TOMRMS

The Ontario Municipal Records Management System

LEARN ABOUT:

♦ What is TOMRMS

♦ Why should an Ontario Municipality implement TOMRMS

♦ The TOMRMS structure

♦ The benefits to an Ontario Municipality

♦ How do you get there

WHAT IS TOMRMS?

TOMRMS stands for "The Ontario Municipal Records Management System"

TOMRMS is a complete file classification system for managing the paper and electronic records of an Ontario Municipality.

♦ Developed in conjunction with the AMCTO— Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario
♦ Used by 100's of Ontario municipalities since 1990

The primary components are:

♦ Classification / Indexing System
♦ Retention Schedule = Current Legislation
♦ Policies for Records Management
♦ Procedure for Records Management

WHY SHOULD AN ONTARIO MUNICIPALITY IMPLEMENT TOMRMS?

Ontario municipalities are organized into many different departments such as:

- Administration
- Building
- Clerks
- Corporate Services
- Planning
- Building
- By-law Enforcement
- Finance
- Public Works
- Protective Services
- Economic Development
- Fire & Rescue
- Garbage & Recycling
- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Public Health
- Engineering/Transportation
- Etc.

Typically each department is responsible for storing and managing the records in their department. This results in silos of information where one department can not access records in the other department and there may be different versions of the same document stored in multiple places. If an employee goes on vacation or retires it is often very difficult to find the records that this person is responsible for. Staff also typically do not know how long to store their records and end up keeping everything forever thereby resulting in a paper and electronic storage that is much larger than necessary.

THE TOMRMS STRUCTURE

TOMRMS is based on Primary and Secondary Classifications.

There are 14 Primary Classifications which are the Record Series including:

- A — Administration
- C — Council, Boards and By-laws
- D — Development and Planning
- E — Environmental Services
- F — Finance and Account
- H — Human Resources
- J — Justice
- L — Legal Affairs
- M — Media and Public Relations
- P — Protection and Enforcement Services
- R — Recreation and Culture
- S — Social and Health Care Services
- T — Transportation Services
- V — Vehicles and Equipment

Secondary Classifications are the types of documents in that department or record group. The Secondary Classifications in "Administration" include:

- A00 - Administration, General
- A01 - Associations and Organizations
- A02 - Staff Committee and Meetings
- A03 - Computer/Information Systems
- A04- Conferences and Seminars
- A05 - Consultants
- Etc.

Scope Notes

Scope Notes are a description of what records are to be classified in each of the Secondary Classifications. An example of a Scope Note is as follows:

A01	**ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS**
	Includes correspondence, minutes, agenda, notices and reports regarding organizations and associations to which staff members belong or with which they communicate in the course of their duties such as Drayton & Community Citizens Association, AMCTO, MISA, Ontario Farm Drainage Association, etc. **Where possible, these records should be filed by their subject, not the originator or recipient of the report and/or correspondence.**
	Excludes:

Alphabetic Cross Reference

There is an Alphabetic Cross Reference to easily identify what Secondary Classification a record should be filed under:

Accessibility of Records (FOI) A17

Accident/Incident Reports P08

Accommodation, Travel and A13

Accounting, Finance and .... F

Accounting, Finance and - General .... FOO

Accounts Payable F01

Retention Schedule

The Retention Schedule details the amount of time that a record must be kept and is based upon current Provincial and Federal legislation. The Retention Schedule appears as such:

Primary Heading: Administration				
Class Code	Secondary Heading	Responsible Dept.	Total Retention (# of years after current year)	Retention Justification/ Citations
A08	Office Services	Originating	1	business need
A09	Policies and Procedures	Originating	15**	g040 g046 g059 g060 g062 g125 g148 g155
A10	Records Management	Clerk's	S	business need
A11	Records Disposition	Clerk's	P	common practice (P) based on CAN/CGSB-72.34-2017: Electronic Record as Documentary Evidence
A12	Telecommunications Systems	Originating	S	business need
A13	Travel and Accommodation	Originating	1	business need
A14	Uniforms and Clothing	Originating	S**	business need
A15	Vendors and Suppliers	Originating	2	business need
A16	Intergovernmental Relations	Originating	5**	business need
A17	Information Access and Privacy	Clerk's	2	g071
A18	Security	Originating	5	business need
A19	Facilities Construction and Renovations	Originating	project finished and no outstanding issues + 2**	g059 g073
A20	Building and Property Maintenance	Originating	5 Setup tests and manuals = Equipment removed + 1 year	g099 g123 g160

Legend: **P** - Permanent; **S** - Superseded; **E – Event; C -** Current Year**; ** -** Subject to Archival Selection
Business need = no citations identified; **Common Practice** = typical retention exceeds citation retention identified

You will see a series of numbers in the right hand column which are the Citations.

