



County Coroner

Records Retention Schedule

Prepared by the Local Records Branch
Archives and Records Management Division
Approved by the State Libraries, Archives, and Records Commission



Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

County Coroner Records Retention Schedule

This retention schedule is to be used by all County Coroner offices in the Commonwealth. It lists records that are legally required for them to create and/or specific to the County Coroner's Office. The County Coroner Records Retention Schedule should be used along with the Local Government General Records Retention Schedule, which lists those records that are common to all local government agencies, i.e. financial, personnel, payroll etc. The records retention schedule is the foundation of an effective records management program and must be used on regular basis. All retention schedules have been approved by the State Archives and Records Commission in accordance with KRS 171.410 – 740. This approval provides the legal basis for all local agencies to apply the appropriate schedule to their records management needs.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS For Records Retention Schedules

- Permanent (P)** Denotes records appraised as having historical, informational or evidential value that warrants preserving them permanently (forever) beyond the time needed for their intended administrative, legal or fiscal functions. These records may be destroyed **only** after the written permission is given by the State Archivist and after they are microfilmed according to specifications published by the Department for Libraries and Archives.
- Confidential (C)** Records deemed unavailable for review by the public after applying the state’s Open Records Law (KRS 61.878) and other state and federal statutes and regulations with specific restrictions. The (C) is added to appropriate record series descriptions as a reminder to agency personnel and does not bear any legal status. **It is important to note that the local government head has the responsibility of knowing all the appropriate confidentiality laws, statutes and regulations that apply to the records maintained in their office and to see that they are enforced.** Even though a record series may or may not be marked confidential on a records retention schedule, contradictory laws or regulations that are approved after the retention schedule has been completed may not be reflected but must be honored.
- Vital Record (V)** Records that are essential to the continued functioning of the local government during and after an emergency, as well as those records that are essential to the protection of the rights and interests of that local government and of the individuals for whose rights and interests it has a responsibility. Local Government should have a plan in place to identify those records and provide for their protection in case of a disaster (fire, flood, earthquake, etc.).
- Duplicates** Duplicate records that have not been assigned a retention period and function solely as reference and informational material may be destroyed when no longer useful. If the duplicate is considered the “copy of record”, it must be retained according to the retention period on the schedule.
- Destruction Certificate** A destruction certificate should be used to document the destruction of public records and may be found, along with the instructions at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives website (www.kdla.ky.gov). It should be used when destroying records according to the appropriate records retention schedule. No record created or maintained by a local government agency may be destroyed unless it is listed on the retention schedule and a destruction certificate completed and the original copy sent to the Department for Libraries and Archives (Department).
- After Audit** A term used in the disposition instructions to denote a records series that shall only be destroyed after the retention period has expired and an official audit has been performed. Example: 3 years and audit: This means that the record series must be kept for 3 years after last activity or date in a file. The record must have gone through the annual audit before it can be destroyed.

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

Signature Page

COUNTY MODEL
Agency

December, 1989
Schedule Date

CORONER
Unit

Change Date

December 14, 1989
Date Approved by Commission

APPROVALS

The undersigned approve of the following Records Retention Schedule or Change:

Agency Head

Date of Approval

Agency Records Officer

Date of Approval

Richard L. Feldman
State Archivist and Records Administrator
Director, Public Records Division

12-7-1989
Date of Approval

Chairman, Archives and Records Commission

12-14-89
Date of Approval

The undersigned Public Records Division staff have examined the record items and recommend the disposition as shown:

Jerry W. Carlton
Records Analyst/Regional Administrator

12-7-89
Date of Approval

Charles A. Robb
Appraisal Archivist

12/18/89
Date of Approval

Darrell Gabbart
State/Local Records Branch Manager

12/7/89
Date of Approval

The determination as set forth meets with my approval.

Cindy M. James CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

12-13-89
Date of Approval

Bob Babbage

STATE ARCHIVES AND RECORDS COMMISSION
Archives and Records Management Division
Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

STATE AGENCY RECORDS
RETENTION SCHEDULE

County Coroner

Record Group
Number

Series	Records Title and Description	Function and Use
L2615	Case File -- (Confidential while case pending) (V)	The function of the case file is to hold all documentation pertaining to the coroner's case. A case file is generated when any death is investigated by the coroner. All deaths investigated by the coroner must be within the 19-point guidelines of KRS 72.025. The primary exception to coroner's death investigations is the event of confirmed natural death. The case file is used for court appearances by the coroner or deputy coroners, and for any reference to the case: insurance purposes, police reference (especially pending investigations and open cases), and media references.
	Access Restrictions	Open cases restricted to coroner & police use.
	Contents	See Supplemental Sheet for contents.
	Retention and Disposition	Retain permanently
L2616	Investigation Report -- (Confidential while case pending) (V)	This record was created to document the circumstances surrounding the death of an individual. This report is not completed when the death involved does not come under the coroner's jurisdiction (See Attached KRS Statute). This report is completed by the coroner or deputy at the time of death and is mandated according to KRS 72.025. Being the initial report done by the coroner, it is used extensively during an subsequent investigation by the coroner's office or the law enforcement agencies.
	Access Restrictions	KRS 61.878, OAG 82-458-Pending unnatural deaths.
	Contents	Time call received, date, time of arrival, time of departure, person calling coroner, name of deceased, place of death, address of deceased, time of death, birthdate, date of death, birthplace, age, sex, race, marital status, next of kin, maiden name, father's name, mother's maiden name, SS #, occupation, employed by, pronounced dead by, PD/Officer, E. C./F.D./Unit, summary, dominant hand, clothing, position of body, height, weight, eyes, hair, distinguishing marks, algor, rigor, liver, rm temp., weather conditions, medications, found death by, last seen alive by, witness to injury, illness, or death, other subjects, or passengers involved, evidence obtained at scene, statistics classification no., case no., name of suspect, address, D.O.B., age, SS #, autopsy, location, D.C. signed by, M.E.: SEE ATTACHMENT
	Retention and Disposition	Retain permanently
L2617	Index to Investigation Reports and Case Files (V)	This record is used as a finding aid for the coroner's investigation reports and case files. Not all offices have these. It is color coded according to type of death.
	Access Restrictions	None
	Contents	This record contains a card with the number of the case, name of deceased individual, address, date of death, place of death and funeral home.
	Retention and Disposition	Retain permanently

