



**POLICE DEPARTMENT  
RECORDS DISPOSAL SCHEDULE  
14-81**

Revised 2/96

**Municipal Government**

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
William Francis Galvin**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE**  
**Information and Procedures**

1. The following is a list of standard records that can be found in the custody of municipal police departments. This list includes records and forms currently mandated for their use in carrying out specific statutory responsibilities.
2. This schedule is arranged alphabetically by category e.g., administration, personnel and then alphabetically by the title of the record series. Record series listed under the activity section relate to activities of the police department, exclusive of criminal offender record information, which is under purview of the Criminal History Systems Board, MGLA Ch.147, sec. 4A, 4C.
3. Each disposal schedule has a schedule number and revision date in the upper right-hand corner. The schedule number has two parts, the department number and the schedule's year of origin.
4. Any records series title with an asterisk (\*) may be destroyed without the permission of the Supervisor of Public Records, following the expiration of the specified retention period.
5. Each entry on the schedule includes: record series title; form identification, if applicable; legal citation (including statutory references to the Massachusetts General Laws); minimum period for which the record must be maintained; whether or not the record must be retained in hard copy format e.g., if the record cannot be microfilmed and destroyed; and the series number.
6. If the phrase "settlement of levy" is used in the disposition section of the disposal schedule, it designates the closure of all accounts for a particular levy through payment, abatement, or taking of property for taxes.
7. Before submitting disposal requests to the Supervisor, be sure that the records are not subject to any current or pending litigation or public records request, and that the prescribed retention period has fully expired for each record to be destroyed.
8. Records created prior to 1870 cannot be destroyed.
9. To destroy records included on this disposal schedule, the police chief should submit to the Supervisor of Public Records two copies of a letter substantially in the form suggested here, indicating: schedule number; date of last schedule revision; series number; estimated volume; inclusive dates for each series to be destroyed; and the date of the last audit or settlement of levy, if applicable. Where the disposal period refers "Completion of satisfactory audit or final settlement of levy" After termination," include these or other variable dates so that the eligibility for destruction of the records in question may be checked.  
The police chief should sign both copies of the letter. One copy of this will be returned to the treasurer with the Supervisor's approval. Following receipt of this approval, all records included in the written request may be legally destroyed, subject to any conditions specified thereon. Any record may be retained beyond this time at the discretion of the treasurer.  
Original records cannot be destroyed without the written permission of the Supervisor of Public Records.
10. To destroy records that have been microfilmed and that are on the disposal schedule, the treasurer should submit to the Supervisor of Public Records two copies of a letter substantially in the form suggested here, indicating: schedule number; date of last schedule revision; series number; estimated volume; inclusive dates for each series to be destroyed; and the date of the last audit or settlement of levy, if applicable. Where the disposal period refers to "Completion of levy, if applicable. Where the disposal period refers to "Completion of

satisfactory audit or final settlement of levy” or “After termination,” include these or other variable dates so that the eligibility for destruction of the records in question may be checked.

The police chief should sign both copies of the letter. One copy of this letter will be returned to the police chief with the Supervisor’s approval. Following receipt of this approval, all records included in the written request may be legally destroyed, subject to any conditions specified thereon. Any record may be retained beyond this time at the discretion of the policed chief.

11. To destroy records that are not included on this disposal schedule, refer to the Administration/Personnel (23/89) records disposal schedules. This schedule includes records held in common by various municipal offices. To destroy a record that is not presently included on this disposal schedule or the Administration/Personnel (23/89) disposal schedule, submit a letter in duplicate to the Supervisor of Public Records. The letter should indicate: schedule number; date of last schedule revision; series number; estimated volume; inclusive dates for each series to be destroyed; and the date of the last audit or settlement of levy, if applicable. If possible, attach a photocopy of the record.
12. If items subject to audit are dated with the current fiscal year and have already been audited, they should be retained through the end of the applicable fiscal year (June 30) or later, as necessary. If items subject to audit are dated with the current calendar year and have already been audited, they should be retained through the end of the applicable calendar year (Dec. 31) or later, as necessary.
13. Disposal schedules apply to information, not the media containing the information. If records maintained on electronic media (for example, magnetic tape disk or optical data storage systems) are printed out in an eye-readable format (paper or microfilm), the original electronic records may be immediately destroyed. In this case a permission letter would not need to be sent to the Supervisor of Public Records. If the electronic record is the sole source of the information, it must be treated in the same manner as its hard copy counterparts for the purposes of disposal, and must be maintained in accordance with the disposal schedule.

SAMPLE LETTER TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO DESTROY RECORDS

[Record Custodian's Letter head]

[Date]

Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Supervisor of Public Records  
Archives Division-Records Management Unit  
Massachusetts Archives at Columbia Point  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston MA 02125

Dear Supervisor:

This is to request authorization to destroy the records listed on the [list schedule name here e.g., Police Department] records disposal schedule [list schedule number here e.g., 14/81] revised [list date of last revision; this date is on the top right corner of the records disposal schedule] as follows:

SERIES NUMBER	INCLUSIVE DATES
6.1	January 1, 1972 to June 30, 1975
6.4	January 1, 1979 to June 30, 1981

Estimated volume: 2.5 cubic feet

The last audit of accounts of this office was completed on [list date and year here e.g., Sept. 1, 1998]. I certify that to the best of my knowledge these records do not pertain to any current public record request or to any current or pending litigation to which this office is a party.

