# Public Database Indexing Guidelines

[August 2014]

# Contents

Legal Foundation of Database Indexing ..... 2
Introduction and Purpose ..... 2
Definitions ..... 2
General Recommendations ..... 3
Responsibility ..... 3
Indexing Administration ..... 4
Technical Recommendations ..... 4
Database Indexing ..... 4
Criteria for Identifying New Databases for Indexing ..... 4
Criteria for (Re-)Indexing Existing Databases ..... 5
Indexing Databases without Retention Schedules ..... 6
Database Indexing Requirements ..... 6
Indexing Information Elements ..... 6
Annotated List of Fields for Table in Sample Database ..... 10
Notes on Generating an Annotated List of Fields ..... 11
Indexing Complex Records in Databases ..... 11
Appendix A: Relevant Statutes ..... 12
G.S. §132-6.1: Electronic Data-Processing Records ..... 12
G.S. §132-1.2: Confidential Information ..... 13
G.S. §14-113.20: Identity Theft ..... 13

## Legal Foundation of Database Indexing

In 1995, the General Assembly amended the North Carolina Public Records Law (G.S. §132) to include the indexing of public databases:

> *The index shall be a public record and shall include, at minimum, the following information with respect to each database listed therein: a list of the data fields; a description of the format or record layout; information as to the frequency with which the database is updated; a list of any data fields to which public access is restricted; a description of each form in which the database can be copied or reproduced using the agency's computer facilities; and a schedule of fees for the production of copies in each available form.*

This amendment to G.S. §132 directs the Office of Archives and History (State Archives) to develop guidelines to instruct state agencies and local governments in indexing their databases. The guidelines that follow are intended to assist state and local agencies meet the mandated requirements of G.S. §132-6.1. This also means ensuring that confidential information protected under North Carolina General Statutes and personally identifying information protected under the Privacy Protection Act, G.S. §14, are not released to the public while complying with a public records request. See **Appendix A** for full text of applicable statutes.

## Introduction and Purpose

Database indexing supports the public's right of access to public records, the protection of confidential information, the privacy rights of individuals, and the security of the records themselves. Database indexing also supports efficient information retrieval by staff, particularly in response to a public records request. Essentially, database indexes are intended for use as finding aids so that both staff and the public may have better control over information stored in databases.

These guidelines provide instructions for completing database indexes and provide criteria for identifying databases for indexing.

G.S. §132-6.1 describes one set of database documentation standards, applying equally to all state agencies, county and municipal governments, regional authorities, and other custodians of public records. Since state and local agencies affected by these requirements vary significantly in size, circumstance, technical expertise, and the extent and configuration of their database hardware and software, agency personnel may require vendor or internal IT assistance to complete their database indexing. In addition, larger agencies are likely to need additional, internal standards and procedures for creating and managing their database indexing documentation. Contact a State Archives records analyst with the Government Records Section for additional guidance and individual assistance with database indexing. The advice in this document reflects professional, rather than legal, opinion; advice from legal counsel may still be advisable.

## Definitions

**Agency**: Any administrative subunit of state, county, municipal, or regional government within the State of North Carolina.

**Chief Records Officer**: In state government, the primary liaison between the state agency and the Government Records Section concerning the management of the agency's records. The Chief Records Officer acts as agency coordinator for all records activities, programs, and reports required by the Department of Cultural Resources in

administering the state records management program. The Chief Records Officer should be a senior manager or an executive with a thorough knowledge of the mission, operations, and records of the agency.

**Database**: "A structured collection of data or documents residing in a database management program or spreadsheet software." – G.S. §132-6.1(d)(1).

**Data Dictionary:** A centralized repository of information about data such as meaning, relationships to other data, origin, usage, and format. A data dictionary typically includes the names and descriptions of various tables and fields in each database, and additional details, like the type and length of each data element.

