael Waters, the Legal Advisor to Governor Fob James (1979-1983), to the Alabama Department of Archives and History. The files provide insight into James' priorities during his first term as Governor.

James is the only Alabama Governor to have been elected to the office as a Democrat and as a Republican. During his first term, he was a Democrat, but despite his affiliation with Alabama's then-majority party, James was something of a political outsider. As such, he sought to reform Alabama's political system by supporting significant revisions to the heavily amended Constitution of 1901. James' proposed constitution would have granted Alabama's counties and municipalities greater autonomy from the state government and provided the state greater flexibility in spending its money. Legislators, however, rejected the proposed Constitution.

Waters' administrative files include documentation of the James administration's efforts to promote a new constitution, including photocopies of the proposed constitution with comments explaining changes from the 1901 constitution and a meeting agenda to discuss the proposed constitution with state legislators and concerned citizens. These materials will be of value to researchers interested in constitutional reform efforts and other priorities of the James administration.

Fob James' official portrait hangs in the Alabama State Capitol Building.





Transmittal Highlight: Land Records

The Alabama Secretary of State's Office (SOS) has historically been responsible for keeping "all books, maps, and other papers appertaining to the survey of any lands belonging to the state" (Code of Alabama 1952 § 56). In December 2022, SOS transmitted to the Alabama Department of Archives and History a survey of the land quality and timber resources of South Alabama conducted in the 1820s or 1830s.

The state, founded in 1819, was still in its infancy when it orchestrated this survey. The rapid growth of the population gave cause for Alabama to examine its natural resources and the quality of its land. The survey results informed settlers of the locations of the most valuable land plots.

Surveyors organized their efforts based on township, and they subdivided those townships into ranges to provide as precise an account of the land and timber resources of a specified area as possible. Pages of the survey are organized by range, and a typical entry includes the topographical characteristics ("level" or "rolling"), dominant tree type ("pine," "cypress," etc.), and wood quality within certain borders of a range. For example, the description for Township No. 1, Range No. 1C, between points M and N reads "Level Pine Wood Poor." The survey also includes information on the course of the Mobile River through a range and the most common "bearing trees" along the banks of that portion of the river.

The survey provides primary documentation of the types of trees and biomes native to South Alabama before significant agricultural and industrial developments in that area altered its ecosystems. The most common tree type listed, by far, is "pine," indicating the historical prevalence of longleaf pine forests in South Alabama. This survey could be a valuable resource to historians studying land use and ecologists undertaking ecosystem rehabilitation.



Transmittal Highlight: Trademark Registers

The Alabama Secretary of State’s Office (SOS) receives and maintains registers of trademarks applied for by business entities operating within the state of Alabama. A trademark is any word, phrase, symbol, design, or combination of these things by which a business or corporation identifies itself. In December 2022, the SOS transmitted a register of all trademarks submitted by corporations operating within Alabama between 1926 and 1980. Each entry includes the trademark being registered, the date it was registered, the corporation or individual that registered the trademark, the address of said corporation or individual, and acknowledgment that the one-dollar registration had been paid.

Many registered trademarks were very specific, and it was common for corporations to file several trademarks simultaneously. For example, on March 15, 1957, Imperial Refineries Corporation registered the following trademarks: “Imperial Cream and Red Shield with Red Loraine Cross and word ‘System,’” “Imperial with Red Shield and the price,” and “Imperial Cream and Red Shield with Red Loraine Cross.”

The trademark register provides information about the economic and consumption trends of Alabama in the twentieth century, and by examining trends in the register, researchers can make connections to broader historical trends. The 1950s and early 1960s saw many oil companies—including Standard Oil Company, Texaco, and Phillips Petroleum Company—file trademarks in Alabama, indicating the increasing significance of automobiles in Alabamians’ lives during that time. Further reinforcing that trend, several fast-food restaurants, such as Whataburger (1956), Chick-fil-A (1964), and Burger King (1964), filed trademarks during this period, showing that Alabamians were looking for meals they could eat while on the move. Be sure to give the trademark registry a look if you’re curious about the brands your grandparents may have encountered on a Sunday drive!

