

ARCHIVE PLAN

For Preservation and Restoration of
Archived Records

FY 20/21

Lisa David
District Clerk
Williamson County

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District Clerk Archive Plan
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Summary

The vast majority of the permanent records in the District Clerk's office are paper. The records are used on a daily basis by the public and are vulnerable to loss by theft and wear and tear. These documents are of historical value and ordered to be kept through the preservation and archiving as these records cannot be destroyed.

In 2014 the Supreme Court of Texas mandated civil and family e-Filing which eliminated the paper files and all cases are now computerized.

In 2018 the Supreme Court of Texas mandated criminal e-Filing which eliminated the paper files and all cases are now computerized.

With no cost to the county, these records kept in paper format as well as docket and minute books can be preserved by using the archive fees collected to cover the cost of preserving and indexing into the current case management system for public research. With this process it will eliminate the documents being physically touched thus improving customer service.

The District Clerk is currently authorized to collect a records management fee of \$10.00. This fee is a dedicated fund for the use of preserving and managing District Clerk records.

The 81st Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1685 which provides That the District Clerk may begin collecting a fee of \$5 for filing specific suits in the County and District Court. This fund became effective October 1, 2010. All monies collected are placed in a line item in the budget labeled District Court Fund and are to be used for the purpose of restoration and preservation of records filed in the District Clerk's office.

The 83rd Texas Legislature passes HB 1513 which allows the Commissioner Court to temporarily authorize the fee not to exceed \$10 per the certain types of filings effective date of September 1, 2013 with an effective date of January 1, 2014. The fees would revert back to

\$5 effective date September 1, 2019, but Senate Bill 658 of the 86th Texas Legislature made the \$10 maximum allowable a permanent figure.

The process to archive the historical records and files dated prior to e-Filing will be a continuous task to ensure records are properly archived and indexed for retrieval.

The records management fee is for ongoing filings and management and preservation of the current records.

The archive fee is set out specifically for the historical records and preservation to prevent deterioration.

Fund Balance for 386-Records Management and Preservation fund is \$278,810.51

Fund Balance for 387-Technology Fund for District Clerk is \$279,265.27

Fund Balance for 388-Court Record Preservation Fund is \$658,196.13

The District Clerk Archive plan must be approved by the Commission's Court each year

Historical Data

In September 2011, The Williamson County District Clerk was awarded a grant by the Supreme Court for the preservation of the Dan Moody KKK case. The Historical Commission found this to be one of the top 20 notable cases in the history of Texas. The files were preserved in hard bound acid free binders by a preservation specialist. As an extra service to Williamson County, I had a CD made and have handed out copies to schools and libraries.

In December 2017 the District Clerk preserved over 178,468 documents dating back to 1848. The documents preserved were the first cases that had been filed in Williamson County Courts. The documents were tattered and worn from years of storage and human touch.

The documents were sent outside vendor and returned after a complete process of flattening the files, documents were cleaned of deposits and a process to humidify the sheets as needed and rehoused in acid-free folders and corrugated archival boxes. These records have now been downloaded into the current case management system used by the Williamson County District clerk. This will enhance customer service without the fear of harm to these documents. The cost for preservation of these records and shelving totaled \$169,361.08. These monies were taken from the records Management fund.

In 2018/2019 files and minute books were sent to outside vendor for professional preservation. This project consisted of over 64,000 documents and 11-minute books archived and digitized for retrieval at a cost of \$139,596.

Objective

A part time salary is also being used for an employee to prepare and index district clerk records as well as digitizing on site with the Scan Pro purchased from the Records Management Fund. This employee is hired at no more than 20 hours per week at \$29,966.00 total with benefits and FICA.

Currently funds are used to store Microfilm offsite in Dallas by KoFile for disaster purposes at a cost of \$2000 per year.

Funds are being requested to purchase corrugated archive boxes for files that are currently stored in the basement in paper boxes. These boxes are not for actual storage or stacking and in the stages of possible deterioration. The amount requested is \$15,000 for the rehousing of these documents in protected boxes until process of preservation can begin.

Now, due to the current COVID circumstances, I do not intend to do any major projects for preserving documents. This is a very time-consuming project and cannot proceed under the current work conditions with staff. The part time employee will continue to work on the volume in the office and then move to the basement for a partial preservation project. The numerous files that will have to be preserved and archived cannot be done in house and will be sent to vendor for professional preservation in the 2021/2022 budget year.

Goal

The goal is to produce and archive documents, regardless of type, as efficiently as possible. The district clerk is restoring records to reduce deterioration of public records, improving public access to these documents. It is the responsibility of the District Clerk records department to perform routine inspections of the records archive. Following an inspection, should documents require restoration, the Records Manager will determine the appropriate method of restoration. The District Clerk will utilize the most efficient and practical method available. In the event this office is unable to restore documents, the District Clerk will research local approved vendors capable of providing necessary services. The District Clerk will utilize the funds approved by the Commissioner's Court in this process. These records have a very high historical value and professional work is needed to restore, preserve and enhance the integrity of the documents and books. As the District Clerk, I will continue the

restoration and preservation process of existing records comprised of older volumes and case files-many of which date back to the 1800's.

Lisa David

Lisa David, District Clerk, Williamson County, Texas

8-28-2020

Date

Bill Gravell Jr. County Judge, Williamson County, Texas

Date

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