Citation Table

The Citation Table shows the Law, Act or Legislative text that defines the retention period for Municipal Records as shown:

group #	Compliance Centre™ Entry	Citation	Retention
g160 Environmental Protection – Solar facilities maintenance & complaints 5 years	OENV-Ev.Pr.-458— Solar Facilities — Inspection, Complaint and Maintenance Records	Registrations under Part II.2 of the Act — Solar Facilities Regulation, under the Environmental Protection Act, O. Reg. 350/12, s. 7	5 years
g161 assessment rolls no longer required for planning purposes	OMUN-Asse.-7 — Access to Assessment Information	Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. A.31, s. 53; as am. S.O. 1996, c. 4, s. 43; as am. S.O. 1997, c. 43, Sched. G, s. 18(33); as am. S.O. 2000, c. 25, s. 13; as am. S.O. 2015, c. 20, Sched. 2, s. 1(1) to (3); as am. S.O. 2016, c. 37, Sched. 2, s.	PRIVACY Act states that information is made available to a municipality by the assessment corporation to meet planning requirements
g162 injury claims 10 days	OMUN-Muni01-3— Actions for Injury— Limitation Period	Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, s. 44(10); as am. S.O. 2017, c. 10; Sched. 1, s. 4	Event + 10 days (Event = Occurrence of injury)
g163 Residential Tenancies - Operational Review Limitation 4 years	OPM-Re.Ten.-1— Ministerial Operational Records Reviews — Limitation Period	Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, S.O. 2006, c. 17, s. 120(6)	Event + 4 years (Event = Commencement date)

A Guide for Establishing a Records Management Program

TOMRMS includes a "Guide for Establishing a Records Management Programs" that includes:

♦ Policy

♦ Staffing and Requirements

♦ Equipment and Supplies

♦ Inactive Records Storage

♦ Vital Records Protection

♦ Disaster Recovery Planning

♦ Etc.

Sample Retention By-law

A "Sample Retention By-law" is also included.

WHY AN ONTARIO MUNICIPALITY SHOULD IMPLEMENT TOMRMS

A corporate wide records management system ensures that the municipality complies with the requirements of the Municipal Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and any other policies and legislation.

Without such a system individuals store and classify their records in a departmental manner as has been always done in the past. This traditional system means that there is no conformity in the way records are managed across the organization. There is also "Institutional Memory" meaning that one staff member will have knowledge of where a record resides but with the retirement of that individual the memory of that record also retires.

Ontario Municipalities should also have a "Retention By-law". This document is very difficult to keep current and accurate, especially for smaller Municipalities so these legal documents are typically incomplete and inaccurate. TOMRMS solves this problem because it includes a sample retention By-law that refers to the TOMRMS classification that is updated annually.

Most Municipalities that have not implemented TOMRMS also have the issue of the storage of paper records. Because staff do no know the retention period of records they are kept permanently and pose storage issues that can be resolved through proper classification and purging.