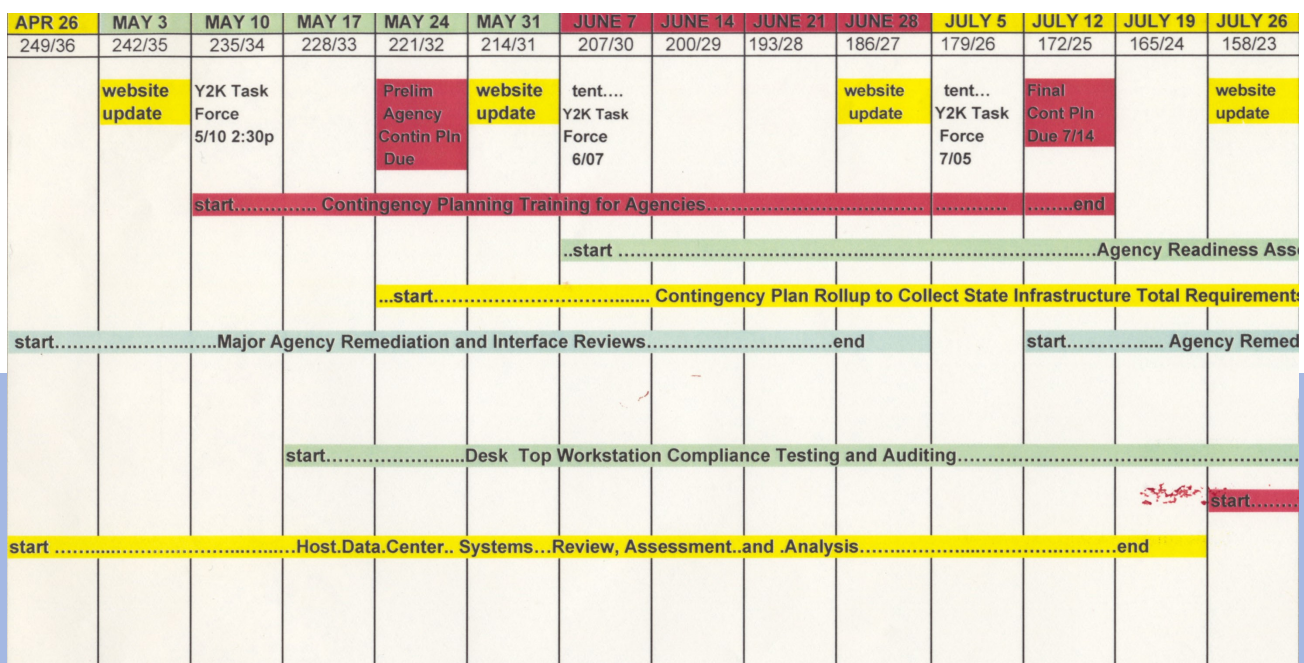
Transmittal Highlight: Y2K Records

On the night of December 31, 1999, state officials assembled in the Alabama Emergency Management Agency’s Operations Center to brace for the new millennium. Far from being a New Year’s Party, this gathering aimed to confirm whether the State of Alabama had conquered the Year 2000 Problem. This issue, referred to as Y2K, was an anticipated computer bug in which system date fields could be interpreted by the system as 1900 rather than 2000, potentially causing widespread service outages.

The Alabama Department of Archives and History’s holdings document state government preparations for and responses to Y2K. For instance, shortly after taking office in January 1999, Governor Don Siegelman issued an executive order establishing an Alabama State Government Y2K Task Force to mitigate its potential effects.

In FY 2023, the Alabama Department of Archives and History accessioned 6.5 cubic feet of Y2K compliance records created by the Department of Finance. The transmitted records document Y2K contingency plans submitted by individual agencies, including, but not limited to, the Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) and the Alabama Department of Transportation. Workflow charts, as shown, demonstrate how the State of Alabama prepared for Y2K over the course of 1999.

Interested in learning more about our state’s response to the Y2K? These records are available in person at the ADAH’s Research Room, with selections available at the ADAH’s Digital Collections portal.



Transmittal Highlight: "Alabama at 200"

Alabama Public Television transmitted to the Alabama Department of Archives and History, in September 2023, a DVD copy of "Alabama at 200," a documentary commemorating Alabama's 200th birthday in 2019 and how Alabamians celebrated it. The documentary, narrated by Birmingham-raised comedian Roy Wood, Jr., highlights the work of the Bicentennial Commission, a 12-member body of Alabama historians, educators, and cultural experts headed by State Senator Arthur Orr.

The Commission kicked off bicentennial celebrations on March 2, 2017—the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Alabama Territory—and festivities continued unabated until December 14, 2019, 200 years to the day after Alabama became a state. Notable events included a 2017 fireworks show in Mobile and a free concert by the Temptations in Birmingham on the weekend of the 2017 Magic City Classic, but most of the Commission's work occurred behind the scenes at the local level. Commission-sponsored Alabama Bicentennial History Institutes offered workshops to teachers to better teach their students about Alabama's history, geography, and society. The Commission also encouraged all public, private, and homeschools in the state to submit bicentennial projects. Based on these projects, 21 state schools were designated Bicentennial Schools of Excellence and received \$5,000 awards from the Governor's Office.

The Commission also sought to highlight the voices and experiences of historically marginalized Alabamians. In 2019, the Commission's Alabama African American Heritage Committee published *The Future Emerges from the Past*, an encyclopedia of people, places, and events significant to the history of African Americans in Alabama. Committee chair Patricia Ford envisioned the work as an accessible yet academic take on the history of black Alabamians. The Commission, aided by Regions Bank, provided a copy to every school and library in Alabama.

The bicentennial celebrations concluded with a large parade in Montgomery on December 14, 2019. You can learn more about how Alabamians threw their state the wildest birthday bash this side of the Mississippi by checking out "Alabama at 200," now being preserved by the Alabama Department of Archives and History and conveniently available for viewing on Alabama Public Television's website.



The Bicentennial Day celebrations featured a light show about Alabama History.

Temporary Records Destruction

While some records created by state and local government entities have permanent historical value, many others are only administratively useful for a set period of time. These documents are known as *temporary records*. Archivists research legal and audit requirements and professional best practices to determine how long records must be maintained (the *retention period*). Retention periods are delineated in RDAs, available in the "Manage Records" section of the ADAH website.

