



February 05, 2025

Electronic Conversion of Paper Records

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee
County Technical Assistance Service
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
615.532.3555 phone
615.532.3699 fax
www.ctas.tennessee.edu

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Reference Number: CTAS-1204

The County Public Records Commission may also, upon the request of any office or department of county government, authorize the destruction of original public records which have been reproduced onto computer or removable computer storage media, including CD ROM disks. ^[1] Despite the fact that copying of permanent records to electronic media is authorized by the law, be aware that the Tennessee State Library and Archives does not consider any existing format for electronic records to be of permanent archival quality.^[2] Once the records have been duplicated, the official with custody of the records must apply to the County Public Records Commission for authority to destroy them. An original paper version of a record required by law to be permanently retained must not be destroyed once reproduced without a majority vote of the county public records commission.

Prior to the destruction of any records reproduced onto electronic storage media, the County Public Records Commission is also required to advertise its intent to do so in a newspaper of general circulation in the county, and, in those counties with a population in excess of 200,000, in a weekly newspaper.^[3] The notice should describe the records by title and year, indicate that the records have been electronically stored, reproduced and protected, and indicate that the county office or department has requested permission to destroy the original record.

See Electronic Records are Not Permanent Archival Records; Tennessee State Library and Archives.

[1] T.C.A. § 10-7-404(d)(1).

[2] See Tennessee Archives Management Advisory 99-006.

[3] T.C.A. § 10-7-404(d)(1).

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