**Data Field**: A unit of information as defined within an information system (e.g., a single cell in a spreadsheet).

**Public Record**: "…all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, *electronic data-processing records*, artifacts, or other documentary material, *regardless of physical form or characteristics*, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions." – G.S. §132-1(a) [emphasis in italics added].

**Record:** A database table, file, spreadsheet worksheet, or similar discrete unit of data within the database. A database may consist of a collection of records (such as multiple tables) or may be a record only when compiled in total.

**Records Custodian:** The agency, office, or work unit that has authority and responsibility to set policy regarding the database. Usually the creator of the record, or the person to whom responsibility for the database fell after the creator left.

**User**: Any person (or automated agent acting on that person's behalf) who requests permission to review or receive copies of data that is stored in a database owned by an agency.

# General Recommendations

## Responsibility

A state agency's Chief Records Officer, a local agency's records custodian, and/or Public Information Officer or business manager should serve as the primary contact regarding database indexing guidelines and requirements. The agency's primary contact facilitates communications between the organization, the State Archives, and the database custodian(s) directly responsible for meeting the requirements of G.S. §132.

The individual responsible for administering these guidelines does not need to possess special computer skills or knowledge, but should be generally familiar with the agency's computer management structure and business practice, as well as the records created by the agency.

Increasingly, organizations use enterprise databases, into which multiple persons and/or agencies contribute or own the data used. Usually IT staff support these applications. In these cases, the data custodians should work with IT to ensure proper indexing of their data.

## Indexing Administration

Each agency should develop uniform procedures for indexing databases and for handling user requests for database index information. The records officer should keep indexing information in a central location and/or publish it online in order to facilitate its availability for public inspection.

If a user wants detailed information about a database, the database custodian will supply this information (database index) within a reasonable period and provide an estimate of the date or time when the material will be ready for user inspection. Agencies can generate most table-level documentation on an "as needed" basis.

Because the database has already been indexed and does not require additional extensive use of technology or personnel time, state agencies and local government offices should furnish information either free of charge or on a cost-per-page or per-digital-media basis (see G.S. §132-6.2(a)).

## Technical Recommendations

As a best practice, records custodians should conduct an annual inventory of agency databases and the indexes created. Records custodians should prepare a simple list of all databases, including name, custodian, one-sentence description, and indication of the presence of any restricted data. This inventory should indicate which of the agency databases need indexing, as well as the existing indexes that need to be updated (see "**Criteria for Identifying New Databases for Indexing**"). The State Archives provides a sample Database Inventory Worksheet with instructions at @@@LINK@@@. Chief Records Officers (or similar) should review the instructions and send a copy of the worksheet out to employees for them to complete. For large organizations, it may be more useful (but not required) to create a database of databases instead of completing the inventory worksheet.

When completed, the State Archives recommends maintaining the database index in a software-neutral format, such as .csv or .txt, so that it is readable by different software programs. If the index is created in a different format, there is no requirement to change the format to .csv or .txt (see G.S. §132-6.1(c)). However, .csv and .txt provide multiple benefits. The .csv and .txt formats facilitate easier conversion from electronic to paper medium in the case of an agency receiving a request for the index in paper format. It can also make migration to new technologies and software easier going forward.

# Database Indexing

## Criteria for Identifying New Databases for Indexing

The indexing of certain new databases serves no practical public interest and is counterproductive of legislative intent and general efforts to improve public access to state and local electronic records. Agencies should index new or significantly changed databases or spreadsheets only if they meet **all** the following criteria:

- The database contains records created or compiled by or on behalf of a state or local agency in North Carolina. Copies of databases owned by private or federal sources, and/or that are copyright-protected or subject to non-disclosure provisions, are not normally subject to indexing.

AND

- The database provides primary data supporting the conduct of agency business. The database serves as the master catalog, file, or inventory listing for agency entities, events, processes, or transactions.

AND

- The data records exist within the context of a database or spreadsheet program. Individual documents or data files grouped together for ease of access do not constitute a database.