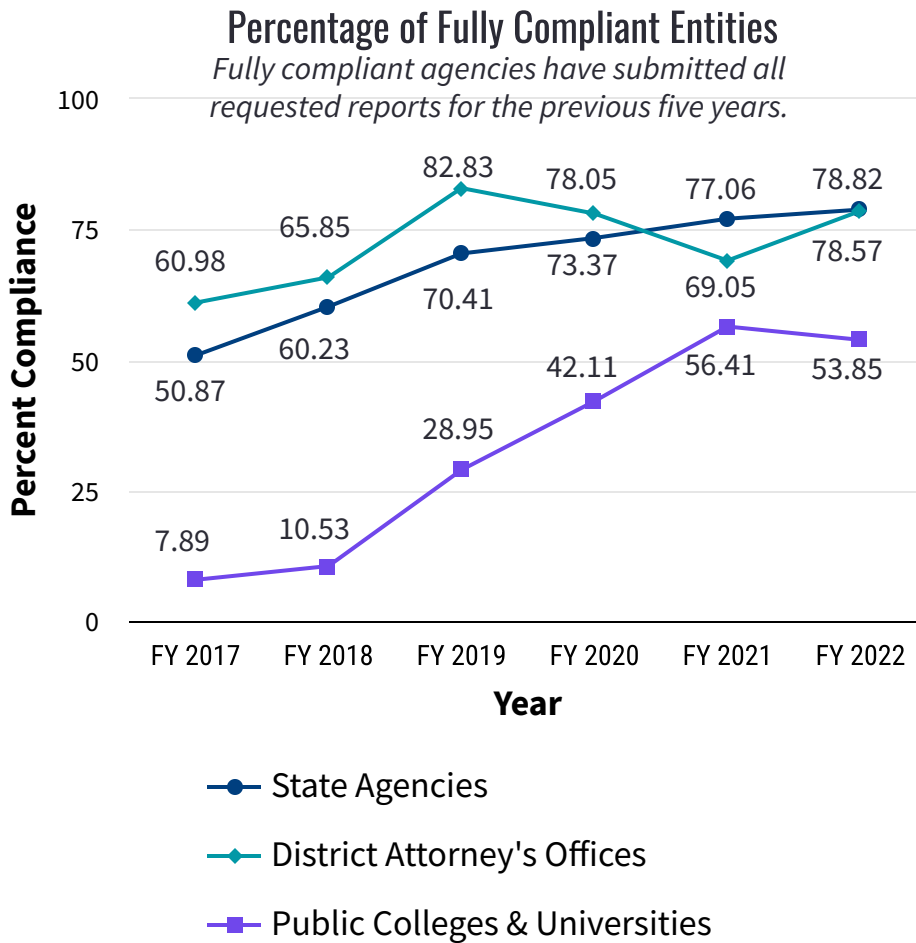
The Records Management Section works with public officials to ensure that temporary records are retained and destroyed in accordance with state records law. All governmental entities in Alabama must report all records destruction to the Records Management Section, and local government bodies must receive permission from archivists prior to destroying records. Agencies should maintain information about the records they destroy to document their compliance with state records law requirements.

Additionally, state agencies in the Montgomery area can store temporary records at the State Records Center, which provides storage and access services for agencies facing space constraints in their offices.

Annual RDA Implementation Report

Fiscal Year 2022 Responses

State agencies, district attorneys' offices, and public colleges and universities are required to submit an Annual RDA Implementation Report summarizing records activities from the previous fiscal year, including information about records destroyed. The Annual RDA Implementation Report for FY 2022, summarizing activity between October 2021 and September 2022, was due January 13, 2023.



Entities Reporting in FY 2022

86.82%

of state agencies

92.86%

of district attorney's offices

71.79%

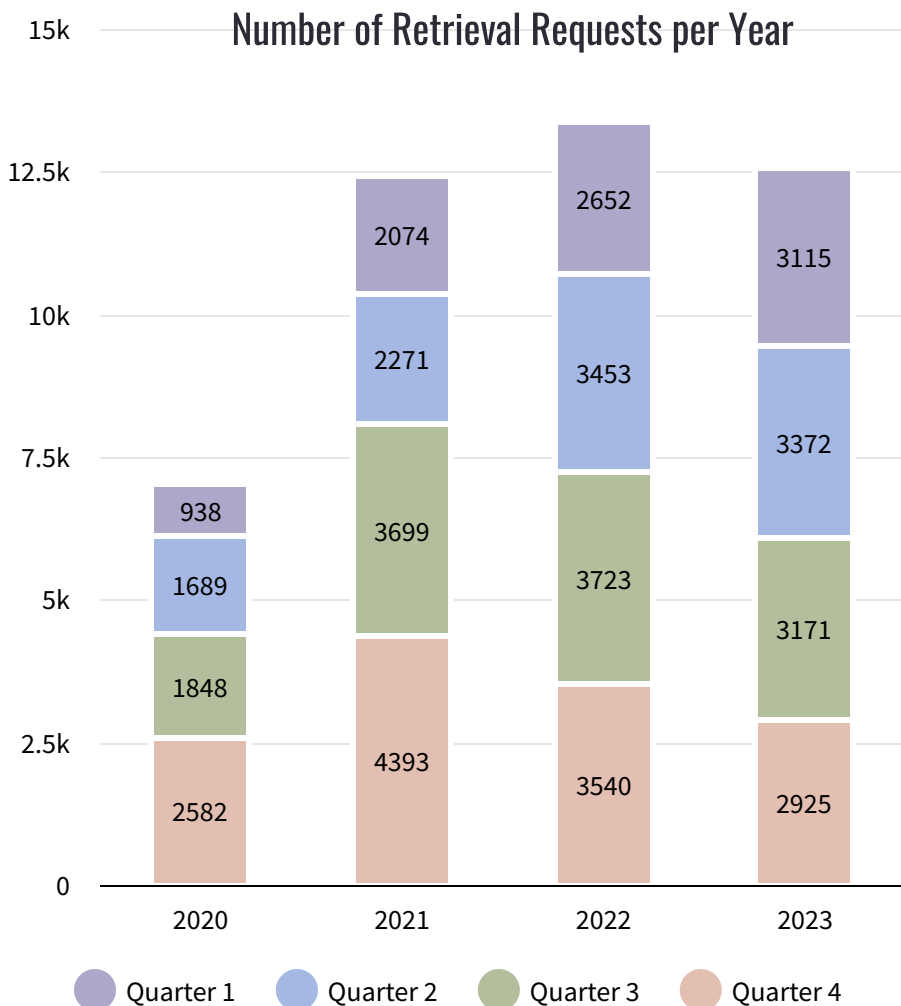
of public colleges and universities

FY 2022 Records Destruction

	Paper records destroyed in FY 2022 (in cubic feet)	Electronic records destroyed in FY 2022 (in GB)
State Agencies	15,234 cf	27,558.28 GB
District Attorney's Offices	520 cf	20.13 GB

Archivists did not request FY 2022 destruction data from public colleges and universities.

