

**State Records Commission**

**Report to the Governor and General Assembly**

**Status of the State Records Program**

Submitted by the State Historical Society of Iowa  
Iowa Department of Administrative Services  
January 10, 2025

**The State Records Commission is authorized under  
Chapter 8A.601-616 of the Code of Iowa**

*“The commission shall adopt government information policies, standards, and guidelines to do all of the following:*

- 1. Provide for economy and efficiency in the creation, organization, maintenance, administrative use, security, public availability, and final disposition of government records.*
- 2. Ensure creation of proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of state government agencies to protect the legal and financial rights of the state and of persons directly affected by the government’s activities.*
- 3. Identify and preserve state government records that document the history and development of the state.”*

- Code of Iowa, 8A.604

*“The department (of Administrative Services), through the state archives and records program, is the primary agency responsible for providing administrative personnel and services for the commission.”*

- Code of Iowa 8A.607

*“The commission shall do all of the following:*

- a. Develop and adopt government information policies, standards, and guidelines for the creation, storage, retention, and disposition of records.*
- b. In consultation with the department of homeland security and emergency management, establish policies, standards, and guidelines for the identification, protection, and preservation of records essential for the continuity or reestablishment of governmental functions in the event of an emergency arising from a natural or other disaster.*
- c. Provide planning, policy development, and review for the government records program.*
- d. Adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A that provide government information policies and standards.*
- e. Adopt and maintain an interagency records manual containing the rules governing records management, as well as records series retention and disposition schedules, guidelines, and other information relating to implementation of this subchapter.*
- f. Make recommendations, in consultation with the department, to the governor and the general assembly for the continued reduction of printed reports throughout state government in a manner that protects the public’s right to access such reports.*
- g. Provide advice, counsel, and services to the legislative, judicial, and executive branch agencies subject to this subchapter on the care and management of state government records.*
- h. Report to the governor and the general assembly on the status of the government records program.”*

- Code of Iowa 8A.608

Date: January 10, 2025

To: Mr. W. Charles Smithson, Secretary of the Senate  
Ms. Meghan Nelson, Chief Clerk of the House  
The Honorable Governor Kimberly K. Reynolds  
Lt. Governor Chris Cournoyer

I am pleased to submit the State Records Commission's status of the State Records Program to the Governor office and the Legislature. If you have any questions about this report, please contact Anthony Jahn, State Archivist of the State of Iowa, Iowa Department of Administrative Services and Secretary of the State Records Commission.

Sincerely,



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Brenda Hall, Chair  
State Records Commission

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### State Records Commission Membership

	<b>Officials</b>	<b>Designees</b>
<b>Secretary of State</b>	Paul Pate	Eric Gookin
<b>Treasure of State</b>	Roby Smith	Dustin McNulty
<b>Director of Revenue</b>	Mary Mosiman	Steve Gus
<b>Department of Management</b>	Kraig Paulsen	Tammy Winters
<b>State Librarian (Chair)</b>	Brenda Hall	Tom Keyser
<b>Auditor of State</b>	Rob Sand	Susan Fager
<b>Department of Administrative Services</b>	Adam Steen	Christopher Sikich

In FY 2024 the State Records Commission met on July 6, 2023; October 5, 2023; January 4, 2024; April 4, 2024. Approved meeting agendas and minutes 2014-present:  
<https://history.iowa.gov/research/state-government-record-management/records-manual-schedule>

## Executive Summary

This 2024 State Records Program report summarizes the work of the State Records Commission ([Chapter 8A.601-616](#)) in fiscal year 2024 which was created under the authority of State Archives and Records Act ([Sec. 8A.601](#)). The responsibilities for policy direction, management and implementation of the State records program are divided among the State Records Commission ([Sec. 8A.608](#)), the State Archives and Records Program within the State Historical Society of Iowa under the Iowa Department of Administrative Services ([Sec 8A.609](#)) and each individual agency ([Sec. 8A.610](#)). In short, the State Records Commission sets state records policy; the Department of Administrative Services manages the program as well as provides administrative support to the Commission; and the State Agencies ([Sec. 8A.610](#)) follow and implement policy. State records as defined in Iowa law ([Sec. 8A.602.9](#)) are created by the state government as state property requiring ongoing economic and efficient management, evolving policy and procedures to govern their use, identification and permanent retention of those identified records that document the history and development of the state.

During the time period covered in this report, the State Records Commission focused on updating existing and implementing new policies to meet the state's ever evolving records management needs. The Commission also focused on adoption of updated procedures and best practices in response to the overall increased complexity of records management in the ongoing transition from paper to born digital records created by the State of Iowa government.

The State Records Commission, through the Department of Administrative Services staff, welcomes the opportunity to discuss the status of the State Records Program at the request of the Governor's office, any legislator or member of the public.

