

Instructions for Completing the Certificate of Records Destruction (RM-3 Form)

Updated: August 2014

The RM-3 documents that records were destroyed properly and in accordance with the *Virginia Public Records Act*. Non-records such as reference material, personal items, and copies must not be reported on the RM-3.

Before a state agency, locality, or regional entity (hereafter referred to as “agency”) can destroy public records:

- A Records Officer must be designated in writing for your agency or department by completing a *RECORDS OFFICER DESIGNATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES* (RM-25 FORM) and filing it with the Library of Virginia.
- Records to be destroyed must be covered by a Library of Virginia-approved general or agency-specific *RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE*, and the retention period for the records must have expired.
- All investigations (including requests under the *Freedom of Information Act*), litigation, and required audits must be completed, as no record can be destroyed if it is subject to one of these actions.
- The organization’s designated Records Officer and an Approving Official must authorize the destruction by signing each RM-3 form.

After public records have been destroyed:

- A responsible person must affirm that the records were destroyed by signing and dating line 9 of the form. This may be the agency staff member or representative of the company who destroyed the records or it may be an official of the agency affirming that they have the knowledge that the records have been destroyed. Either way, this is the final signature that certifies the records have **actually been destroyed**. No vendor certificates or other attachments (such as lists of records destroyed) will be accepted with the RM-3.
- A copy of the signed RM-3 form must be retained by the organization pursuant to GS-19 for localities or GS-101 for state agencies.
- The RM-3 form, with all original signatures, must be mailed to the Library of Virginia where it will be retained for fifty (50) years.

Mail forms to:

Library of Virginia
Att: Patrice Morgan
800 E. Broad Street
Richmond VA 23219-8000

For additional information on records destruction refer to the [Virginia Public Records Management Manual](#) (Chap. 8).

Instructions:

1. Type the full name of agency, locality, or regional entity.
2. Type the name of division, department, and/or section.
3. Type the name of individual completing the form (to whom any questions about the form or records may be directed).
4. Type the mailing address of the agency.
5. Type the
 - a) Telephone number of the person completing the form including direct extension, if applicable.
 - b) E-mail address of the person completing the form.
6. Records to be destroyed:
 - a) Type both the retention schedule and series numbers that apply to the records to be destroyed. ENTER ONLY ONE SERIES NUMBER PER LINE.
 - b) Type the exact records series title as listed on the approved retention schedule. You may add detail to this title if it is important to identifying the records.
 - c) Type the date range of the records to be destroyed, from oldest to most recent. Indicate starting month/year and ending month/year.
 - d) Type the location where the records are stored (optional).
 - e) Type the total volume for each series of records to be destroyed in cubic feet (cf). Refer to the [Volume Equivalency Table](#) to convert boxes, drawers, open shelves, or even “piles” of paper or microform records to their cubic-footage equivalents. If it is electronic records being destroyed, then enter the approximate size of the files in some form of byte (kilo-, mega-, - giga-, etc.). If needed, please use two lines to report destruction of electronic and paper records from the same series.
 - f) Type the method used to destroy the records, i.e., trash, recycle, shred, burn, pulp, electronically shred, degaussed, etc.
7. Type the name of the individual responsible for the records or the work that the records support; sign and date.
8. Type name; apply signature of Records Officer attesting that the form is accurate and complete, and the date signed.
9. Typed or printed name and signature of individual or company representative who affirms that the records have been destroyed and the date they were destroyed. Do not attach anything to the original sent to the Library of Virginia.

If multiple RM-3 forms are submitted, all three required signatures must be on each page.

Do not modify the RM-3 form or print double-sided.

For an example of a completed RM-3, please see the [Completed Sample RM-3](#).