State Records Center



State Records Center Services

Retains state agency temporary records and tracks the authorized destruction dates for a monthly fee per box

Provides storage and access services for state agency temporary paper records

Provides archival boxes for the transfer of permanent records to the ADAH and assists with the transport of records

By The Numbers:

51,675 cubic feet housed

12,583 records requests

616 cubic feet destroyed

1,817 cubic feet transferred

Interested in storing temporary agency records at the State Records Center? Contact Michael Grissett at Michael.Grissett@archives.alabama.gov or 334-277-9898!

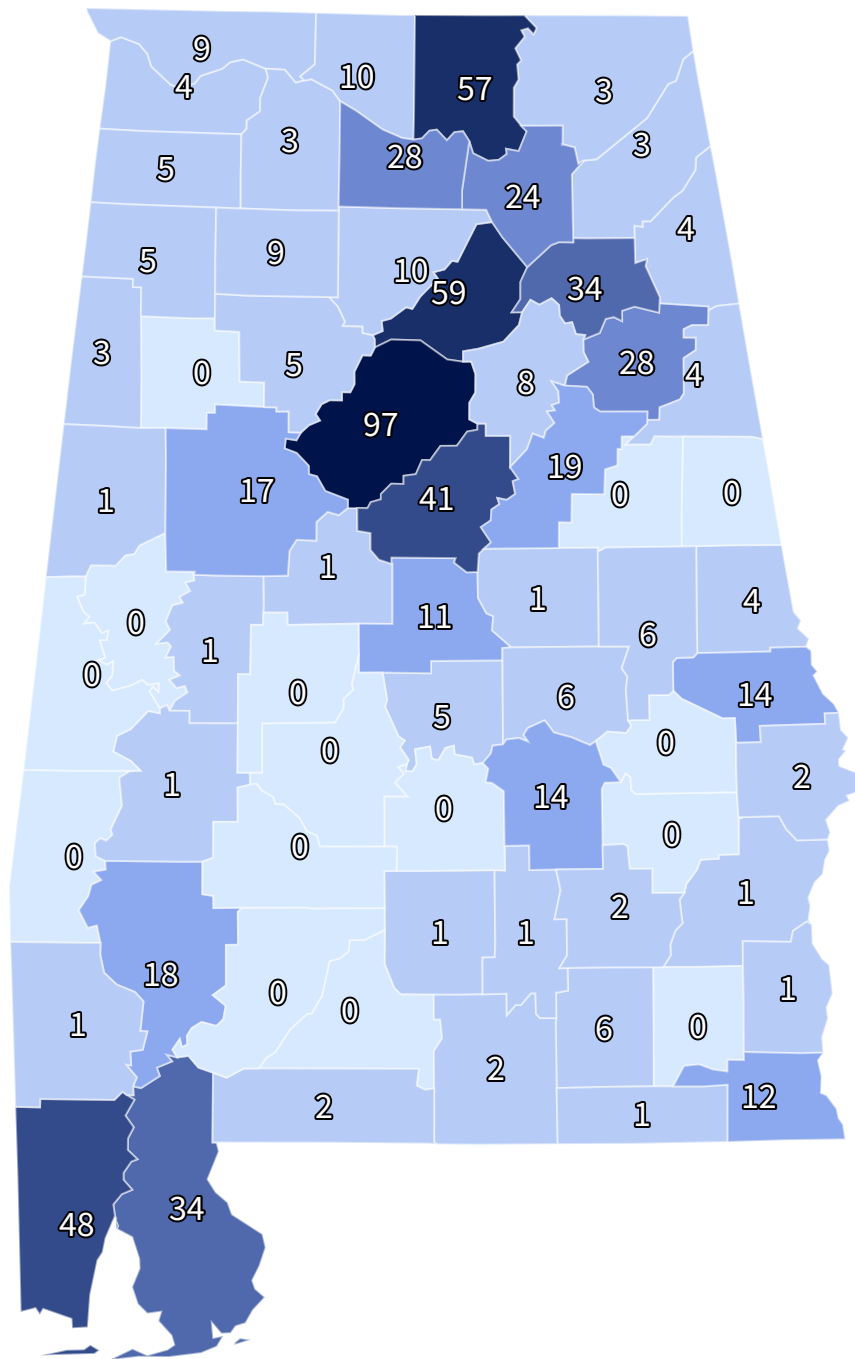
Local Destruction of Obsolete Records

The Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23 mandates that "no county, municipal, or other local government official shall cause any county, municipal, or other local government record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the Local Government Records Commission." Records Management Section staff, in their role as support staff to the Local Government Records Commission, review all Local Government Records Destruction Notices prior to destruction to verify that the records are eligible to be destroyed. Local government offices are not required to destroy records each year; however, offices that choose to dispose of eligible obsolete records must receive permission before completing destruction.

