Town of Bergen

Records Management

Procedure Manual

Preface

The Bergen Town Board has always made every effort to reduce the cost of operating our town government.

One such method for reducing the cost of operating the town government is through the establishment of a modern records management program. Creating this Town of Bergen Records Management Procedure Manual will help ensure the town maximizes the benefits from its records management program.

Those benefits include:

- Cost savings through disposition of some records
- Low cost storage of other records that must be retained. Our low-cost storage facility is on the second floor of the old town hall located at 13 S. Lake Avenue.
- Providing departments with the information they need, by providing them with records they have requested from the records center.

This manual is an essential resource for our records management program. Therefore, we strongly urge you to make every effort to follow the procedures set up in this manual.

If we all follow the procedures outlined in the manual, we will have a system for handling our records that we can all be proud of.

Thank you for your cooperation.

The Bergen Town Board

And

Michele M. Smith
Bergen Town Clerk and
Records Management Officer (RMO)

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The Town of Bergen government continues to hold an ever-increase amount of records as town government continues to become more complex.

However, the method for handling our town's records remained the same for many years. For quite a while inactive town records were stored in a disorganized manner. In addition, town records took up extra space because there was no efficient and regular system for disposal of records that no longer had any value. As a result, it was difficult to handle requests for inactive records.

Thanks to a New York State Archives 2009-2010 Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) grant awarded to the Town of Bergen, the town will begin to operate a modern municipal records management program.

Bergen's records management program will save money and save time. Money will be saved by reducing the number of filing cabinets purchased to store records and opening up floor space previously taken up by records. Time will be saved by retrieving requested records within 24 hours as opposed to several days or not finding them at all, under the previous "system".

In an effort to help ensure the town's records management program is maintained, we have developed this easy to follow manual. This manual will outline the procedures to follow in: (a) transferring records to the records center or vault, (b) requesting records from the records center or vault and/or (c) disposing of records which have met their legal retention period.

If you have any questions about the procedures outlined in this manual, please contact Michele Smith at 494-1121 Ext. 21.

Thank you, in advance for your cooperation. It will make our job of serving you easier.

Michele Smith
Bergen Town Clerk and RMO

Transfer of Records

To transfer records to the town's records center or vault, certain procedures must be followed. These procedures have been designed to be simple. However, they are necessary so the transfer of any records can be documented and transferred records can be quickly located to answer requests, or disposed of when the records meet their legal retention period.

The first step in transferring records is to request the appropriate number of records storage boxes to hold the records. These boxes will hold one cubic foot of records and measure approximately 10 ½" x 12" x 15". The box is designed so 8 ½" x 11" documents can be stored one way and 8 ½" x 14" documents can be stored the other way.

To obtain the records storage boxes, simply call the Town Clerk's Office at 494-1121 Ext. 21 and ask for Michele Smith. The boxes will be delivered to your department.

With the boxes, you will receive several RECORDS MANAGEMENT INVENTORY SHEETS. A copy of that sheet is on page 7. Following is a step-by-step procedure for completing this sheet. Please note: **a completed records management inventory sheet must accompany any transfer of records to the records center or vault.**

Item #1- DATE – Fill in the date when you inventory the records and put them in the boxes.

Item #2 – TITLE OF RECORDS – Describe the records series you are putting in each box. Use one page for each records series when describing the records. For example, if you are putting "Site Plan Files" in a box, you would list "Site Plan Files" and not the name of each individual site plan. Please make the title as clear as possible.

Item #3 – INCLUSIVE DATES – List the dates for the records you are putting in the boxes, list only the earliest date and the latest date.

Item #4 - LOCATION – This column is where the box number of each box will be listed. List the box number opposite the title of the records you actually put in that box. That way, we can determine later, which records are in which box.

Item #6 – DISPOSED DECEMBER – This column will be filled in by the RMO. Do nothing with this column.

Item #7 – OFFICE OF ORIGIN – List the office these records are coming from.

Item #8 – NEW YORK STATE ARCHIVES RETENTION/DISPOSITON

REQUIREMENTS – This item will be completed by the RMO. Do nothing with this column.

Item #9 – COMPLETED BY – Put your initials on this line so if there are any questions about how the sheet was completed, the RMO can contact the appropriate person.

That is the step-by-step procedure for completing the RECORDS MANAGEMENT INVENTORY SHEET. An example of a completed sheet is on page 8.

At approximately the same time you are transferring records to the records center, you will receive a RECORDS TRANSFER SHEET that has been prepared by the records manager. This sheet will list all the records you wish to transfer to the records center. When you receive this sheet, please bring it to your department head for his or her signature, on line #10, authorizing the transfer of the records to the records center.

After the department head has signed the sheet, take a copy of this form for your records and return the original to the records manager. Two examples of RECORDS TRANSFER SHEETS are found on pages 8 and 9.

After the above steps have been followed, everything necessary for a satisfactory transfer of records from a town office to the records center or vault will have been done.

Date: 1

Records Management Inventory Sheet

Title of Record	Inclusive Dates	Location	Disposed Jan.
2	3	4	5

(form updated 1/27/84)

Office of Origin: 6

7 State Archives Retention/Disposition Requirements:

Completed by: 8

Date: 12/15/08

Records Management Inventory Sheet

Title of Record	Inclusive Dates	Location Box or Shelf	Disposed Jan.
Vouchers	2008	10	

(form updated 6/15/10)

Office of Origin: Bookkeeper

New York State Archives Retention/Disposition Requirements:
#??? – 6 Years

Completed by: JMT

Date: 1

START HERE!

