

FY 2022

Commonwealth of Virginia

Circuit Court Records Preservation Grant
Program



Guidebook

Project Year July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

Government Records Services

Library of Virginia

Contact and Resource Information

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Resources:

Circuit Court Records Preservation Program
<https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/CCRP/>

Retention Schedules

<https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/retention.asp>

Program Description and Guidelines

I. Introduction

During their 1990 session, the General Assembly amended the *Code of Virginia*, §17.1-275 (A.2.), which increased the circuit court recording fees for land records designated *for use in preserving the permanent records of the circuit courts. The sum collected for this purpose shall be administered by the Library of Virginia in cooperation with the circuit court clerks.* Thus was created the Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Program (CCRP), directed solely toward the preservation of permanent circuit court records, those in the 120 offices now existing across the commonwealth and those that have been transferred to the Library of Virginia. Since 1991, the CCRP grant program has provided nearly \$25,000,000 to all 120 circuit court clerks' offices to support preservation efforts.

Grants are funded through fees collected by circuit court clerks for the preservation of permanent circuit court records. In this competitive grant program, the number of grant applications submitted and the level of grant funding requested routinely exceeds the total amount available. Grant funds are limited and every effort is made to provide an equitable level of funding to all qualified projects. Funds for more than one type of grant project may be applied for within a grant cycle, but separate applications are required for each project. A locality may prioritize the projects it submits; however, the CCRP Grant Review Board is responsible for determining which project will receive funding.

The Library of Virginia awards grants in consideration of the advice and recommendation of the CCRP Grant Review Board. The board is comprised of three circuit court clerks, the State Archivist, and a senior staff member of the Local Government Records program. The consulting archivists and Local Records Program Manager attend as non-voting, ex-officio members and facilitate the meeting.

General information about the grant program and electronic versions of the grant applications are available at the Library of Virginia website: <https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/CCRP/>

II. Staff Assistance

Retain this Guidebook for your reference and use throughout the grant award. This publication, updated annually, will provide answers to many questions that may arise. Project applicants must consult with their consulting archivist about proposed projects prior to submission of the grant proposal. Archivists can assist in adjusting the scope and nature of projects to ensure proposed projects are eligible. Contact Local Records Program Manager Greg Crawford (804-692-3505) or gregory.crawford@lva.virginia.gov for the consulting archivist assigned to your locality. A consulting archivist is assigned to each project prior to its commencement and is available throughout the project for consultation with the grantee.

Projects Eligible for Grant Funding

I. Security Systems

1) An early warning smoke, fire, and intrusion detection system must be procured from a reputable vendor. State and/or local procurement guidelines must be followed. This system must be connected to an office monitored 24 hours a day (typically the sheriff's department, a central 911 office, or a paid third-party monitoring firm). The maintenance cost for the first year may be included in the solicitation and covered by grant funds. Maintenance and repair costs after the first year are the responsibility of the clerk and/or locality. The locality must agree to incur the yearly costs thereafter. **The submitted vendor proposal must include a professionally designed diagram of the system layout created by the vendor.**

2) Camera monitoring and recording systems. The purpose of this grant is to discourage the unauthorized removal of or damage to historic records stored in the records room(s). It is not for monitoring the security of circuit court staff. This type of system must be procured from a reputable vendor according to state and/or local procurement guidelines. **The submitted vendor proposal must include a professionally designed diagram of the system layout created by the vendor identifying where the cameras and monitors are to be installed.** This system should include a digital video recorder that does not require the use of videotapes. The maintenance cost for the first year may be included in the solicitation and covered by grant funds. Maintenance and repair costs after the first year are the responsibility of the clerk and/or locality.

II. Reformatting

Reformatting vital and historically significant records can be undertaken to secure the informational content of a record, to increase access to the record, and to preserve the artifactual integrity of an original document by providing an electronic copy and retiring the original. **Applicant must contact a Consulting Archivist or the Local Records Program Manager prior to submitting a reformatting grant to determine if records are eligible for grant funding.**

All projects that reformat records from any medium to digital must conform to appropriate state standards and Library of Virginia guidelines, copies of which may be obtained on the Library of Virginia website at https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/electronic/digital_imaging.pdf.

The following are eligible for grant-funded imaging:

1) Permanent records of historical and/or informational significance. These include loose original records and volumes such as marriage licenses, road and bridge records, minute books, and pre-1913 birth and death registers. Loose original records must be flattened, conserved, and properly arranged. The records must have a logical order, for example, alphabetical, chronological, or numerical. If suit papers are being reformatted, each case must be filed in an acid free folder. Volumes must be properly identified and conserved prior to reformatting. Grant covers 100% of cost to generate digital images

(**minimum resolution – 300 dpi tiffs**). Digital images are to be stored and made accessible on a secure remote access system and/or a computer terminal maintained by your office. Applicants are recommended to retire the original records from public use following completion of project.

