

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

ACTION
 NOTICE

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*PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

AS FM ML TR
 CC FL NA W-2
 CS IT RA WIA
 CF JC TC
 CR LM TA

TO: W-2 Agency Directors

FROM: Kristiane Randal
Division Administrator

RE: Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Related Programs Record Retention

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to update the Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies on the record retention policy for all W-2 and related programs.

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Welfare Initiatives (now Bureau of Working Families) [Operations Memo 99-37](#) described the record retention policy for retaining W-2, Job Access Loan (JAL), and Emergency Assistance (EA) paper case records. At that time, the W-2 agency was required to retain case records for three years, six months after the case was closed before the agency could purge a W-2 record.

NEW RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

W-2, JAL, and EA Case-related Paper Documents

As of January 1, 2013, W-2 agencies must retain W-2, JAL, and EA case-related paper documents for three years after a case closes if the agency has not yet scanned the documents into the Electronic Case File (ECF). The only documents that agencies should not scan into ECF are those that contain sensitive and confidential information ([W-2 Manual 4.4.6](#)). After the case has been closed for three years, the W-2 agency can destroy (shred) the paper documents.

W-2 agencies must retain paper documents for longer than three years if any litigation, claim, or audit involving the case is unresolved. In these situations, the W-2 agency must not destroy the documents until three years from the date the issue was resolved. The terms "litigation," "claim," and "audit" include lawsuits, Fact Finding Reviews, Departmental Reviews, Intentional Program

Violation (IPV) claims, federal or state audits, Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) audits, etc. ([W-2 Manual 4.4.3](#)).

W-2, JAL, and EA Case-related Documents Stored in the Electronic Case File (ECF)

W-2 agencies are required to scan paper documents into ECF that do not contain sensitive and confidential information within 30 days after receipt. Agencies may destroy paper documents that are scanned and stored in the ECF at any time. The division recommends that agencies retain paper documents that have been scanned into ECF for at least a week in the event they discover scanner operator error. This includes copies of birth certificates, Social Security cards, marriage certificates, etc. Agencies must return original documents to the owner. For more information on storing documents in ECF, see [W-2 Manual, Chapter 4](#).

The Department of Health Services (DHS) will purge documents scanned into ECF. Documents will not be purged until at least the minimum document retention time period of three years has lapsed and then purged documents will be based on storage space, case closure dates, and other considerations.

Enterprise Output Solution (EOS) Reports

Quarterly EOS reports can assist agencies in identifying which paper case records they can destroy. The reports are located in the reporting subsystem on the CARES mainframe. Agencies access the subsystem by selecting "EOSP" and then search for the report series that starts with "C7." The reports contain non-duplicative data.

The following four (4) quarterly reports will be available to agencies as of April 15, 2013:

1. *C787; CARES-RP772A-QTR; CASES CLOSED >3 YRS*
Identifies cases in which all assistance groups have been closed for at least three years.
2. *C789; CARES-RP774A-QTR; CASES TRANS OUT OF CTY >3 YRS*
Identifies cases that have been transferred out of a specified county for at least three years. It is possible that a case identified on this report is currently open in another county.
3. *C791; CARES-RP780A-QTR; WP CASES CLOSED >3 YRS*
Identifies work program (WP) individuals whose case record has been closed for at least three years.
4. *C792; CARES-RP781A-QTR; WP CASES TRANS OUT CTY >3 YRS*
Identifies work program individuals that have been transferred out of a specified county for at least three years.

The reports are alphabetical by last name of the individual. All individuals on the case (including children) will display for reports C787 and C789. Reports C791 and C792 list only individuals referred to work programs. All four reports display the WP Disenrollment Date. The disenrollment dates are for informational purposes only.

Agencies will need to track EA cases because EA cases are not included on the EOS reports. A suggested method to track EA cases is to organize case files according to the last year of contact.

ACTION NEEDED:

W-2 agencies should check the reports the month following the end of each quarter in order to identify cases that may have paper case records that can be destroyed.

CONTACT: Balance of State - Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO) Staff
Milwaukee - Milwaukee Operations Section (MOS) Staff