AND

- The database or spreadsheet serves a public purpose and has legal, administrative, fiscal, or historical value as determined by the agency's retention and disposition schedule.

AND

- The database or spreadsheet is an "original" in that it does not consist entirely of a subset or copy of another database.

The following conditions have no bearing on whether or not a database is subject to indexing:

- Size and configuration of the computer system on which a database resides
- Number of staff members using the database
- Development of the database or the extent of its use

Indexing is not required when:

- A database exists solely to enhance personal, group, or agency productivity

OR

- The records do not materially affect the public's interests.

Such "exempt" databases include general facilities, personnel scheduling systems, or similar "convenience" systems producing records often destroyed within a short time after their creation. For example, a staff member's database "address book" normally does not require indexing.

The records of a short-term project may have long-term value. For example, a database created in conjunction with the work of a short-term study commission would not meet the definition of a "convenience system" and may well hold records critical to the commission's findings, giving it a legal and historical useful life far greater than the active life of the database itself. Similarly, an "ad hoc" database that is reconstituted at intervals of one year or less may actually represent a continuing database. A spreadsheet, compiled annually, that lists current salary ranges and calculates benefits represents such an example.

## Criteria for (Re-) Indexing Existing Databases

Re-indexing existing databases is only necessary when making significant changes to the structure of the data or the purpose of the database. Examples of such changes include:

- The addition of new records such as tables or sheets. If the database, by design, stores documents that are records, this is not a significant change. For example, if a database storing arrest records is updated with a new arrest report that is not considered a significant change. However, if that database is given a new table describing personnel assigned to that case after arrest, which is a significant change.
- Major alterations in database architecture
- The addition of significant data fields. Simply adding new data to existing data fields is not significant and does not constitute the compilation of a new database for indexing.

A special case exists regarding deleting fields from a copy of an existing database. While it is not necessary to index the resulting edited copy, the agency's internal documentation should make clear that the truncated database does not replicate the original.

The following changes are not "significant" and do not warrant indexing:

- The addition of new fields recording information that already exists in the database. For example, if the database already contains a field for personal name, formatted as "last name, first name, middle name", and that field is broken into three separate fields, "last name", "first name", and "middle name", the structure of the database remains unaltered.
- Technical changes not related to informational content (e.g., increasing the allowable length of a field, changing the number of decimal places in a calculation, enlarging a 5-digit ZIP code field to accommodate a 5+4 code, or adding a 4-character year field to augment or replace a 2-character field).

## Indexing Databases without Retention Schedules

The Department of Cultural Resources continuously revises records retention and disposition schedules. If the records retention and disposition schedule does not mention your database or information, do not delete the information. As resources permit, the State Archives will work with your agency or database custodian in performing a records analysis of the database and in developing a records retention and disposition schedule for it. This schedule will note any special conditions affecting database indexing and, if such conditions exist, any recommended indexing modifications. As a precautionary measure, agencies should index these databases (especially if they meet the criteria for indexing a database above). If a State Archives analyst determines that the database is not in need of indexing, it can be removed from the index.

# Database Indexing Requirements

G.S. §132-6.1 lists the following information elements to be included in each database index:

- A list of the data fields
- A description of the format or record layout
- Information as to the frequency with which the database is updated
- A list of any data fields to which public access is restricted
- A description of each form in which the database can be copied or reproduced using the agency's computer facilities
- A schedule of fees for the production of copies in each available form

Instructions for completion and an example of how that element should read in the index follow each information element title. The State Archives created the fictional Cherry County Animal Services database that serves as the basis for these examples. The State Archives provides a copy of this database as-is for general use at @@@NEW LINK@@@. Please be sure to read the README.txt file before working with the database.

