

Records Management

University of Cincinnati

Vital Records

Vital Records are defined as those records that are essential to the continuation of an organization after a disaster. Identifying and protecting your vital records are critical components of your records management program.



What records are considered vital?

Some examples of vital records include contracts and agreements, customer lists, leases, licenses, accounts receivable and payable, by-laws, insurance policies and personnel payroll information and histories. These are just a few and you will need to appraise your own records to determine what records are vital in your department. Only about 2 to 6 percent of an organization's records are vital.

Risks to records

Fire, flood, tornados and electronic loss of data are all possible hazards that can destroy your information. The very nature of a disaster prevents us from knowing when it is coming so the time to protect your vital records is now.

Protecting vital records

The basic method for protection of vital records is to make copies of the record and send them offsite. Paper copies are preferable to electronic or microform for vital record purposes in the case that special equipment is not functional or available in the face of disaster. Make copying these records part of the normal creation process. You can routinely send the copies to other departments within the organization or you can choose to store them offsite with a secured storage vendor.

Are you prepared?

If a disaster struck today would you be able to continue operations in your organization? Are you comfortable with you vital records practices? If not, contact Records Management today for a consultation!