## Key Policy Discussions and Updates

**Records Retention Schedules.** Under [Sec. 8A.602.12](#) "Records series retention and disposition schedule" the Commission has established and maintained timetables agencies must use to retain records in active and inactive status. The schedules also provide authorization for a final disposition of the records series by destruction or permanent retention. The Commission classifies these retention schedules into two categories, general (which applies to all agencies) and agency specific (applies to only one agency).

In FY 2024 the following agencies brought forward proposals to add new, revise existing and/or eliminate existing records retention schedules. The Commission appreciates the significant time and effort spent by agencies on their records retention schedules.

- Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS)
- Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)
- Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)
- Department of Inspections, Appeals & Licensing (DIAL)
- Department of Administrative Services/State Historical Society of Iowa (DAS/Historical)
- Auditor of State (AOS)
- Iowa Utilities Board (IUB)

### **Email Policy Discussion.**

The State Records Commission under its authority in [Sec. 8A.602.9](#) and [IAC 671.15](#) is responsible for approving the retention schedules of all records including those in electronic email format and agencies are responsible for their management. At the July 6, 2023 Records Commission meeting, commission members were joined by Office of the Chief Information Officer staff (currently known as Department of Management, Division of Information Technology). The State Archivist brought the members up to date on what the State Records Commission member working group had learned about email management in other states and the federal government during the preceding months. OCIO staff provided an overview of the current status of email management in the executive branch. Commission members, OCIO staff and attendees engaged in dialog with the intention of eventual approval of a new email records policy that would become part of the State Records Manual and administrative rules.

## **State Archives Historical Records Management and Storage**

State Archives and Records Act under [Sec. 8A.609](#) provides authority for the Department of Administrative Services through the state archives and records program to collect, manage and preserve records having permanent value to the State of Iowa. The State Archives includes historical records of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government including but not limited to records of the office of Governor, the laws of Iowa, Iowa Supreme Court opinions, the vital record statistics of every Iowan since 1880 and much more. The State Archives storage space also holds the State Historical Society of Iowa Special Collections which includes a wide variety of donated items including the personal and professional papers of elected officials, public and private organization records as well as the collections from thousands of everyday Iowans.

In 1988 the State Archives was relocated to a 9,110 square foot room within the State Historical Building at 600 E. Locust St. on the Capitol complex. Funds to purchase powered and mechanical assist high density Spacesaver compact movable shelving was appropriated to accommodate 40,000 cubic feet, the shelving was installed and the collection relocated to the State Historical Building.

Starting in the early 2000s, staff began to encounter functionality issues related to the shelving not working as designed including most notably difficulty moving the carriages in which the shelves sit on and the powered systems needing to run with the safety override deactivated. Since 2017 the powered system has operated using a hand held emergency battery backup system. On June 25, 2024 the 36 year old battery backup system completely failed and approximately 27,000 cubic feet of the collection was completely inaccessible. Since the powered system is classified as beyond term replacement by Spacesaver, no repair parts for the system are available, so the vendor had to patch together a fix using 36 year old spare parts from the secondary market so the system would activate. Partial functionality was restored on August 22, 2024. Even with the repair, the powered assist system operates with safeties disengaged and approximately 6,000 cubic feet of records are inaccessible as those carriages no longer function. Access to the 13,000 cubic feet stored on mechanical assist systems is limited because many of those carriages only partially open due to the condition of the tracks the carriages sit on.

In 2022 a \$49,751 National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) grant was secured to fund a project team, led by the Department of Administrative Services staff and the State Archivist, to assess current conditions and develop a plan for a sustainable storage solution for the State Archives and Special Collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa. The determination of the team was that the shelving has deteriorated to such an extent that entire sections of the state's collection are currently inaccessible as the shelving no longer moves, is irreparable, is now a danger to the collection and unsafe for staff to operate and use. Beyond replacement of the shelving, the project team identified a number of other deficiencies within the storage room itself that will require a complete renovation of the space including, prior to any new shelving installation: repairing the entire concrete floor, updating the electrical and lighting, removing plumbing and walls, etc. The proposed outcomes will meet industry-standard best practices for historical collection preservation storage, including efficiency of ongoing collection management, protection of materials while on the shelf and lighting. The final deliverables of the team included the creation of documents for a future project implementation phase including schematic design, construction and cost opinion estimate documentation, bidding documents.

In 2023, the State Historical Society of Iowa applied for a \$995,027 NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grant to fund 20% of the overall project cost. Unfortunately, the State's application, while well received by NEH grant reviewers, was not approved for funding. The (NEH) Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grant program received 138 applications in this cycle but only 22% of applicants were funded. In December 2023 the State also learned the NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants program has been discontinued so alternative sources of funding will be identified and secured to fund this important State Archives historical records access, management and preservation project.