## Indexing Information Elements

| **A.** | **Database Title and Acronym** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Explanation** | List the title of the database and its acronym. Use the complete title of the database as it is most widely known. |
| | **Example** | Cherry County Animal Services (CCAS) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **B.** | **Agency/Custodian** | |
| | **Explanation** | List the name of the agency, organization, section, branch, etc. that sets policy with regards to accessing this database. At a minimum, record the database custodian using the full, hierarchical name of the custodian. Such a name begins with the top-level agency, followed by the immediate subdivision, followed by the next subdivision, until reaching the actual work unit. Separate each name in the hierarchical chain with a forward slash ("/").<br><br>In the case of different components of a single database belonging to different custodians, the index should indicate the custodian of each component. |
| | **Example** | Cherry County/Animal Services/Nathaniel Greene |
| **C.** | **Database Abstract and Purpose** | |
| | **Explanation** | Provide a simple, non-technical narrative description of the database. Descriptions can be as long as 500 words. In the description, provide the lineage of the database, and any specific agency requirement, function, or goal that is responsible for the continued delivery of information.<br><br>The contents of this field should be short, but contain enough descriptive information for the reader to determine whether the database warrants contacting the custodian for further information. The abstract may include (but is not limited to) a discussion of the information content (including data coverage, persons, events, and topics), forms of information, time span, and geographical coverage. |
| | **Example** | The CCAS database stores information related to the business of animal shelters in Cherry County, North Carolina. It holds records related to persons that adopt or donate, animals that are received, and the care of those animals by veterinarians. The database has been active since October 2012, and contains all data since then. It is primarily stored as a Microsoft Access 2010 database. |
| **D.** | **Database Update Frequency** | |
| | **Explanation** | List one of the following: daily, bi-weekly, quarterly, continuously, weekly, monthly, yearly, semi-annually, as needed, other (specify). |
| | **Example** | As needed. |
| **E.** | **Access Restriction: Legal** | |
| | **Explanation** | If the database is wholly closed to the public or if there are certain fields closed to the public, so note, optionally citing the pertinent North Carolina General Statute(s) or federal regulation(s). Otherwise, list "None." |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Example** | Person(PerSSN) – NCGS§132-1.10; Person(DriversLicense) – NCGS§132.1.2; Veterinarian(VetSSN) – NCGS§132-1.10 |
| **F.** | **Other Factors Affecting Database Access** | |
| | **Explanation** | Describe any special physical conditions, impediments, or enhancements affecting public access to this database. Otherwise, list "None."<br><br>Examples of such conditions include security or copyright protections. A potential user might be required to show proper identification or receive a security pass; extra preparation time may be necessary to retrieve and mount data tapes; access at a small office may depend on the availability of a particular staff member who is not always at the location; terminals may not be available to the physically disabled. Conversely, hearing and visually impaired persons may have special access features available to them. |
| | **Example** | Database custodian works part time (Monday and Wednesday). |
| **G.** | **Digital Format(s)** | |
| | **Explanation** | For each digital form in which the database can be copied or reproduced using the agency's computer facilities, describe the technical format or presentation of data fields and records. (See also "H," below.) |
| | **Example** | .accdb; .xls |
| **H.** | **Database Digital Copy Media and Costs List** | |
| | **Explanation** | For each digital form listed above, note specifications and costs. |
| | **Example** | $1 per CD/DVD; Optional $1 per Jewel Case |
| **I.** | **Hardcopy Report Reproduction Costs** | |
| | **Explanation** | For each available printed database output format, list per-unit costs. The State Archives strongly recommends standardization of copy fees for all public records within each agency to the maximum extent possible. |
| | **Example** | $0.10 per hardcopy page.<br>http://www.ncdcr.gov/archives/Public/Services/DuplicationServices.aspx |
| **J.** | **Custom Services Costs** | |
| | **Explanation** | If the agency volunteers to create or compile a record or report that does not otherwise exist, list applicable fee(s). Otherwise, list "No custom services available." |
| | **Example** | Can run any basic SQL command (SELECT, FROM, WHERE) for no charge. Any reproduction is charged at the rate(s) for hardcopy and CDs specified above. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **K.** | **Records Contained within the Database** | |
| | **Explanation** | List and identify pertinent database tables, files, spreadsheet worksheets, or similar discrete parts of the database that may be records in themselves. A database may consist of a single record or a collection of related records. |
| | **Example** | Person; Animal; Veterinarian; AnimalCenter; CaresFor; Donates; VetCredentials |
| **L.** | **Annotated List of Data Fields (one per record)** | |
| | **Explanation** | For each pertinent record listed above, furnish a list of data fields and provide the following information for each:<br><br>**Field Name** — The name of the data field.<br><br>**Data Type** — The data type of the attribute as defined by the database. Common examples include "Varchar", "Int", "Date", etc. The data type can also be specific to the database software being used. For example, Microsoft Access has a "Currency" data type that is not an ANSI standard SQL datatype.<br><br>**Description** — This information defines and describes the field, stating its purpose and any pertinent information on how users derive the data. The State Archives highly recommends that this description be included since it is often critical to the public's understanding of the information contained within the database. For certain fields in legacy databases, this description may neither exist nor be determinable, in which case the description should read "Unknown". See "Notes on Generating Annotated List of Fields" below.<br><br>**Restricted Field Indicator** — The public cannot inspect the field due to one or more state statutes or federal laws or regulations. Optionally, managers can cite applicable laws. Write each citation without spaces and prefixed by either "NCGS" (N. C. General Statutes), "USC" (US Code) or "CFR" (Code of Federal Regulations), as appropriate. Separate multiple citations with semicolons.<br><br>**Special Conditions (Strings)** — Any of three special conditions that may apply to the data field. Write them as character strings enclosed in parentheses and insert after the Field Name, in the tail of the Description, or both. The special conditions are as follows:<br>1. **(Optional)**: database rules do not require an entry in this field. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | 2. **(Internal Format)** or **(Intfmt)**: the data for the field is stored in internal format; the proper display of this field requires a formatting conversion performed at run-time. (Dates, times, and currency are three typical examples).<br>3. **(Derived)**: the data displayed for the field does not reside within the field itself, but is calculated from other data fields. |
| | **Example** | See Below. See special note for **Excel spreadsheets**. |

