

December 13, 2021 at 12:56 PM

Our reference number: 128119

Dear Nina Green,

Thank you for your inquiry to Library and Archives Canada (LAC).

I am responding to your request for information concerning a Treasury Board directive allowing the destruction of federal government records in all departments, as well as a file referenced by Jay Atherton in his article about the Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre

(<https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/10728/11607>).

With regards to the Treasury Board (TB) directive, having reviewed the Atherton article, I believe there may be some confusion between the date that TB requested information from departments about their holdings (1933) and the resulting TB minute that granted the formal authorization to destroy records. The TB minute that formally authorizes the destruction of old documents is: **RG55, Vol. 20032, TB Minute 160481 (2 June 1936)**.

Kindly note that I have reviewed this file and it is a general executive direction permitting the destruction of documents no longer required by departments. The destruction of records is authorized in accordance to an outlined schedule and is subject to restrictions. Both the schedule and the restrictions are clearly outlined in the documents. Please be advised that there is no specific mention of medical records, hospital admissions or requests for treatment in the Department of Indian Affairs retention schedule.

As for the National Archives file referenced in the Atherton article, specifically the correspondence between W.C. Ronson to A.G. Doughty on 2 February 1933, I also consulted the file and, since it is open, I was able to make a copy of this particular letter. Please find it attached. The full reference for this file is as follows: **RG37, Vol. 303, PAC History, W.C. Ronson to A.G. Doughty, Feb, 2, 1933**.

As you will see, this is a one-page letter to the Dominion Archivist confirming that the Treasury Board is looking into recommendations concerning the destruction of records. W.C. Ronson states that the recommendations are to be compiled under three categories: (1) documents to be destroyed after 5 years, (2) documents to be destroyed after 10 years, (3) documents to be preserved indefinitely.

In addition to the above-mentioned records, I also consulted the following open file, specifically related to the retention of records related to Indian and North Health Services: **Department of Health RG29, Vol. 2622, File 800-4-9, Part 2, Records Retirement, 1952-1976**. I carefully reviewed this entire file and did not see anything authorizing the destruction of medical records. However, in this file are references to some TB minutes that may contain additional information about the retention of Indian and North Health Services records. I did not consult these TB minutes myself, but they may be of interest to you. The references are below.

RG55, Vol. 20640-41, TB Minute 502599, 20 September 1956

RG55, Vol. 20659, TB Minute 512949, 14 March 1957

RG55, Vol. 20668, TB Minute 512144, 9 May 1957

Please note that the TB minutes are restricted, so if you wish to consult the records or to obtain copies, you will need to submit a formal Access to Information (ATIP) request. For detailed information on the *Access to Information Act*, the *Privacy Act* and how to submit requests, please consult the How to Make an ATIP Request page: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/transparency/atippr/Pages/how-to-make-request.aspx> If you would like to review any of the other documents, which are open, please be advised that archival documents can be consulted onsite in Ottawa. In order to come onsite to consult the records, you must first reserve your spot and then you can request the material you wish to consult. Kindly note that places must be reserved a minimum of two weeks ahead of your planned visit. Information on preparing a visit can be found here: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services-public/Pages/book-your-visit-in-ottawa-step-1.aspx>

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I hope this information will prove useful to you. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Catherine Butler (Elle/Her)

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