2) Back-file scanning of permanent records for access by a land records management system and/or secure remote access system is permitted. Examples are deed books, order books, marriage registers, and will books. Grant covers 100% of cost to generate digital images (**minimum resolution – 300 dpi tiffs**) from original volumes or microfilm. The original records are recommended to be retired from use following completion of project.

3) Back-Indexing for the purpose of making analog index information digital and searchable on a land records management system and/or secure remote access system. Users will have the ability to search index books and view document images. Vendor proposals must include strategy to adhere to existing indexing systems and be compatible with existing land records management system and secure remote access system. This grant is also available for reindexing projects which serve to upgrade a previous indexing system. Grant covers 100% of the cost.

III. Essential Equipment and Storage

The following are eligible for grant funding:

1) Shelving (permanent records) – Shelving that promotes improved preservation of or access to **permanent** records. Shelving can be static or mobile and must meet archival standards. Applicant must identify in grant application permanent records that will be stored in new shelving. **Submitted vendor proposal must include the shelving design and specifications.**

2) Shelving (office records) – Shelving needed as a result of daily office recording and filing may be made to the grants program for 50% of the purchase price, with matching funds coming from local sources. **Submitted vendor proposal must include the shelving design and specifications.**

Note: All shelving must be procured from a reputable vendor. State and/or local procurement guidelines must be followed. The maintenance cost for mobile shelving the first year may be included in the grant request and covered by grant funds. Maintenance and repair costs after the first year are the responsibility of the clerk and/or locality. The locality must agree to incur the yearly costs thereafter. **Contact a Consulting Archivist or the Local Records Program Manager prior to submitting a shelving grant.**

3) Plat cabinet must be procured from a reputable vendor. State and/or local procurement guidelines must be followed. The purchase and installation of a plat cabinet will receive 100% grant funding. The system may be either a cabinet or drawers, depending on the need of the locality. Vendor proposal must accompany the grant application.

4) Digital Scanner –Purchase of digital scanner to preserve and make accessible **permanent** records. Grant covers 100% of the purchase price.

5) Environmental monitoring and control equipment – Equipment for monitoring and improving storage conditions to ensure proper environmental conditions in areas where archival records are stored will receive 100% grant funding. Examples would be dehumidifiers and temperature/humidity monitors.

IV. Preservation Supplies

The purchase of preservation supplies, such as acid free boxes, UV filters, flat sleeves, and conservation supplies will receive 100% grant funding. **Contact a consulting archivist or Local Records Program Manager prior to submitting a preservation supplies grant.**

V. Item Conservation

An item conservation project would contract the services of a professional book and paper conservator to perform conservation treatments on volumes and/or loose papers of major historical, administrative and/or informational significance. **For the FY2022 grant cycle, a clerk can submit no more than eight volumes or no more than 2000 items of loose papers.** Due to the unique services involved in conserving loose papers, contact a consulting archivist or Local Records Program Manager prior to submitting a grant to conserve loose papers. Clerks are encouraged to identify records to be conserved in order of preference in the grant application; however, the CCRP Grant Review Board is responsible for determining which items will receive funding.

The vendor shall employ qualified staff and furnish supplies to carry out a full range of conservation treatment services on manuscripts, ledger books, cloth and leather bindings, maps, blueprints and other photomechanical reproductions. Conservation treatment will primarily include, but will not be limited to, the removal of lamination (including cellulose acetate lamination, modern lamination, etc.), pressure sensitive tape and adhesive removal, aqueous and non-aqueous deacidification, paper repair, archival polyester encapsulation, and binding repair or rebinding. The treatment process must be completely reversible to allow for the possibility of future conservation advancements. Any projects involving the conservation of original paper records must conform to the conditions stated in the Guidelines for Conservation Contractors. The Guidelines are available online at <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/CCRP/ccrp.asp>

This grant includes funding for digital reformatting of conserved materials. Item conservation grant covers 100% of cost to generate digital images (**minimum resolution – 300 dpi tiffs**) and, if needed, preservation microfilm (**35 mm**). Digital images are to be stored and made accessible on a secure remote access system and/or a computer terminal maintained by your office. If preservation microfilm is generated, the reels are to be transferred to the Library of Virginia for storage. Applicants can include in their grant request the cost for uploading the digital images to their secure remote access system or public terminal. Applicants are recommended to retire the original records from public use following completion of project.

All projects that reformat records from any medium to microfilm and/or digital must conform to appropriate state standards and Library of Virginia guidelines, copies of which may be obtained on the

Library of Virginia website at <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/standards/> and https://www.lva.virginia.gov/agencies/records/electronic/digital_imaging.pdf.

Application Review and Award Process

Consulting archivist staff will advise on all grant projects from their development through the completion of the application. Additionally, they can review draft applications and offer suggestions to guide development of the application.