Very truly yours,

[Signature of legal Records Custodian]

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor of Public Records

## 14\_81

Function	Series name (* =perm not required for destruction)	Legal citation	Disposition period	Hardcopy retention required	Series number	Date last revised
Activity.	Ambulance Calls Report		7 years, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.1	1/1/79
Activity.	Arrest Records (a) Booking Sheet		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56A	2/28/96
Activity.	Arrest Records (b) Fingerprint Card		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56B	2/28/96
Activity.	Arrest Records (c) Vehicle Inventory		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56C	2/28/96
Activity.	Arrest Records (d) BOP Report		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56D	2/28/96
Activity.	Arrest Records (e) RMV Report		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56E	2/28/96
Activity.	Arrest Records (f) LEAPS Report		Until completion of prosecution and exhaustion of appeals.	No	14.56F	2/28/96
Activity.	Cell Monitoring Reports	c.40, s.36B	3 years.	No	14.65	2/28/96
Activity.	Controlled Substance Seizure Report (no arrest or warrant)	c.94C, s.47A	7 years.	No	14.2	2/28/96
Activity.	Death Report (Suicide, Sudden, Unexplained)		Permanent.	No	14.3	2/28/96
Activity.	Dispatch Tapes		Dispose or reuse 60 days after disposition of case, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.66	2/28/96
Activity.	Dog Bite Investigation Report	c.140, s.155	7 years, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.4	2/28/96
Activity.	E-911 Call Detail Record	c.6A, s.18A-18F	3 years.	No	14.89	2/28/96
Activity.	Evidence Control Form		3 years.	No	14.57	2/28/96
Activity.	Firearm Identification Card	c.140, s.129B	Permanent.	No	14.5	2/28/96
Activity.	Firearm, Licence to Carry (Application)	c.140, s.131	Record permanently.	No	14.6	2/28/96
Activity.	Firearm, License to Carry. Form FA-19	c.140, s.131	5 years and 90 days; record permanently.	No	14.7	2/28/96
Activity.	Firearms, License to Sell	c.140, ss.122, 122A	Record permanently.	No	14.8	2/28/96
Activity.	Firearms, Wound Report	c.112, s.12A	Permanent.	No	14.9	2/28/96
Activity.	Found Property Form		3 years.	No	14.59	2/28/96
Activity.	Gunsmith License	c.140, s.122	Record permanently.	No	14.10	2/28/96
Activity.	Incident Report (Miscellaneous non-criminal investigation)		3 years.	No	14.11	2/28/96
Activity.	Investigation Report (no arrest or warrant) (a) Armed Robbery	c.265, s.17	11 years.	No	14.13A	2/28/96
Activity.	Investigation Report (no arrest or warrant) (b) Assault with a Dangerous Weapon	c.265, s.18	11 years.	No	14.13B	2/28/96
Activity.	Investigation Report (no arrest or warrant) (c) Unarmed Robbery	c.265, s.19	11 years.	No	14.13C	2/28/96
Activity.	Investigation Report (no arrest or warrant). (d) Confining or putting in fear with intent to commit felony	c.265, s.21	11 years.	No	14.13D	2/28/96
Activity.	Investigation Report of all crimes except Murder and those covered	c.277, s.63	7 years.	No	14.12	2/28/96

