

# Microfilming Records Policy Statement

In today's highly computerized and technology-driven offices, there is still a place for microfilm. Microfilming offers the advantages of space savings, security, and reliable preservation. No matter how technology changes, microfilm remains one of the most cost effective formats for the long-term storage of valuable records.

Agencies may convert official State records from their original paper or digital format to microfilm and dispose of the originals. The microfilmed copy will have the same force and effect as the original and shall be treated as the original in admissibility as evidence NRS 239.051.<sup>1</sup>

Because microfilm has advantages as well as disadvantages over other methods of retaining records, careful analysis must be made to determine whether or not an agency should convert its paper record to microfilm.

## Which records should be microfilmed?

- Permanent records or records which must be retained for longer than twenty years should be filmed because it is the most cost-effective way to store the information. Space savings of up to 98% can be realized if microfilm is stored instead of paper. The cost of storing paper in a records center balances the cost of filming after approximately twenty years. Storing paper in an office setting (which is very expensive) would justify the cost of filming well before the twenty-year mark.
- Permanent or long-term<sup>2</sup> valuable records should be filmed and the security microfilm copies stored off-site to guarantee that if fire, flood, or other disaster strikes an agency's offices, its recorded information will not be lost. NAC 239.755.<sup>3</sup>
- Permanent or long-term valuable records retained on fragile media or on media that is subject to obsolescence should be filmed to assure media quality and stability for preservation. Microfilm is recognized as very durable media for permanent records, with an estimated lifespan of 500+ years when stored in the proper environment.

## Microfilming Requirements

- The Agency-specific Records Retention and Disposition Schedule identifies the record series that should be microfilmed.
- All microfilming of State records shall comply with the standards of American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) as identified in NAC 239.763.<sup>4</sup>
- Price schedules and other information relating to microfilm services can be obtained from Imaging & Preservation Services. 775-684-3414.

Department of Administration  
Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records  
775-684-3414

[bchurch@admin.nv.gov](mailto:bchurch@admin.nv.gov)

Updated 09/2016

---

<sup>1</sup> **NRS 239.051 Reproduction of public records before destruction: Requirements**

1. Unless destruction of a particular record without reproduction is authorized by a schedule adopted pursuant to NRS 239.080 or 239.125, any custodian of public records in this state may destroy documents, instruments, papers, books and any other records or writings in his custody only if those records or writings have been placed on microphotographic film or if the information they contain has been entered into a computer system which permits the retrieval and reproduction of that information. A reproduction of that film or that information shall be deemed to be the original.
2. Microphotographs made pursuant to this section must be made on film which complies with minimum standards of quality approved by the American National Standards Institute.
3. The custodian of the records or writings shall:
  - a. Promptly store at least one copy of the microphotographic film or the tape, disc or other medium used for storage of that information by the computer in such a manner and place as to protect it reasonably from loss or damage; and
  - b. Maintain for the use of authorized persons a copy of a reproduction of the film or information stored by the computer.

<sup>2</sup> **NAC 239.630 “Long-term record” defined.** “Long-term record” means a record which must be retained for more than ten years.

<sup>3</sup> **NAC 239.755 Priority for microfilming and protection of vital records.** Each state agency shall give priority to the microfilming and protection of its vital records within the limits of the agency’s budget. If money has been appropriated for the microfilming or storage of records, the microfilming of records must be given priority.

<sup>4</sup> **NAC 239.680 “Schedule” defined.** “Schedule” means a schedule for the retention and disposition of official state records developed by a state agency and approved by the Committee pursuant to NRS 239.080.