RDA Type	Quantity of Notices Submitted	Quantity of Distinct Entities Reporting	Total Cubic Feet of Obsolete Paper Records Destroyed
911 Emergency Communications Districts	3	2	3.13 cf
Archives and Museums	1	1	4.00 cf
Boards of Education	405	65	10,219.05 cf
County Boards of Registrars	3	3	147.00 cf
County Commissions	24	9	2,391.00 cf
County Probate Offices	21	13	2,310.00 cf
County Taxation Offices	19	13	4,481.69 cf
Emergency Management Agencies	0	0	0.00 cf
Fire Departments	4	3	60.00 cf
Law Enforcement Agencies	28	22	4,474.25
Municipalities	175	54	7,891.70 cf
Public Libraries	2	2	6.00 cf
Regional Planning Commissions	1	1	10.00 cf
Total	686	188	31,998.05 cf

Local Destruction of Obsolete Records

Distribution of Records Destruction Notices



Destruction notices were submitted most frequently from the following counties in FY 2023:

1. Jefferson County - 97 notices (14.14% of total)

2. Blount County - 59 notices (8.60% of total)

3. Madison County - 57 notices (8.31% of total)

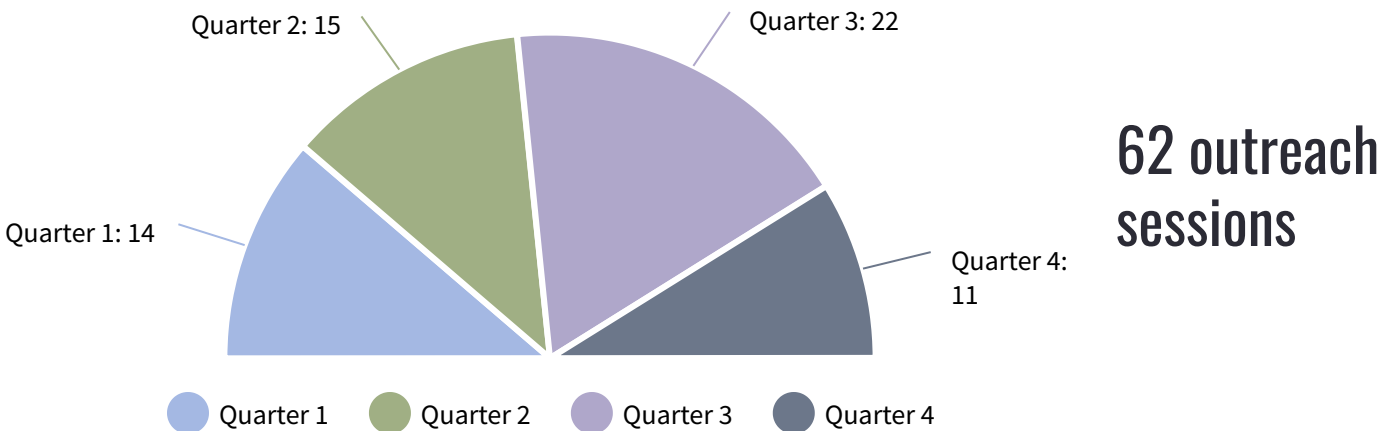
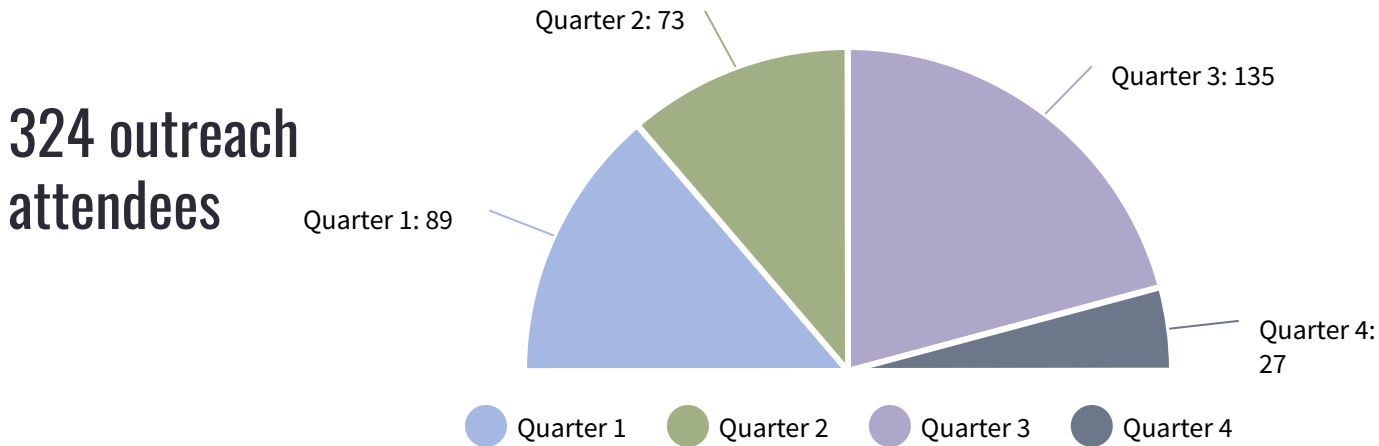
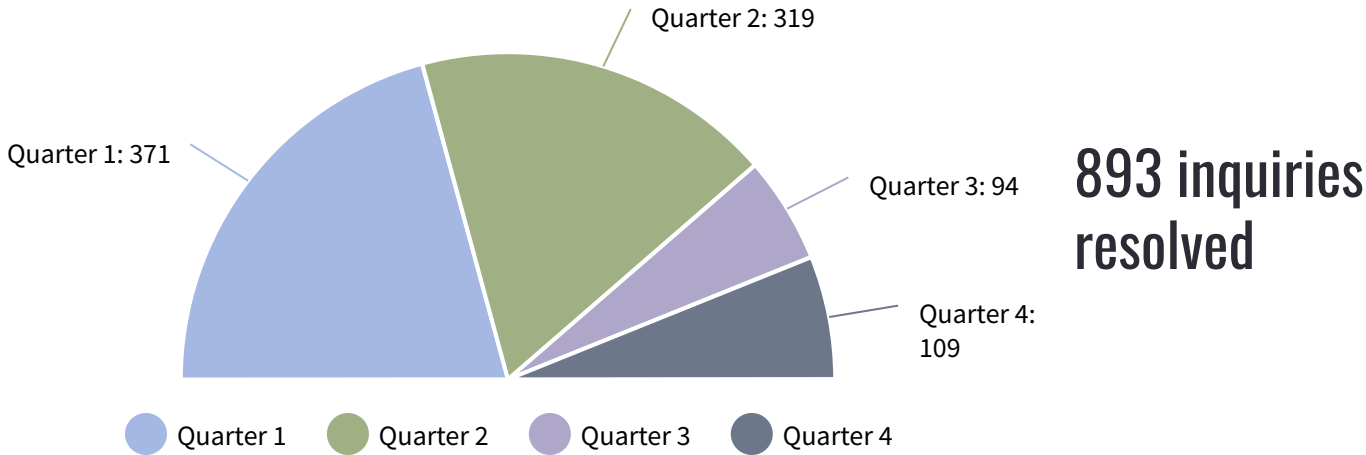
Records Management Outreach