Function	Series name (* =perm not required for destruction)	Legal citation	Disposition period	Hardcopy retention required	Series number	Date last revised
	by c.265, s.17, 18, 19, 21 (no arrest or warrant)					
Activity.	Investigation Report, Murder (no arrest or warrant)	c.277, s.63	Permanent.	No	14.14	2/28/96
Activity.	Journal		Permanent.	No	14.15	2/28/96
Activity.	Juror Investigation Report	c.234, s.4	1 year.	No	14.16	2/28/96
Activity.	Log (Blotter)		Permanent.	No	14.17	2/28/96
Activity.	Missing Person Report		2 years after case is closed.	No	14.18	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (a) Operator's Report (investigation or no investigation)	c.90, s.26	3 years.	No	14.19A	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (b) Fatal	c.90, s.26	Permanent.	No	14.19B	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (c) Hit and Run	c.90, s.26	7 years, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.19C	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (d) Personal Injury	c.90, s.26	7 years, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.19D	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (e) Property Damage	c.90, s.26	3 years.	No	14.19E	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Accident Reports (f) Investigating Officer's Report	c.90, s.26	3 years.	No	14.19F	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Citation	c.90C, s.2	1 year.	No	14.20	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Citation Sheet	c.90C, s.6	1 year.	No	14.21	2/28/96
Activity.	Motor Vehicle Inventory Form		3 years.	No	14.60	2/28/96
Activity.	Parking Ticket (Paid)	c.90, s.20A	After completion of satisfactory audit.	No	14.22	2/28/96
Activity.	Permits/Applications (Sunday work, etc.)		1 year after issuance.	No	14.23	2/28/96
Activity.	Premises Inspected Slips		1 year.	No	14.24	2/28/96
Activity.	Prisoner Property Slip		1 year.	No	14.25	2/28/96
Activity.	Protective Custody Report (All)	c.111B, s.8	3 years.	No	14.26	2/28/96
Activity.	Public Records Request Form		3 years.	No	14.61	2/28/96
Activity.	Radar Log		3 years.	No	14.27	2/28/96
Activity.	Stolen Goods Report	c.266, s.48	3 years.	No	14.28	2/28/96
Activity.	Stolen Vehicle Report	c.90D, s.33	3 years.	No	14.29	2/28/96
Activity.	Tape Recordings of Phone Calls (911 etc.)	c.90D, s.33	Dispose or reuse 60 days after disposition of case, provided no litigation is pending.	No	14.67	2/28/96
Activity.	Taxi Cab Driver Records		When superseded.	No	14.64	2/28/96
Activity.	Unclaimed Property, Notice of Sale	c.135, ss.8, 9, 11	3 years.	No	14.30	2/28/96
Administration.	Annual Report (Departmental)		Permanent (one mint copy).	Yes	14.31	2/28/96
Administration.	Correspondence		3 years, if of no informational or evidential value.	No	14.34	2/28/96
Administration.	Criminal Offender Record Information Request Form		3 years.	No	14.62	2/28/96
Administration.	Cruiser Maintenance Report		1 year after retirement of vehicle.	No	14.35	2/28/96
Administration.	Equipment Inventory		Until superseded by next inventory.	No	14.37	2/28/96
Administration.	Equipment Maintenance Log		After retirement of equipment.	No	14.38	2/28/96
Administration.	Lock-up Rules and Regulations	c.40, s.34	Permanent.	No	14.40	2/28/96

Function	Series name (* =perm not required for destruction)	Legal citation	Disposition period	Hardcopy retention required	Series number	Date last revised
Administration.	Payroll (Departmental)		After audit, provided a permanent record of earnings is retained by Police Department or other municipal office.	No	14.42	2/28/96
Administration.	Procedural Rules		Permanent.	No	14.43	2/28/96
Administration.	Roll Call Report		3 years.	No	14.44	2/28/96
Administration.	Schedule of Departmental Payments to Treasurer		After use.	No	14.45	2/28/96
Administration.	Travel Expense Report of Court Witness	c.262, s.53B	After completion of satisfactory audit.	No	14.46	2/28/96
Administration.	Uniform National Crime Reports		When superseded.	No	14.63	2/28/96
Personnel.	Appointment Certificate	c.41, s.96	Permanent.	No	14.32	2/28/96
Personnel.	Civil Service Records	c.31, s.61	Permanent.	No	14.33	2/28/96
Personnel.	Civilian Complaints, no specific officers named	c.260, ss.3A, 5B	4 years following closure of investigation.	No	14.49	2/28/96
Personnel.	Civilian Complaints, substantiated	c.149, s.52c, c.260, ss.3A, 5B, c.277, s.63	7 years following closure of investigation or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain outside personnel file.	No	14.48	2/28/96
Personnel.	Civilian Complaints, unsubstantiated	c.149, s.52C, c.260, ss.3A, 5B	4 years following closure of investigation or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain outside personnel file.	No	14.50	2/28/96
Personnel.	Disciplinary Case Files, resulting from administrative reprimand	c.149, s.52C, c.151B, c.260, s.5B, c.277, s.63 29 CFR 1602.30	7 years following closure or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain with personnel file.	No	14.51	2/28/96
Personnel.	Disciplinary Case Files, resulting from civilian complaint	c.149, s.52C, c.260, ss.3A, 5B, c.277, s.63	7 years following closure or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain with personnel file.	No	14.52	2/28/96
Personnel.	Employment History Records		20 years following termination of employment.	No	14.36	2/28/96
Personnel.	Internal Investigation Case Files	c.151B, c.260, s.5B, c.277, s.63	7 years following closure; retain with personnel files.	No	14.53	2/28/96
Personnel.	Leave Reports	c.41, s.111F	3 years.	No	14.39	2/28/96
Personnel.	Overtime Reports		3 years.	No	14.41	2/28/96
Personnel.	Reprimands, administrative	c.149, s.52C, c.151B, c.260, s.5B	4 years or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain with personnel file.	No	14.54	2/28/96
Personnel.	Reprimands, resulting from civilian complaint	c.149, s.52C, c.260, ss.3A, 5B, c.277, s.63	7 years following closure or 3 years following termination of employment, whichever is later; retain outside personnel file.	No	14.55	2/28/96
Personnel.	Vacation Report	c.41, s.111A	3 years.	No	14.47	2/28/96