RECORDS TRANSFER SHEET

Title	Inclusive Dates
2	3

New York State Archives Retention/Disposition Schedule Requirements:

4

Office of Origin: 5

Records Transferred to: 6

Volume: 7 cu. Ft. Records on Microfilm: 8 Y ____N

Authorizing Signatures:

Transfer Authorized By: 9 Date: _____

Transfer Received By (RMO): 10 Date: _____

Completed by: 11

(updated 6/10/10)

Date: 12/15/09

RECORDS TRANSFER SHEET

Title	Inclusive Dates
Check Register	2007

New York State Archives Retention/Disposition Schedule Requirements:
(224) 10 Years

Office of Origin: Bookkeeper

Records Transferred to: Records Center

Volume: .40 cu. Ft. Records on Microfilm: ___Y XX N

Authorizing Signatures:

Transfer Authorized By: *John Brown* Date: *1/10/06*

Transfer Received By (RMO): *Michele Smith* Date: *1/12/06*

(updated 6/10/10)

Requests for Records

To request records from the Bergen Records Center, certain procedures must be followed. These procedures are designed to handle requests for records as quickly as possible.

These procedures also make it possible to document requests for records and quickly determine who has a requested record if it is already "out" when requested a second time.

The first step in requesting a record is to complete a REQUEST FOR RECORDS form. Please put only one request on each form. The following is a step-by-step procedure for completing a REQUEST FOR RECORDS form, which is found on page 13.

> Item #1- RECORD(S) – Describe the records you are requesting. Please make your description as clear as possible, listing the department the record originated from, the date of the record, as well as any specific subjective file number that was used originally in the office of origin, to file that record.
>
> Item #2 – REQUESTED BY – List the person who is requesting the record.
>
> Item #3 – DATE OF REQUEST – List the date the record has been requested.
>
> Item #4 – LOCATION – this line will be filled in by the RMO. Do nothing with this item.

Upon delivery of the requested record, the person requesting the record will sign the form on line #5, accepting the record. The form will be held by the RMO until the record is returned.

After the requested record has been used and the user wishes to return the record to the records center, simply contact Michele Smith at 494-1121 Ext. 21. Upon return of the requested record, the records manager will initial line #7 and provide the user with a copy of the original form. This copy should be retained, as it is your "receipt" and proof that the record was returned.

Any requests for records which come to Michele Smith before 10:00 AM will be handled that day. If any requests for records are made after
10:00 AM, the records will be delivered the following day. All requests should be sent to Michele Smith in the Town Clerk's Office.

An example of a completed REQEST FOR RECORDS form is on page 14.

Town of Bergen

REQUEST FOR RECORDS

1

Record(s)

_____

_____

2

_____

3

Requested by: _____

4

Date of Request: _____

Location: _____

5

Above Record(s) have been received: _____

(Person receiving record)

6

Above record(s) have been returned: _____

(RMO)

Town of Bergen

REQUEST FOR RECORDS

Record(s) 2008 Assessment Rolls

Requested by: Town Assesosr.

Date of Request: 5/1/09

Location: shelf 7 in vault

Above Record(s) have been received: John Brown
(Person receiving record)

Above record(s) have been returned: Michele Smith
(RMO)

Updated 6/10/10

Disposition of Records

One of the goals of the Town of Bergen Records Management Program is to control the cost of storage of town records. One method used to accomplish this goal is to dispose of records that can be legally disposed of. This disposition of records is carried out once a year (usually in December).

All dispositions of records are handled through the use of the DISPOSITION OF RECORDS form. This form is used so the RMO can control the disposition of records, and monitor the volume of records disposed of each year. The DISPOSITION OF RECORDS form is also an excellent vehicle to guarantee input by each department head before any records are disposed of from his or her department. This is a very important feature of Bergen's Records Management Program.

Copies of a blank and a completed DISPOSITION OF RECORDS form are on pages 15 and 16. Prior to disposing of any records, the RMO will send to each department, a partially-completed DISPOSITION OF RECORDS form for each series of records, from that department, that can be legally disposed of.

After receiving these forms, they should be reviewed by the department head. If he or she approves of the disposition of the records described on the form, then the department head should sign the form on line #9. After the department head has signed the form, take a copy of the form for your files and return the original to the records manager. By keeping a copy of this form, each department can got to a file in its office and know at a glance which of its records have been disposed of and when.

If the department head does not wish to dispose of the records described on the disposition form, the department head should simply not sign the form, and send the unsigned form back to the records manager with an explanation that the department head does not wish to dispose of those records.

Once the records manager does receive a DISPOSITION OF RECORDS form, signed by the department head, the records described on the form will be disposed of.

Date: _____

DISPOSITION OF RECORDS

Title	Inclusive Dates	Dispose of

New York State Archives Retention/Disposition Schedule Requirements:

_____

Office of Origin: _____

Volume: _____ cu. Ft. Records on Film: ____

Authorizing Signatures:

Department head:_____

Town Clerk/RMO: _____

Date: _____

DISPOSITION OF RECORDS

Title	Inclusive Dates	Dispose of
Vouchers	2000	12/18/83

New York State Archives Retention/Disposition Schedule Requirements: (240) 6 Years after end of fiscal year in which payment was made

Office of Origin: Bookkeeper

Volume: 1 cu. Ft. Records on Film: No

Authorizing Signatures:

Department head: Joe Jones

Town Clerk/RMO: Miche Smith