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Series	Records Title and Description	Function and Use
L2618	Annual Statistical Report	This is a report compiled annually by the coroner's office to document the activities of that office during that year. These statistics are gathered to reflect the investigations of the coroner's office and what types of deaths were investigated. This report is sent to the news media, public library, and the Urban County Government or Fiscal Court.
	Access Restrictions	None
	Contents	This record contains statistical information as to cause of deaths and they are divided into the following categories: (1) Accidental deaths-Vehicle, thereunder auto - vs- auto, fixed object, pedestrian, truck, tractor trailer, motorcycle -vs- fixed object, moped -vs- fixed object, truck -vs- auto, truck or fixed object, total accidental deaths-vehicle outside county, and total accidental deaths - vehicle. (2) Accidental Deaths, thereunder by blunt object, carbon monoxide, drugs, falls, fire, farm machinery, suffocation, private property motor vehicle accident, hyperthermia, total. (3) Accidental Deaths(Industrial), thereunder by steel beams, falls, and total. (4) Suicide whether by carbon monoxide auto, explosion, fire arms, hanging, jumping, or drugs and total. (5) Homicide. Total deaths.
	Retention and Disposition	Retain permanently
L2619	Certificate of Death (V)	This record was created to record the death of persons and certify the cause of death. Questions 1-23b are to be completed by the funeral home. The remainder is to be completed by the coroner's office if the death comes under the jurisdiction of that office (See Attached KRS Statute 72.025). After completing this certificate it is sent to the local vital statistics office. A duplicate is maintained in the coroner's office either in the case file or in a separate file. When there is an unnatural death, this certificate is put in the case file.
	Access Restrictions	None
	Contents	Decedent's name, sex, date of death, SS #, age, date of birth, birthplace, was decedent ever in armed forces?, place of death, facility name, city, town, or location of death, county of death, marital status, surviving spouse, decedent's usual occupation, kind of business, residence-state, county, city, st.&no., inside city limits?, zip code, was decedent of Hispanic origin?, race, decedent's education, father's name, mother's name, informant's name, mailing address, method of disposition, place of disposition, location, signature of funeral licensee, name and address of facility, signature, date signed, name of person completing cause of death, time of death, date pronounced dead, was case referred to M.E. Coroner?, immediate cause, was an autopsy performed: SEE ATTACHMENT
	Retention and Disposition	Retain until no longer useful, then destroy.
L2620	Provisional Report of Death	This document is used to inform the local registrar of vital stats. that a death has occurred and that a certificate of death is to be sent later. This is sent to the funeral home to give them permission to bury or cremate the body. This is a release of the body from the jurisdiction of the coroner's office. If there have been provisions made for special arrangements for the body (organ donation etc.), this form is used to inform those of such arrangements. This report is initiated by the coroner if the case is one to be addressed by that office. It also can be initiated by the hospital where the person died. Put in the case file if it is unnatural death. If not, is filed by itself.
	Access Restrictions	None
	Contents	Name, date of death, hour, county of death, county of residence, age, race, sex, facility or location of death, attending MD/coroner, facility notes, blood and body fluid precautions advised?, Kentucky Organ Donor Affiliates, authorization to release the remains, acceptance of the remains, signature, authorization for cremation and burial.
	Retention and Disposition	Retain for two (2) years, then destroy after audit.

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L2621	Evidence in Coroner's Cases -- (Confidential while case pending) (V)	Evidence items are those found near a death scene or on the body which are retained for investigation, for court trial, and/or for next of kin to claim. Generally, evidence in criminal investigations is taken by the police; in non-criminal cases by the coroner. (This practice may vary by county; in smaller counties or those without constituted police depts., the coroner may assume evidence in unnatural death cases.) Evidence in closed coroner's cases is returned to next of kin when called for. Evidence in open cases must be held until final disposition. (In the case of weapons confiscated in suicide cases, the weapon must be held for 1 yr. after case disposition.)
	Access Restrictions	While investigation open. KRS 61.878 1f OAG 82-458
	Contents	Items include: billfolds, personal identification, money, drug apparatus, checkbooks, personal clothing or jewelry, medications, etc. Evidence may also include weapons; however, these are often taken by the law enforcement authorities as part of their criminal investigation.
	Retention and Disposition	Retain until final disposition of case and when no longer needed, then destroy.