Records Management Archivists work with governmental bodies throughout the state to ensure that public officials understand their legal records responsibilities and implement best practices.

Assistance is available to employees of local government offices, state agencies, district attorneys' offices, and public colleges and universities. Archivists hold free, open-registration, virtual training sessions throughout the year, including 7 sessions for local officials, 5 sessions for state employees, and 2 sessions for public college and university staff. Upon request, staff additionally provide individualized assistance through site visits, collaborative projects, retention schedule consultations, agency-specific training, and storage condition examinations.

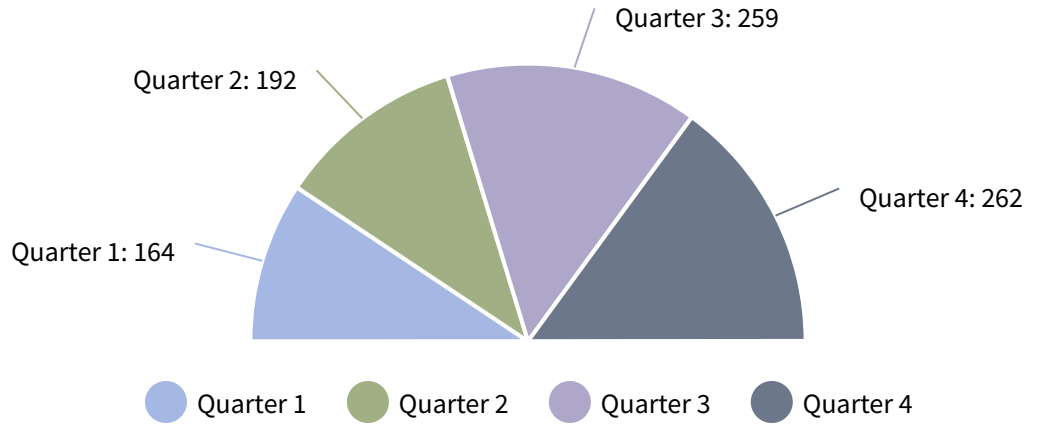
In FY 2023, the Records Management Section held **77 outreach sessions** for **1,303 attendees** and answered **1,794 inquiries.**

