

Texas Digital Archive (TDA) Transfer Procedures

According to Texas Government Code 441.181, The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) shall take legal custody of and preserve archival state records and shall endeavor to collect and preserve other historical resources determined by TSLAC to possess sufficient value to warrant continued preservation in the state archives. The state archivist shall identify and designate archival state records and arrange for their transfer to the custody of the commission in accordance with GC Sec 441.186.

These procedures are designed to instruct agencies in how to properly prepare and transfer archival state records in electronic format to the Texas Digital Archive (TDA).

Consultation

Due to the technical requirements imposed by electronic records, TSLAC cannot receive electronic records in the same manner as paper records. Prior to transferring electronic records to TSLAC, an agency records management officer (RMO) should contact the archives and complete the [Electronic Records Survey](#), available on the TDA website, or upon request.

After submission of the survey, TSLAC will follow up with a consultation involving an archivist and/or an electronic records specialist. During this consultation, an [Electronic Records Appraisal Form](#) will be completed. These forms will allow TSLAC to assess the technical requirements necessary to transfer and preserve the electronic records in question. On completion of an assessment, TSLAC will work with the agency to determine the necessary next steps and timeline for accession of the records.

Records to be transferred

TSLAC will accept state agency records that have been scheduled as "A" (Archival) on an approved records retention schedule and, when appropriate, records that are continuations of series already accessioned.

If the records have an "R" (Review) designation on an approved records retention schedule then a TSLAC archivist will conduct an appraisal review before initiating the transfer.

Timing of transfers

Archival state records shall be transferred to the custody of TSLAC when they are no longer needed for the administration of the state agency unless state law requires that the records remain in the custody of the agency. (GC 441.186(d))

When transferring electronic records, the agency is permanently transferring official custody of the records to TSLAC including responsibility for handling Public Information

Act (PIA) requests. The agency should identify any restrictions on access to information contained in the records and cite the appropriate section of the Texas Public Information Act (GC Chapter 552), or other laws and statutes.

Each agency is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the records (see “Protecting integrity of records” section below) it transfers on physical media to TSLAC. For records transferred by a media-less method (SFTP, as an email attachment, downloaded from the Internet, etc.), TSLAC shall work with the agency to ensure integrity and security of the records during the transfer process. Each state agency shall transfer electronic records to TSLAC promptly in accordance with the agency's records retention schedule.

Temporary retention of copy

The agency should retain all copies of any permanent electronic records transferred to TSLAC until it receives from TSLAC that the transfer was successful and that TSLAC has assumed responsibility for continuing preservation of the records.

Transfer documentation

The details of the transfer will be covered in consultation phase with the agency and TSLAC agreeing upon the documentation needed to accompany the records and the method of transfer.

The agency must include a manifest or inventory of what is contained in the transfer down to the folder level. (An item level description is desirable but not necessary.)

- The manifest must include total number of folders, files, and total size (in MB, GB, TB) of the entire transfer.
- The inventory must indicate the quantity of media (# of disks), and a directory listing on each media item.
- The manifest must be included as a plain text (.txt) file on the transfer media. If the transfer includes multiple media (i.e. several discs) then each media should contain a text file manifest of the contents it contains.
- Any other documentation adequate to identify, service, and interpret the permanent electronic records should be included.
- A checksum digest of all the files in the transfer (see below).

Transfer Methods

As part of the consultation, TSLAC and the agency will agree on the transfer method.

For the transfer of permanent records to TSLAC, the agency shall use only media that is sound and free from defects. Transfer methods may depend on the size of the transfer and number of files. Acceptable transfer methods include:

Physical Transfer: (TSLAC can provide transfer media upon request)

- Optical Disc (CD, DVD, Blu-Ray) – should be formatted as a data disc, not a photo CD, audio CD, or video CD/DVD.
- USB Flash Drive
- Hard Drive
- Other media – if the agency has permanent electronic records on other media it will need to be discussed in the consultation prior to transfer

Media-less Transfer

- Email – Only viable for small transfers of records (less than 2 MB). Must be sent as attachment to the email.
- SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol) – Must discuss with TSLAC first.
- Web harvest – Inform TSLAC of where records are located on website

Protecting integrity of the records

Copying and moving electronic records increases the risk of corruption and possible damage to the files. To protect the integrity of the records in the transfer process all files must have checksums calculated and applied prior to being transferred.

Agencies may apply their own checksums to the files being transferred (consult your IT staff.) TSLAC can provide agencies with tools for applying checksums if needed.

Encryption and other Digital Rights Management (DRM) issues

TSLAC will NOT accept any encrypted records. Encryption or any other form of DRM must be removed prior to being transferred to TSLAC. Encryption and other DRM may be used by the agency in the course of business if necessary, but must be deactivated before transfer. If the security of the records being transferred requires encryption in transit, **this must be discussed in the consultation** and TSLAC must be given the appropriate keys to decrypt to the records upon completion of the transfer.

Format Recommendations

Agencies may use formats necessary to conduct their business. TSLAC can accept records in most formats, however highly specialized formats can be difficult to preserve long-term, and proprietary formats (especially those with expensive licensing requirements) need to be discussed in the consultation phase of the transfer. The same is true for older legacy formats still held by the agency that may no longer be in use. The agency may need to convert records in specialized formats into a more common format prior to transfer or provide TSLAC with copies of software or licenses necessary to access records in these formats.