
Electronic Records Management: Can Meeting Recordings Be Deleted After Meeting Minutes Have Been Approved?

Purpose: Provide guidance to state agencies and local government entities on whether audio/video recordings of meetings can be destroyed after the meeting minutes have been finalized.

Can audio/video recordings of meetings be destroyed once the minutes for the meeting have been approved?

NO – If an agency chooses to make an audio/video recording of a meeting (whether required to do so or not), that recording must be retained for the appropriate period based on the function and content of the meeting, along with the minutes, agenda, agenda packet, and other records used or created in the meeting.

This applies even if the recording was made only as a memory aid for creation of the minutes.

While minutes document the actions taken at the meeting in summary form, the recording provides a complementary record that documents the discussions and the mood of the meeting.

Are there any exceptions to this?

YES, but only one. If a meeting participant is **not** acting as the clerk or secretary for the meeting, and is recording the meeting **only** for their own use (and **not** to aid in the creation of meeting minutes), the recording may be destroyed when no longer needed in accordance with **Meeting Materials – Members' Copies/Notes (DAN GS2016-007/GS 09026)** in the *Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE)* and the *State Government General Records Retention Schedule*.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**