## Annotated List of Fields for Table in Sample Database

An annotated list of fields, commonly called a data dictionary, is a centralized repository of information about data such as meaning, relationships to other data, origin, usage, and format. Data dictionaries ensure that future users can read and understand the fields contained in the database, which is especially important for databases with historical value that must be preserved indefinitely. G.S. §132-6.1(b) only requires "a list of the data fields" and "a list of any data fields to which public access is restricted"; a standard far short of a data dictionary. However, creating a data dictionary is an industry best practice. The State Archives recommends following this best practice for the purposes of the database index.

| **Table Name** | Person | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Notes** | Contains Restricted Fields | | |
| **Field Name** | **Data Type** | **Description** | **Restricted?** |
| PID | AutoNumber | Person identification number. Primary key. | No |
| PerFName | Text | First name of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerLName | Text | Last name of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerSSN | Text | Social security number of donors or adopters. | Yes(NCGS§132-1.10) |
| DriversLicense | Text | Drivers' license number of donors or adopters. Format: [State Abbreviation]DL [Number]. (Optional) | Yes(NCGS§132-1.2) |
| PerStreet | Text | Street address of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerCity | Text | City of residence of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerState | Text | Abbreviated state of residence of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerZip | Text | Full (9-digit) or 5-digit mailing zip code of donors or adopters. | No |
| PerPhone | Text | Phone number (including area code) of donors or adopters. (Optional) | No |
| PerEmail | Text | Email address of donors or adopters. (Optional) | No |

### Notes on Generating an Annotated List of Fields

Most commercial database software products can generate reports listing data fields found in files or tables. The data files used in creating these reports may be called "data dictionaries," "table definitions," "data maps," or similar names. The preformatted reports are usually available through a special menu or command, and generate a screen or printed report. Generally speaking, if the names of the data files or tables composing the database are available, a list of fields can be generated using existing database features. Generating a data dictionary can significantly help in creating the annotated list of fields above.

