

# Security Microfilm Policy Procedures and Fees in Handling Record Requests for Security Microfilm of Government Agencies

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## Abstract

The Nebraska State Historical Society - State Archives, Government Records Department, periodically reviews its policies and procedures to better serve the citizens of Nebraska and the mission of the NSHS. These changes to our security microfilm policy are in keeping with the laws that govern records in Nebraska. (See 82-104, 82-105, and 82-108 at [uniweb.legislature.ne.gov](http://uniweb.legislature.ne.gov))

Only records listed as permanent on an approved records retention schedule are eligible for transfer to the State Archives on security microfilm. Long-term historical value of these materials is subject to evaluation by the Curator of Government Records and the State Archivist.

To locate current schedules for your agency or department, refer to the following:

[http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/retention\\_schedules.html](http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/retention_schedules.html)

The ability to ensure record preservation, integrity, and accessibility is the role of the State Archives. If security microfilm is taken from the government records microfilm vault, there is the potential for loss of permanent and irreplaceable historical records. Implementing new procedures and retrieval fees to safeguard security microfilm will ensure that Nebraska's culture and history found in public records will remain secure.

## I. Introduction

- Once records are officially transferred to the State Archives, Government Records, the NSHS retains custody, control and supervision of those records (See: **Section 82-104, *Nebraska State Historical Society; public documents, records, relics; custodian***). As the custodian of those records, the Archives is mandated by the Records Management Act to be the caretaker of permanent and archival records. That responsibility requires and mandates the Archives to review its policies and procedures.
- By their nature, archives are final repositories for permanent records deemed to have historical significance or importance. Many government entities send their records to the NSHS because we do not charge storage fees. The NSHS does recognize that state, county, or local agencies do need to recall their permanent records in certain circumstances, however,

NSHS does have the right to charge retrieval fees based on **Section 82-108, Nebraska State Historical Society; documents and records; certified copies; fees.**

- Security microfilm is an integral part of the holdings of the State Archives, in many cases it is the only permanent copy of an archival record. Hence, it is imperative that a limited number of reels be allowed out of the vault at any given time if government agencies or the office of origin needs to recall them.

## **II. Reasons and Objectives to Review Procedures for Pulling Security Microfilm for Government Agencies from the Vault**

- Because of limited staff in the State Archives, this problem of requests to pull security microfilm has grown over the past decade.
- As the size of the security microfilm collection grows, so do the labor costs to pull reels from the vault.
- As the size of the security microfilm collection grows, so do the operating costs to maintain reels in the vault.
- Rising costs of rental space to house the State Archives.
- To protect security microfilm in case of disasters. i.e. tornadoes, floods, fires. If a number of reels have been recalled by government agencies, they run the risk of losing vital historical records on that film.

The specific objectives for a new policy for security microfilm are solutions that provide:

- Secure archival copies of important government records for historical, legal purposes, as well as for continuation of government.
- A clear understanding that the State Archives is the final repository of permanent historical records in the state.
- Emphasis that the State Archives is the custodian for records of historical importance that have been placed on security microfilm.

## **III. Security Microfilm Policy**

- State and local government agencies would be required to have microfilm sent to a qualified vendor to be duplicated, with the archival copy going back to the archives.
- Advanced notice of 2 weeks must be given to NSHS staff in order to accommodate the pulling of 30 or more reels of security microfilm from the vault.
- The vendor must pick up and return security microfilm in person to the Government Records Facility of the State Archives.

- The microfilm vendor must complete duplication of reels before another batch of security microfilm will be allowed out of the microfilm vault. Please refer to retrieval fees for maximum number of reels.
- Security microfilm represents the master negative preservation copy for records of historical significance. *Individual copies cannot be made from security microfilm since it will cause damage and scratches to the negative film.* The entire reel must be duplicated onto a positive film format in order for copies to be made from a reader/printer.

#### **IV. Retrieval Fees for Security Microfilm**

\$5.00 per reel (1 to 10 reels)

\$7.00 per reel (11 to 25 reels)

\$10.00 per reel (26 to 100 reels)

**NOTE: 100 is the maximum number of reels that can be requested by state, county, or local agencies at any given time. Microfilm must be duplicated and returned to the vault by the vendor before another batch of microfilm will be allowed out of the Government Records Facility of the State Archives.**

#### **V. Conclusions**

- The security microfilm policy will result in tools and models that create opportunities and solve dilemmas:
- Ensure that permanent records on microfilm are secure for future generations.
- Backup and security of essential legal and historical data for continuation of government operations. Government agencies can still meet administrative and legal requirements with the guidelines stated in this policy.
- Closer working relationship between recognized microfilm vendors and the State Archives.

**APPROVED BY NSHS BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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