State Government Outreach



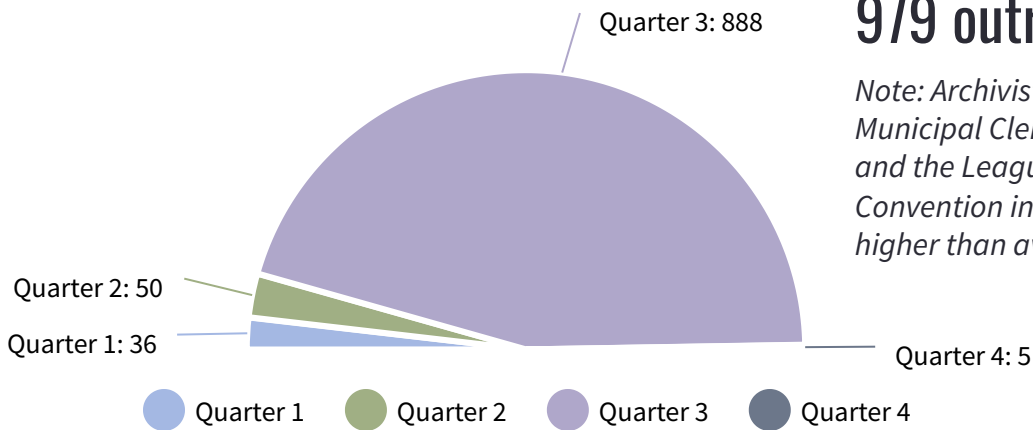
Local Government Outreach

877 inquiries resolved

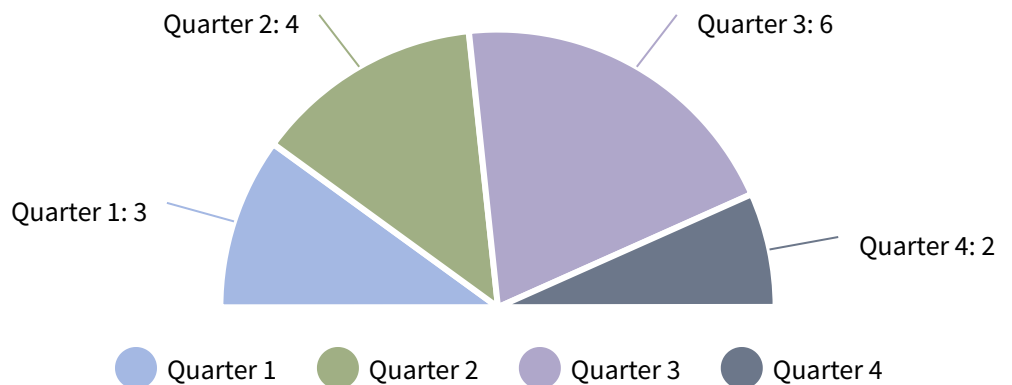


979 outreach attendees

Note: Archivists presented at the Alabama Municipal Clerks Spring Training Institute and the League of Municipalities Convention in Quarter 3, accounting for higher than average numbers.



15 outreach sessions



2023 Conference Appearances

League of Municipalities

In May 2023, archivists attended the Annual Convention of the Alabama League of Municipalities in Birmingham. Founded in 1935, the Alabama League of Municipalities is a nonpartisan membership association of over 450 incorporated cities and towns that focuses on strengthening municipal government through advocacy, training, and the advancement of effective local leadership. Records Management staff spoke with the convention's 800+ attendees, providing resources on records management best practices, including the Managing Local Records in Alabama booklet and upcoming training opportunities.

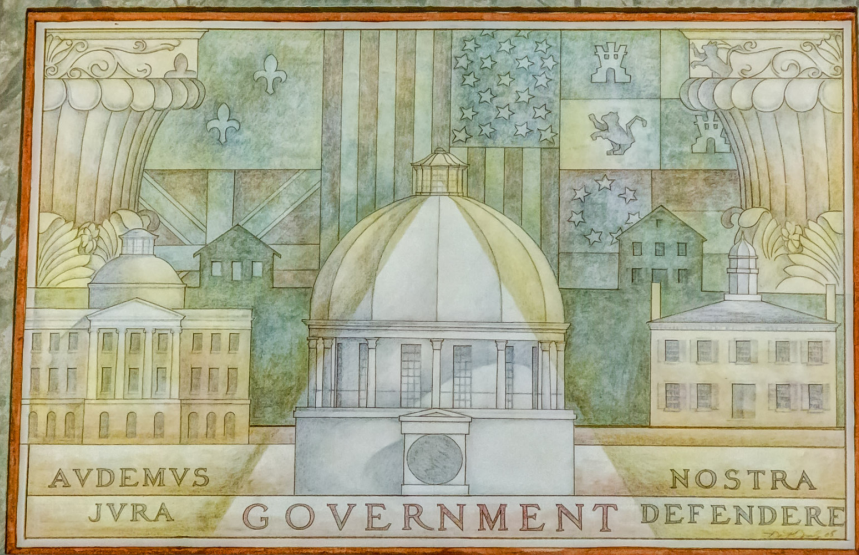
Alabama Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officials

Archivists spoke at the annual conference of the Alabama Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officials (ALACRAO) in June 2023. Since 1936, ALACRAO has served as a forum for admissions and registrar staff of Alabama's higher education institutions to network and grow their knowledge base to serve their schools and students better. Archivists presented a session on records management principles for colleges and universities to approximately twenty-five attendees.

School Superintendents of Alabama

On November 16, 2022, archivists presented to 20 attendees of the School Superintendents of Alabama (SSA's) New Superintendent Orientation about legal records responsibilities. The SSA serves as a resource for Alabama's superintendents.





Collaboration with the Alabama Secretary of State's Office

During the first quarter of FY 2023, archivists concluded a long-term project with Secretary of State (SOS) John Merrill's administration as his term in office came to an end. The Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) worked with the Secretary of State's office to develop and implement records management policies, transmit paper and electronic records at the end of the administration, and assist in the transition to a new administration.

Archivists collaborated closely with SOS staff in each division to ascertain existing records practices, update electronic file structures, and draft and implement organizational solutions. The project team developed records management policies and procedures guides for each of the seven divisions, which would aid in seamless and organized record keeping for incoming staff in the new administration.

As Secretary Merrill's term ended, ADAH staff identified permanent electronic and paper records that should be transferred with the transition between administrations. The office transferred training guides for candidates and poll workers, election records, electronic policy records of the Secretary, electronic voter engagement posters and commercials, electronic databases, and a variety of other records. ADAH staff also helped assess temporary records that would not be needed in the succeeding administration of Secretary of State Wes Allen and determined when these records would be eligible for destruction.

In addition to special projects, the ADAH collaborates with constitutional officers in administrative transitions, transferring the records of outgoing officials, and offering records management resources to the incoming administrations.

Staff Presentation at 2023 NAGARA Annual Conference

"Know Thyself: Safeguarding Institutional Knowledge"

In July 2023, Charles Busby and Sophie Law traveled to the National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators (NAGARA) Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, where they delivered a presentation entitled "Know Thyself: Safeguarding Institutional Knowledge." In this session, they chronicled the Records Management Section's efforts to preserve its institutional history with innovative knowledge management strategies.