### Special Note for Excel Spreadsheets

Excel does not provide the ability to store field descriptions. Users will have to create these descriptions during the process of creating the index. However, Excel does have different data types assigned to a cell based on the information contained in that cell. The most common format is "General". Other formats include "Number", "Currency", "Accounting", etc. Users can find these formats by right-clicking and choosing "Format Cells…".

## Indexing Databases without Retention Schedules

The Department of Cultural Resources is continuously in the process of revising records retention and disposition schedules. If the records retention and disposition schedule does not mention your database or information, do not delete the information. As resources permit, the State Archives of NC will work with your agency or database owner in performing a records analysis of the database and in developing a records retention and disposition schedule for it. This schedule will note any special conditions affecting database indexing and, if such conditions exist, any recommended indexing modifications.

## Indexing Complex Records in Databases

Some databases store files that are records in themselves. For example, the NC Court of Appeals keeps a database of all its decisions. The text of these decisions is in PDF format and uploaded into the database. In this case, the database is a record as are the documents stored in the database. When a database exists to house records, any fields that contain information about those records should be indexed as described above. The database that keeps Court of Appeals decisions also notes the docket number, case name, date the appeal was filed, etc. as separate data fields associated with that document. The Court of Appeals should index these fields as well as the field into which the PDF document is placed.

GIS offers a similar challenge. Agencies should consider each logical GIS group (e.g., a collection of associated geographical information sets stored as a single "GIS" unit, as opposed to separate main files and layers) a database.

- The indexing information element "K" (List of Database Data Modules) for GIS databases will be subdivided as follows:
    - List each geographic area covered, including a description of each area and, optionally, a formal mathematical representation of this area.
    - For each geographic area covered above, record a list of the layers and a description of the data contained in each layer, including applicable metadata elements either conforming to or convertible to the *Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata*.
    - For each of the above entries, follow Indexing Information element "L" (Annotated List of Fields) instructions.

# Appendix A: Relevant Statutes

## G.S. §132-6.1: Electronic Data-Processing Records

(a) After June 30, 1996, no public agency shall purchase, lease, create, or otherwise acquire any electronic data-processing system for the storage, manipulation, or retrieval of public records unless it first determines that the system will not impair or impede the agency's ability to permit the public inspection and examination, and to provide electronic copies of such records. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require the retention by the public agency of obsolete hardware or software.

(b) Every public agency shall create an index of computer databases compiled or created by a public agency on the following schedule:

State agencies by July 1, 1996;

Municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more, counties with populations of 25,000 or more, as determined by the 1990 U.S. Census, and public hospitals in those counties, by July 1, 1997;

Municipalities with populations of less than 10,000, counties with populations of less than 25,000, as determined by the 1990 U.S. Census, and public hospitals in those counties, by July 1, 1998;

Political subdivisions and their agencies that are not otherwise covered by this schedule, after June 30, 1998.

The index shall be a public record and shall include, at a minimum, the following information with respect to each database listed therein: a list of the data fields; a description of the format or record layout; information as to the frequency with which the database is updated; a list of any data fields to which public access is restricted; a description of each form in which the database can be copied or reproduced using the agency's computer facilities; and a schedule of fees for the production of copies in each available form. Electronic databases compiled or created prior to the date by which the index must be created in accordance with this subsection may be indexed at the public agency's option. The form, content, language, and guidelines for the index and the databases to be indexed shall be developed by the Office of Archives and History in consultation with officials at other public agencies.

(c) Nothing in this section shall require a public agency to create a computer database that the public agency has not otherwise created or is not otherwise required to be created. Nothing in this section requires a public agency to disclose security features of its electronic data processing systems, information technology systems, telecommunications networks, or electronic security systems, including hardware or software security, passwords, or security standards, procedures, processes, configurations, software, and codes.

(d) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Computer database. - A structured collection of data or documents residing in a database management program or spreadsheet software.

