



RECORDS MANAGEMENT FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS

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Date: 20th August 2019

To: K. P. George, County Judge
Vincent Morales, Commissioner, Precinct 1
Grady Prestage, Commissioner, Precinct 2
Andy Meyers, Commissioner, Precinct 3
Ken DeMerchant, Commissioner, Precinct 4

CC: Kent Edwards, Director of Human Resources
Pamela Gubbels, Director of Finance and Investments
Ed Sturdivant, County Auditor

From: Nancy Sparrow, Records Management Officer

In re.: Request for three (3) part-time Records Management Technicians,
wages to be paid from the Records Management & Preservation Fund

Background

Until about ten years ago, the Records Management Department employed a part-time technician. When that individual became unable to continue working, the department allowed the position to fall empty.

At the same time that microform utilization decreased, the Records Management Department launched digital conversion pilot programs with Environmental Health and the District Attorney. In time, other departments and offices requested our capture services: Tax Assessor Collector; Clinical Health Services; the County Attorney; and all of the justice courts. Child Support transferred its long-term storage format request to digital. Additionally, the department has completed one-off scanning projects for other departments.

In mid-2017, Fort Bend County launched an Electronic Content Management Solution, with Human Resources and Risk Management being the pilot departments. Records Management staff performed those back-file conversions, in the respective offices. HR's project continues. The Treasurer's Office and the DA have asked Records Management to complete their digital conversion. We've had to decline, because progress for our long-standing clients mentioned above has stalled:

Two hundred, eighteen (218) cubic feet of documents remain in Records Management, unprepared and unscanned. Those include records of Child Support, Environmental Health, Clinical Health Services and three justice courts. Without considering receipt of additional material, estimated completion time is April 2020.

- ◆ Since 2015, Child Support averages 28 cubic feet per year. Delivery of the 2019 records likely will be by or shortly after April 2020.

Both Human Resources and the Treasurer’s Office require their records to remain on premises.

- ◆ HR has 198 cubic feet of documents remaining. Estimated completion time is mid-2021.
- ◆ TO’s holdings are approximately 50 cubic feet. Estimated completion time is early-2021, owing to the type and amount of handling required.

Records Management accorded the Tax Assessor-Collector preferred status, meaning that staff prepares and scans those records upon receipt. Tax averages 139 cubic feet per year, delivered approximately quarterly in lots of about 35. Each delivery delays production of other departments’ images.

The County Attorney currently has fewer than twenty cubic feet of litigation documents to be scanned. Records Management will perform that operation in the RM department. Those records will “go to the end of the line:” work will begin no sooner than March 2020.

The District Attorney has approximately 10,000 cubic feet of misdemeanor and felony case files in off-site storage to be scanned. Those, also, will go to the end of the line, after retrieval from the storage facility.

- ◆ Considering the ages of some of those records, preparation will require increased time.

As additional County offices and departments begin to employ the ECMS, back-file conversion needs will grow. The ECMS deployment is expected to be complete in three-to-five years.

Part-time employees not only will assist with digital conversion projects, they will be available to learn other departmental operations, including and not limited to assisting clients with records retrieval, receiving stored records, and staging records destruction.

Records Management and Preservation Fund

As previously stated, Records Management historically paid part-time employees’ wages from the Records Management and Preservation Fund. Records Management utilizes that account also for payment of the County’s off-site storage at Harris County Department of Education and document destruction fees.

The RMP Fund currently contains \$811,000. Presuming no increase in revenue to that fund, and no increase in expenditures for the storage and shred services, the Fund will cover both of those services and three part-time employees at \$14 per hour, 29 hours per week, for four and one-half years, as shown in the table below.

	2020 \$ (estimate)	10% increase	2019 \$ (estimate)	2018 \$	2017 \$	2016 \$	2015 \$	2014 \$
HCDE	46255.00	4205.00	42050.00	41957.83	34758.93	31055.00	27575.00	25215.00
Shred-It	53768.00	4888.00	48880.00*	12130.00	*note: average of \$4075/month			
part-timer 1	26033.31							
part-timer 2	26033.21							
part-timer 3	26033.21							
total	\$178,122.73							
RMP Fund, 8/16/19	~811,000.00							
# years	4.55							

In fact, Fund revenues have increased an average of about 3.3% annually since 2014. Storage cost increases average 7.9% for the same time period, primarily due to growth in the Sheriff’s Office’s and District Attorney Office’s holdings.

Cost comparison: responding digital capture vendors

The Records Management Committee recommended investigating the cost of outsourcing digital conversion. Two service providers, DocuPros and VeriTrust, supplied cost estimates. Comparisons, based on off-premises scanning, at 2000 pages per cubic foot, follow.

dept-vendor	# cubic feet	# pages	rate/page	total \$ to scan	rate/ft3 to shred	total \$ to shred	transport	TOTAL	remarks
DA-DocuPros	10000	20000000	0.04	800,000	3.00	30,000	?	\$830,000	includes indexing, USB; transportation cost unknown
DA-VeriTrust	10000	20000000	0.11	2,200,000	4.95	49,500	?	\$2,249,500	includes 10% QC; transportation cost unknown; USB, indexing, 100% QC are extra
Tax-DocuPros	139	278000	0.04	11,120	3.00	417	396	\$11,933	includes indexing, USB; presumes 4 trips
Tax-VeriTrust	139	278000	0.11	30,580	4.95	688	179	\$31,447	includes 10% QC; USB, indexing, 100% QC are extra
Child Support-DocuPros	28	56000	0.04	2,240	3.00	84	99	\$2,423	includes indexing, USB; presumes 1 trip
Child Support-VeriTrust	28	56000	0.11	6,160	4.95	139	68	\$6,367	includes 10% QC; USB, indexing, 100% QC are extra
Co Atty-DocuPros	20	40000	0.04	1,600	3.00	60	99	\$1,759	includes indexing, USB
Co Atty-VeriTrust	20	40000	0.11	4,400	4.95	99	60	\$4,559	includes 10% QC; USB, indexing, 100% QC are extra

Within the industry, a per-page scan rate of between \$.05 and \$.17 is usual. Other fees may apply to indexing, transportation, destruction, preparation other than removing clips and staples, re-binding and re-boxing, storage devices, OCR, and other services. On-premises production will cost an additional 30-40% or more, depending on whether the County provides facilities and equipment. Set-up and increased labor rates can also apply.

- ◆ Records Management's preparation consists of removing clips and staples as well as taping small pieces of paper and adding machine-type receipts to pages, trimming paper to fit the scanners' Automatic Document Feeders, increasing contrast, and otherwise making the pages camera-ready.
- ◆ Records Management's quality check consists of examining each page by a person other than the scanner operator. If the client department requires image duplication onto a portable device, RM re-examines those images.
- ◆ Client departments' staff are responsible for uploading images to the network drive, case management system or other storage location.

To protect the County and its employees from risk and liability, the Records Management Committee recommends that Records Management staff continue to perform backfile conversion on-premises.