Many archival institutions face the threat of losing internal institutional knowledge due to staff turnover or changing technologies. In 2015, the Records Management Section embarked on a multi-year effort to combat the loss of institutional knowledge. What began as a scanning project of the Section's old administrative files led to a modernization of internal documentation procedures, implementation of a web-based client relationship management system, and other sweeping changes in policy, process, and procedure. Taken together, these efforts have equipped a new generation of archivists with the tools to build meaningful partnerships with the state and local government agencies they serve.

In "Know Thyself: Safeguarding Institutional Knowledge," Busby and Law explained the Records Management Section's steps along this path, highlighting both successes and shortcomings encountered along the way. They hope that the lessons the Records Management Section learned in Alabama can be applied to similar challenges faced at other NAGARA members' home institutions.



"For The Record" Blog

2023 Overview

Resources and How-To's

- Put a UV Filter on that Limelight, Please!: Archivists in Popular Culture
- It's Time to Submit Your Required Annual Records Disposition Authority Implementation Report for FY 2022
- Scrapbooks: Challenging Historical Treasures
- State Records Center
- FAQ: Accessing Bankruptcy Records
- Dear Reader: "You've Got Records"

From the ADAH Collections

- Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering Ledgers

Staff Highlights

- Meet the Staff Feature: Mary Clare Johnson
- Meet the Staff Feature: Kevin Nutt
- Meet the Staff Feature: Records Management Student Worker - Ethan James
- Meet the Staff Feature: Records Management Student Worker - Gabriella Galarza

Commission Updates

- Updates from the State Records Commission: October 26, 2022
- Updates from the Local Government Records Commission: October 26, 2022

Records Management Staff

As of 2023, the Records Management Section staff consists of nine members, including two State Records Center specialists. Records Management Archivists' workload is unique even amongst other archival positions. In their day-to-day work, staff may field questions about records management principles, consult with public officials to develop and write retention schedules, conduct training, perform assessments of records storage spaces, approve destruction of obsolete records, facilitate intake of permanent state records into the ADAH, and write technical guidance for public audiences, among other responsibilities.

In 2023, two new staff members joined the Records Management Section, highlighted in the following pages. As our staff capacity continues to grow and new archivists bring new ideas, we are excited to discover what we can accomplish in years to come!

New Staff: Leslie Coty

How did you end up working at the Alabama Department of Archives and History?

While completing my Master of Library and Information Sciences with a certificate in Archival Administration at Wayne State University, I developed an interest in records management, with a particular focus in government records. As the Public Records Officer for the City of Asheville, I saw first-hand how a well-organized records management system contributes to the efficiency, transparency, and overall success of a local government entity. I wanted to focus more on providing direct support to localities with their records and information management issues, and I'm able to do just that in my current position as Records Management Archivist.

What is your role?

I primarily assist local agencies with their records management needs. For example, local governments must request authorization to destroy their temporary records, and I assist them with that process. I've also helped state agencies with the development of their Records Disposition Authority. Currently I'm working on a state-wide Local Government Records & Needs Assessment. The project involves meetings with local agencies and learning more about their records management and preservation efforts. The data we've been collecting during these assessments will help us focus our energies and resources where they're needed most. It's been a great experience learning more about how we can better serve our localities.

What is something you enjoy about working in records management?

Government officials are focused on helping their customers and carrying out the day-to-day responsibilities of their offices, so records management isn't necessarily something that's at the forefront in their minds. I really enjoy being a resource for our state and local agencies by helping them organize and maintain their records so they can focus on what they do best.



What do you view as the biggest challenge facing the profession today?

We're all dealing with information overload, especially when it comes to electronic records. The exponential growth of digital information creates immense administrative and storage burdens. The volume of records we're creating on a daily basis can make it challenging to organize and maintain our records for easy access and retrieval. The Records Management Section understands how overwhelming this can be, so we are really focused on providing the tools necessary to stay on top of everything.

New Staff: Chris Bertolini

How did you end up working at the Alabama Department of Archives and History?

I worked as a student intern with the Records Management Section towards the end of my time at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I wanted something more practical than getting a doctorate, and I enjoyed my work as an intern, so I applied for this position as soon as I found out about it. And I got it!

What is your role?

I develop records schedules for state agencies and help agencies transmit their permanent records to the archives.

How is your role different from what you did as an intern?

As an intern, I mostly summarized and made timelines documenting the kind of work I'm doing now. Since I became familiar with the position during my internship, none of it is very surprising. This, along with making professional connections and the clichéd-yet-necessary "getting your foot in the door," is probably the best thing about internships: they're good ways to find out if a job is right for you.

What is something you enjoy about working in records management?

It's an interesting way to learn. Records management projects force you to get familiar with how other people do their jobs, so even if you're completely focused on managing records, you'll pick up extra little info-nuggets (go ahead, ask me who the father of soil conservation science is). This makes us great at trivia but also burdens us with temporary passions that no one else wants to talk about.

What do you view as the biggest challenge facing the profession today?

Perceived irrelevance. Contemporary career culture saddles humanities-based professions with the stigmas of impracticality and obsolescence. I worry this perception will dissuade students interested in archival work from following their passions.

What are your hobbies when you are not at work?

I like most things involving music: listening to it, playing it, reading about it, especially arguing about it. I'm also big into reading history books, although I've been on a fiction kick recently. Lastly, I like sports, particularly basketball. The Orlando Magic and San Antonio Spurs will meet in the 2025 NBA Finals; remember you heard it from me first.



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