

How to Read Retention Codes

Examples from State of New Hampshire Retention Schedule:

Retention Code	Description	Time Active (in office)	Total Time Kept	Type
032-02-01-01	Archival Correspondence	0	0	P
032-02-01-02	Agency & General Correspondence	0	0	P
032-02-01-03	Destruction Notifications & Authorizations	0	0	P
032-02-01-04	Request & Refile Slips	1	1	S
032-02-01-05	Transfer Lists	0	0	P
032-02-01-07	Requests for Proposal (RFP) (working papers)	0	10	S
032-02-01-12	Information Technology Planning (working papers)	0	10	S
032-02-01-22	Administrative Records	0	0	P
032-02-01-99	Needs Processing	0	0	P

Retention Code Breakdown (example): 032-02-01-01 Archival Correspondence

Agency Code: 032 (Department of State)

Division Code: 02 (Archives and Records Management)

Item Code: 01

Suffix Code: 01

After the Suffix Code, you will see a description of what the code represents:

032-02-01-01 is **Archival Correspondence**

The numbers that follow specify how long the item is kept:

1st number: How long it is kept in the office

2nd number: How long it is kept in total

If both columns are zeros, the item is kept **permanently**

If the first column is zero but the second is not, then the item is not kept in the office. It is **only kept for the determined amount of time** (2nd number) at the Archives Division and then destroyed.

The letters that follow the second number stand for the following:

P=Permanent

S=Shred or destroy

If any letter besides those mentioned above are used, there is an issue with the retention code. Please verify that it is a valid code.

Examples:

032-02-01-01 - Archival Correspondence shall be kept permanently in office.

032-02-01-07 - Request for Proposal (RFP) working papers shall be kept in the office for zero years after completion of documents and then kept at Archives and Records for 10 years before they can be authorized for disposal.

Most records are kept for a set number of years, but some files are kept for a different unit of time (ex: 22 months). Please see your own agency codes to find out what they are.