INTEGRATION WITH ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Although TOMRMS was initially designed as a paper records management system it integrates very well with electronic records management systems and can be used as the basis for the file classification and retention of such a system. Shown below is how TOMRMS is used within the FileHold Electronic Document and Records Management System.
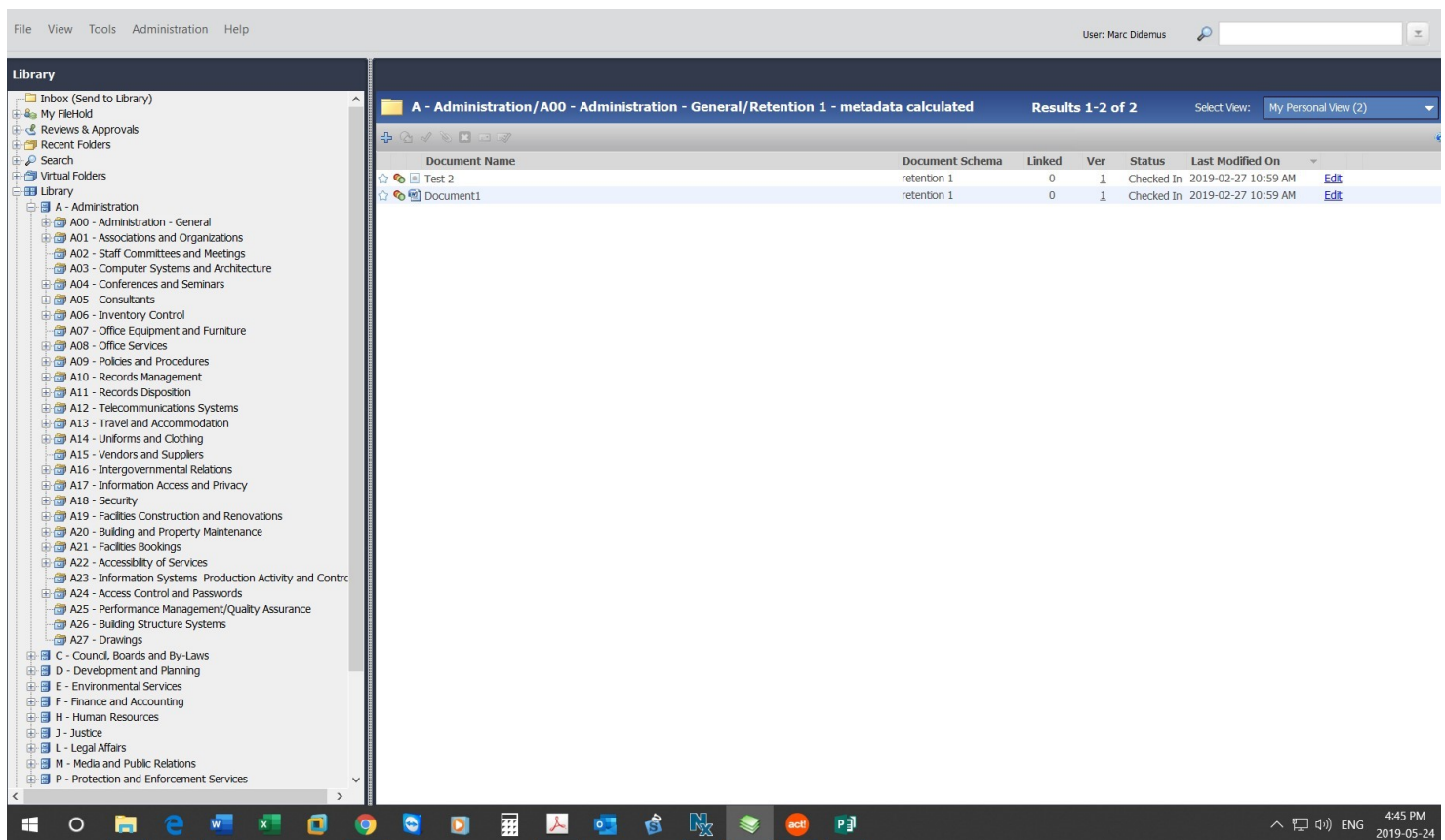

Image Advantage Solutions Inc. are experts in integrating TOMRMS with the FileHold system for Ontario Municipalities and has this system implemented into over twenty five Ontario Municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION

TOMRMS includes one day of training for staff. This training includes the process to implement TOMRMS into an Ontario Municipality. The first step is to contact Image Advantage Solutions Inc. for a free web presentation on how TOMRMS works.

CONCLUSION

Records in a Municipality are often difficult to find because they are managed departmentally. They tend to be kept for too long because staff are not aware of the legal or functional retention periods of their records. Retention By-laws also tend to be outdated and incomplete causing legal risk. TOMRMS resolves all of these issues and allows a Municipality to comply with the requirements of the Municipal Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and any other policies and legislation.

For more information please contact:

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