Projects that meet the criteria of the grant program will receive the most favorable review. They are well conceived, fully described and adequately supported, in a correctly completed application form.

The criteria are:

- 1) **Historical, informational, and/or administrative significance** – Consider age, legality, history of the locality, genealogical research, and/or impact on day-to-day operations of the office.
- 2) **Condition of the records** - Severity of physical damage and/or preservation concerns that threaten long-term preservation of the records.
- 3) **Benefits of grant project** - does the project ensure the preservation of the records? Does it provide greater accessibility of the records to the clerks' staff and the public?
- 4) **Locality's commitment to preserve original records following conservation and/or reformatting** – Consider the actions proposed by the clerk's office which would aid in the long-term preservation of the records submitted in the application. Will the clerk limit public access to the original records? Will the clerk direct the public to digital images of the records available on a local records management system?
- 5) **Locality's contribution** - If applicable, rate the clerk's office or locality's general contributions of time, finances, personnel, etc. to the project
- 6) **Overall soundness of grant project** – After reviewing the applicant's grant application and vendor's proposal of work, rate the overall appropriateness of funding the grant project.

The CCRP Grant Review Board meets approximately two months after the submission deadline to review applications and make their award recommendations. Projects may be awarded in full, partially funded, or denied funding. A partially funded grant is not necessarily an indication that the grant is faulty; rather it may reflect the reality of the limited funds. Grants receiving no funding are either not eligible or have significant flaws. Grant award decisions are final; however, denied applicants are encouraged to consult with CCRP staff to develop revised submissions for subsequent grant cycles. The decisions of the board are forwarded to the president of the Virginia Court Clerks' Association and the State Archivist, who announce the grant awards within four weeks of the Grant Review Board meeting.

Grant Award and Administration

Clerks who have been notified that their grants have been approved are to complete and sign the **grant award certification** document and return to Consulting Archivists or Local Records Program Manager at the Library of Virginia within 15 days of notification.

Grant funds will only be disbursed to the fiscal office of the locality upon verification of the successful completion of the project. Once the grant project has been completed successfully, the clerk is to complete and sign a verification of work form provided by LVA. They are also to attach a copy of the vendor's invoice to the verification of work form and return both to LVA within 15 days of completion of grant project. LVA will only release grant funds to locality upon receipt of verification of work form and copy of the vendor's invoice. **As determined by instructions from the Auditor of Public Accounts, these funds must be released to the locality's fiscal office (i.e. Treasurer's Office or Department of Finance). Therefore, clerks are encouraged to notify their local fiscal office prior to applying for a grant.** Funds will be released within thirty business days of submission of a completed verification of work form and copy of the vendor's invoice. Failure to submit the verification of work form and a copy of the vendor's invoice will delay release of applicable funds and render an office ineligible to apply for further grant funding until those reports have been successfully received by the grants office.

Any funds designated as local match are restricted to project-related use within period of the grant and prior to submission of the verification of work form. Retain records that show the source, amount and expenditure amount of all matching; this level of record keeping is necessary with any local match contribution.

Grant applications not approved because of insufficient funds may be resubmitted in a later cycle. These applications will not necessarily need to be rewritten but vendors and all other parties involved must acknowledge in writing their willingness to honor the resubmission. In the event an application is not awarded for reasons other than the availability of funds, the Grant Review Board will provide the reasons to the Consulting Archivists who will review them with the clerk. This will allow for changes to be made prior to the next application deadline.

Process for Applying for an Item Conservation Grant

Items submitted as conservation grant candidates are assessed and prioritized using individual Statement of Work (SOW) documents created by the Library of Virginia. The SOW document serves as the description of the physical condition of the records and recommended treatment services to be provided by vendors. If any changes need to be made to the SOWs, clerk must contact their Consulting Archivist or the Local Records Program Manager for approval. If approved, LVA will provide clerk with updated SOWs. **Grant funds can only be applied to the cost of conservation requirements specified in SOW document.** Costs for conservation treatments not specified in the SOW document will be incurred by the locality.

The process for developing an Item Conservation grant is as follows:

- 1) LVA Consulting Archivist meets with clerk to collaboratively determine materials to be conserved.

2) Consulting Archivist examines the physical condition of the records for the purpose of developing a SOW based on the *Guidelines for Conservation Contractors*. If LVA staff determine that further examination is required, the selected records will be brought to the LVA for inspection and development of the SOW document.

3) After consultation with the clerk, LVA will develop a SOW for the treatment recommendations for the records selected. The completed SOW is then provided to the clerk. If records are brought to LVA for the purpose of developing SOW, they will be returned to clerk along with SOW documents.