(2) Computer hardware. - Any tangible machine or device utilized for the electronic storage, manipulation, or retrieval of data.

(3) Computer program. - A series of instructions or statements that permit the storage, manipulation, and retrieval of data within an electronic data-processing system, together with any associated documentation. The term does not include the original data, or any analysis, compilation, or manipulated form of the original data produced by the use of the program or software.

(4) Computer software. - Any set or combination of computer programs. The term does not include the original data, or any analysis, compilation, or manipulated form of the original data produced by the use of the program or software.

(5) Electronic data-processing system. - Computer hardware, computer software, or computer programs or any combination thereof, regardless of kind or origin.

## G.S. §132-1.2: Confidential Information

Nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to require or authorize a public agency or its subdivision to disclose any information that:

(1) Meets all of the following conditions:
   a. Constitutes a "trade secret" as defined in G.S. 66-152(3).
   b. Is the property of a private "person" as defined in G.S. 66-152(2).
   c. Is disclosed or furnished to the public agency in connection with the owner's performance of a public contract or in connection with a bid, application, proposal, industrial development project, or in compliance with laws, regulations, rules, or ordinances of the United States, the State, or political subdivisions of the State.
   d. Is designated or indicated as "confidential" or as a "trade secret" at the time of its initial disclosure to the public agency.

(2) Reveals an account number for electronic payment as defined in G.S. 147-86.20 and obtained pursuant to Articles 6A or 6B of Chapter 147 of the General Statutes or G.S. 159-32.1.

(3) Reveals a document, file number, password, or any other information maintained by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 21 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes.

(4) Reveals the electronically captured image of an individual's signature, date of birth, drivers license number, or a portion of an individual's social security number if the agency has those items because they are on a voter registration document.

(5) Reveals the seal of a licensed design professional who is licensed under Chapter 83A or Chapter 89C of the General Statutes that has been submitted for project approval to (i) a municipality under Part 5 of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes or (ii) to a county under Part 4 of Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes. Notwithstanding this exemption, a municipality or county that receives a request for a document submitted for project approval that contains the seal of a licensed design professional who is licensed under Chapter 83A or Chapter 89C of the General Statutes and that is otherwise a public record by G.S. 132-1 shall allow a copy of the document without the seal of the licensed design professional to be examined and copied, consistent with any rules adopted by the licensing board under Chapter 83A or Chapter 89C of the General Statutes regarding an unsealed document.

## G.S. §14-113.20: Identity Theft

(a) A person who knowingly obtains, possesses, or uses identifying information of another person, living or dead, with the intent to fraudulently represent that the person is the other person for the purposes of making financial or credit transactions in the other person's name, to obtain anything of value, benefit, or advantage, or for the purpose of avoiding legal consequences is guilty of a felony punishable as provided in G.S. 14-113.22(a).

(b) The term "identifying information" as used in this Article includes the following:

(1) Social security or employer taxpayer identification numbers.
(2) Drivers license, State identification card, or passport numbers.
(3) Checking account numbers.
(4) Savings account numbers.
(5) Credit card numbers.
(6) Debit card numbers.
(7) Personal Identification (PIN) Code as defined in G.S. 14-113.8(6).
(8) Electronic identification numbers, electronic mail names or addresses, Internet account numbers, or Internet identification names.
(9) Digital signatures.
(10) Any other numbers or information that can be used to access a person's financial resources.
(11) Biometric data.

(12) Fingerprints.
(13) Passwords.
(14) Parent's legal surname prior to marriage.

(c) It shall not be a violation under this Article for a person to do any of the following:
(1) Lawfully obtain credit information in the course of a bona fide consumer or commercial transaction.
(2) Lawfully exercise, in good faith, a security interest or a right of offset by a creditor or financial institution.
(3) Lawfully comply, in good faith, with any warrant, court order, levy, garnishment, attachment, or other judicial or administrative order, decree, or directive, when any party is required to do so.