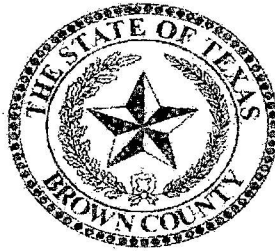


**SHARON FERGUSON
BROWN COUNTY CLERK**



**ARCHIVE PLAN
For Preservation and Restoration
Of Archived Records
FY 2025-2026**

**Prepared by Sharon Ferguson, Brown County Clerk
HEARING DATE SEPTEMBER 8, 2025**

*September 8, 2025
(Exhibit #7)*

September 8, 2025

The Honorable Judge Shane Britton
Brown County Judge

The Honorable Kirk Chastain
County Commissioner Pct. 1

The Honorable Joel Kelton
County Commissioner Pct. 2

Mrs. Jennifer Robison
Brown County Auditor

The Honorable David Reid
County Commissioner Pct. 3

The Honorable Larry Traweek
County Commissioner Pct. 4

Re: PROPOSED ARCHIVE PLAN OF BROWN COUNTY CLERK

Dear Sirs, Madam,

The proposed Archive Plan of the County Clerk follows:

Noteworthy topics:

1. Effective September 1, 2019, the maximum allowable archive fee became permanent. It was scheduled to be reduced to a maximum \$5 fee on 09/01-2019, but SB 658 of the 86th Texas Legislature made the current \$10 maximum allowable amount a permanent figure.
2. Archive Plan, long term, includes preserving remaining deed records, Commissioner Court Minutes Books, Small Estates Books, Deputation Books, and birth and death records (some dating back to the 1880's) or any records in the County Clerk's Office that need to be archived.

Sharon Ferguson, Brown County Clerk requests the Commissioners' Court approve and accept this Archive Plan as presented.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Ferguson
Brown County Clerk
325-643-2594

**BROWN COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE
ARCHIVAL PLAN FOR FY 2025-2026**

STATUTES

Local Government Code 118.025 permits the commissioners court of a county to adopt a records archive fee under Local Government Code 118.011(f) as part of the county's annual budget for the preservation and restoration services performed by the county clerk in connection with maintaining a county clerk records archive. Section 118.025(g) requires an annual written plan for funding the preservation and restoration of the county clerk records archive.

HB 1513 passed by the 83rd Texas Legislative Session amends Sections 118.011 (b) and (f) of the Local Government Code to increase the amount of the County Clerk Records Archive Fees (assessed when a non-court document is presented to the County Clerk for recording or filing) from not more than \$5.00 to not more than \$10.00. The increased fee was set to revert to the \$5.00 amount on September 1, 2019.

SB 685 passed by the 86th Texas Legislature made permanent the former temporary increases in records archive fees and records management and preservation fees charged by district and county clerks. Section 118.011 (b) and (f) were amended to allow the County Clerk to set and collect a Records Management and Preservation Fee of not more than \$10 and a Records Archive Fee of not more than \$10.00 on September 1, 2019.

Most of the permanent records in the County Clerk's office are paper based. These records are used daily by the public and are vulnerable to loss by theft and wear and tear. At no cost to the County, these records can be preserved by using the archive fees collected to cover the cost of scanning the paper-based documents and preserving the handwritten ones by encapsulation. In addition to preserving the documents, the images can be added to our existing imaging system and improve customer service by offering a wider date range of documents on the Internet.

PURPOSE

The County Clerk's Records have been exposed to deterioration from usage and unfavorable elements in some of the storage areas. Although the office is progressive in the preservation of current records by utilizing the Records Management Fees collected, funding has not been sufficient to conserve all the oldest records or to electronically preserve, restore and re-index these records that have priceless historical value. To preserve and enhance the integrity and reliability of the existing system for recording and preserving public documents, the County Clerk seeks to preserve existing original record books by restoration, digitization, re-indexing these records and importing newly created images and data into the existing computer system. The fee is set by commissioner's court as part of the budget process. The County Clerk designates public documents that are part of the records archive and prepares a plan to pay for the preservation and restoration of records archive projects, subject to the approval by the commissioner's court. A public hearing is required.

PLAN SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to define the restoration and preservation plans of the County Clerk's Office for the upcoming fiscal year. The scope of work will be ongoing for many years to come to preserve documents and conduct restoration activities when necessary. Not all documents of significant interest to the County Clerk and the public have been restored and preserved. The Records Archive Fee is controlled by the County Clerk and Commissioners Court, by agreement, subject to an annual public hearing and commissioners court budgetary authorization. Changes to the plan must be approved by the Commissioner's Court. The plan can be modified as required. My plan for this next fiscal year is to continue to archive additional permanent records, only when funds are available. The County Clerk will provide the Commissioner's Court with the written quotes and will adhere and comply with Subchapter C, Chapter 262 Texas Local Government Code.

- . Digitize all Deed of Trust Records.
- . Suspend or reduce the deterioration of public documents
- . Create roll of security microfilm for scanned images archival backup.
- . Modernize and upgrade old records systems in the office by back scanning.
- . Continue to add records and information to existing computer system.
- . Eliminate or reduce manual lookups and searches.
- . Expedite record searching by having more records available for electronic retrieval.
- . Provide more public information via the Internet and other electronic methods
- . Continue to eliminate the need for paper records
- . Commissioner Court Records-continue to import data to existing computer in the searchable format Easy Doc.

RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for implementing the preservation and restoration of records maintained by the County Clerk's Office will be by the County Clerk and employees selected by her to assist. **Final decision regarding the funding and expenditures of the plan shall be made by the County Clerk with Commissioners' Court approval.**

VOLUME APPRECIATED

This archive projects include court records, from misdemeanor criminal cases, estate and probate cases, and all types of civil suits. Additionally, the project includes deed records, lien records, commissioners' court minutes, and marriage and death records. Due to the enormous volume of records in the Brown County Clerk's Office, the records archival projects will be an ongoing process for many years to come.

PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR FY 2025-2026

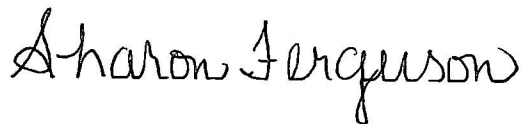
Scan, index and restore commissioner court minutes books
Scan, index and restore military discharge books - completed
Scan, index and restore marriage record books - completed
Scan, index and restore birth record books
Scan, index and restore death record books
Scan, index and digitize official public records
Scan, index and digitize criminal, civil and probate case files
Scan, index and restore other books, like Small Estate and Deputation Books, as needed
Scan, index and restore Deed of Trust Records

SUMMARY

The Legislature has provided a means to raise revenue for the records management and preservation of older county records. The records archive fee is an alternative to raising taxes or spending general fund monies to accomplish these projects. This plan will be implemented in phases as money is accrued and all contract services will be done through standard purchasing procedures. Approval and implementation will ensure the preservation of priceless historical records for future generations.

Sharon Ferguson, Brown County Clerk, requests the Commissioners' Court approve and accept this archival plan as presented.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Ferguson
Brown County Clerk
sharon.ferguson@browncountytexas.gov

09-08-2025
Date

August 5, 2025

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, per Texas Local Government Code Sec. 118.025 (g), that a public hearing regarding the preservation and restoration of the County Clerk's Records Archive shall be held on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 9:00 A.M. at 200 South Broadway, Brownwood, Texas, in the County Commissioners Courtroom to allow public discussion regarding the use of these funds.

**Sharon Ferguson
Brown County Clerk**

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 118.025 (g) OF THE TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, THE BROWN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS' COURTROOM, BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 200 SOUTH BROADWAY, BROWNWOOD, TEXAS, AT WHICH TIME THE COURT WILL CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL THE WRITTEN PLAN FOR FUNDING THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE BROWN COUNTY CLERK'S RECORDS ARCHIVE.

Notice must be published not later than the 15th day before the date of the hearing.

Bill cost for publication to: Brown County Commissioners Court
200 South Broadway, Ste. 322
Brownwood, Texas 76801

PUBLIC NOTICE

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 118.025 (g) OF THE TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, THE BROWN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS' COURTROOM, BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 200 SOUTH BROADWAY, BROWNWOOD, TEXAS, AT WHICH TIME THE COURT WILL CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL THE WRITTEN PLAN FOR FUNDING THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE BROWN COUNTY CLERK'S RECORDS ARCHIVE.

Notice must be published not later than the 15th day before the date of the hearing.

Bill cost for publication to: Brown County Commissioners Court

200 South Broadway, Ste. 322

Brownwood, Texas 76801

Published in Brownwood Bulletin August 16, 23, 2025.

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COUNTY CLERK

RECORDS ARCHIVE FEE

Local Government Code 118.025(h)

(h) If a county charges a fee under this section, a notice shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the County Clerk's Office. The notice must state the amount of the fee in the following form:

“THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF BROWN COUNTY HAS DETERMINED THAT A RECORDS ARCHIVE FEE OF \$10.00 IS NEEDED TO PRESERVE AND RESTORE COUNTY RECORDS.”

COMMISSIONER COURT MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF BROWN

ORDER APPROVING RECORDS ARCHIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Local Government Code, Section 118.011(f) enables the Commissioners' Court to adopt a Records Archive Fee, for the preservation and restoration services performed by the County Clerk in connection with maintaining a County Clerk records archive.

WHEREAS Commissioners' Court approved the collection of a Records Archive Fee of \$10.00 to commence on October 1, 2021, which the County Clerk's office will collect at the time of filing or recording of any public record, excluding a state agency.

WHEREAS Sections 118.011 (f) of the Local Government Code was amended to increase the amount of the County Clerk Records Archive Fee when a non-court document is presented to the County Clerk for recording or filing from not more than \$5.00 to not more than \$10.00.

WHEREAS, with approval from the Commissioner's Court the County Clerk will collect a Records Archive Fee of \$10.00 when a non-court document is presented for recording or filing.

WHEREAS, after Commissioners' Court approval of the County Clerk Records Archive Plan for FY 2025-2026, and the Plan being accepted as presented.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED by the Commissioners' Court of Brown County, pursuant to Local Government Code, Section 118.011 (f), hereby approves and adopts the County Clerk Annual Written Records Archive Plan for FY 2025-2026, finding that all postings and public hearing requirements have been met as per Local Government Code 118.025.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED, this 8 day of September, 2025.

BROWN COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COURT

The Honorable Shane Britton, County Judge

Kirk Chastain
Commissioner Precinct #1

Joel Kelton
Commissioner Precinct #2

David Reid
Commissioner Precinct #3

Larry Trawick
Commissioner Precinct #4