4) Clerk provides conservation vendor candidates with SOWs to review. Conservation vendor candidates visit clerk's office to examine material for submission using SOWs as a template to develop a proposal of work. Proposal of work must include a price quote for each item that includes a breakdown of individual treatment costs for each item. If the vendor charges for time spent evaluating the project, it is considered a pre-grant expenditure ineligible for reimbursement with grant funds.

5) Clerk selects conservation vendor through local procurement process. **It is the expectation of LVA that all applicable state and local procurement rules will be followed in getting price quotes from vendors to prepare grant submission(s).**

6) The clerk or designated staff member completes a grant application to be submitted to the Grant Review Board (GRB) for review. The clerk should contact LVA Consulting Archivist, **not a vendor**, if in need of assistance to complete the application. Each grant proposal must include a proposal of work from a vendor. Clerks should not countersign any contracts to be funded through the grant program until the grant application has been approved.

7) If grant is approved, clerk contacts vendor to begin project.

8) Vendor notifies LVA following completion of project for the purpose of inspecting work performed on the conserved records to ensure it was done according to treatments listed in SOWs.

9) If the materials have been conserved correctly, LVA will notify clerk that they are ready to be returned to their office. Clerk contacts vendor to schedule return of materials. If materials have not been conserved correctly, LVA will notify clerk that corrections needed to be made in order to meet specifications listed in SOW. Grant funds will not be issued to locality until all outstanding service issues are successfully resolved.

10) Following completion of project, clerk verifies that all original records, including digital images and/or microfilm if requested, have been returned and that the project is complete. Clerk completes and signs a verification of work form provided by LVA. Clerk attaches a copy of the vendor's invoice to the verification of work form and returns both either electronically or by mail to LVA within 15 days of receipt of all materials.

Note: *Failure to submit the verification of work form and a copy of the vendor's invoice will delay release of applicable funds and render an office ineligible to apply for further grant funding until those reports have been successfully received by the grants office. This includes reports that are currently delinquent.*

11) Grant funds will be released and disbursed to the fiscal office of the locality within thirty days of submission of a completed verification of work form **and** copy of the vendor's invoice. As determined by instructions from the Auditor of Public Accounts, grant funds must be released to the locality's fiscal office (i.e. Treasurer's Office or Department of Finance). Therefore, clerks are encouraged to notify their local fiscal office prior to applying for a grant.

Process for Applying for a Reformatting Grant

Imaging Project Requirements

Records must be prepped and organized prior to submitting a reformatting grant. Volumes must be conserved and loose original records must be flattened, conserved, and properly arranged. The records must have a logical order, for example, alphabetical, chronological, or numerical. If suit papers are being reformatted, each case must be filed in an acid free folder. The process for developing a Reformatting grant is as follows:

- 1) Estimate the number of pages to be imaged. Vendors are typically willing to come on-site and help determine this number. A standard cost basis for imaging can be per-image cost, the cost per 1,000 images, or cost per bound volume. Be sure the vendor's proposal includes all appropriate vendor charges. It is important to have reasonable and accurate estimates to develop your grant application.
- 2) Solicit bids from vendors based on number of images estimated. If the vendor charges for time spent evaluating the project, it is considered a pre-grant expenditure ineligible for reimbursement with grant funds.
- 3) Clerk or designated staff member completes a grant application to be submitted to the Grant Review Board (GRB) for review. The clerk should contact an LVA consulting archivist, **not a vendor**, if in need of assistance to complete the application. Each grant proposal must include a vendor's proposal of work to perform the specified work at a stated price. Clerks should not countersign any contracts to be funded through the grant program until the grant application has been approved.
- 4) If grant is approved by the Grant Review Board, clerk contacts vendor to begin project.
- 5) Prior to transfer of records to vendor, volumes must be arranged in the order in which they are to be reformatted. Boxes must be labeled with the title of records and date range, alphabetical range, or case file number range of materials enclosed. The boxes must be numbered in the order they are to be reformatted. Include an inventory list to vendor of volumes/boxes being transferred.
- 6) Following completion of project, clerk verifies that all original records and digital images have been returned and that the project is complete. Clerk completes and signs a verification of work form provided by LVA. Clerk attaches a copy of the vendor's invoice to the verification of work form and returns both either electronically or by mail to LVA within 15 days of receipt of all materials.

Note: Failure to submit the verification of work form and a copy of the vendor's invoice will delay release of applicable funds and render an office ineligible to apply for further grant funding until those reports have been successfully received by the grants office. This includes reports that are currently delinquent.

7) Grant funds will be released and disbursed to the fiscal office of the locality within thirty days of submission of a completed verification of work form and copy of the vendor's invoice. As determined by instructions from the Auditor of Public Accounts, grant funds must be released to the locality's fiscal office (i.e. Treasurer's Office or Department of Finance). Therefore, clerks are encouraged to notify their local fiscal office prior to applying for a grant.