

DOCUMENT RETENTION PROCEDURES

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the minimum periods of retention of records in a format that does not including having to read lengthy circulars and provide clarification on the storage, disposal and destruction of records.

3. Retention Periods

Retention periods are generally specific to the type of record. There are minimum lengths of time that each record should be kept (see below). The period of time should be calculated from the end of the calendar or accounting year following the last entry in the records whether held in paper form or electronically. For clinical records it is the time since the last entry.

2. Purchase Invoices and Supplier

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Contracts – non sealed (property) on termination	6	The Limitation Act 1980
Contracts – non sealed (other) on termination	6	The Limitation Act 1980
Contracts – sealed	Minimum of 15 years	
Day files	6 months	
Deeds of title	Permanent	
Delivery notes	1.5	
Products – liability	11	Consumer Protection Act 1987
Requisitions	1.5	
Stock control reports	1.5	
Stores records – major (stores ledgers etc)	6	
Stores records – minor (requisitions, issue notes, goods received books etc)	1.5	
Supplies records – minor (ITTs, routine papers etc)	1.5	
Tenders (unsuccessful)	6	The Limitation Act 1980
Payment cash book or record of cheque payments	6	
Purchase ledger	6	
Invoice – revenue	6	
Invoice – capital item	10	
Successful quotation for capital expenditure	Indefinitely	
Petty cash records	6	
Payroll and pensions	6	
Purchase orders excluding medical devices and medical equipment	6	
Purchase orders for medical devices and equipment	11	

3. Income/Monies Received

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Bank paying in counterfoils	6	
Bank statements	6	
Receipts cash books	10	
Sales ledger	10	
Remittance advices	6	
Bank reconciliations	6	
Deeds of covenant	12	
Correspondence re donations	3	
Gift aid signatures	Indefinitely	

4. Other Documents

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Employer's Liability Certificates	40	
Investment certificates	Indefinitely	
Investment ledger	Indefinitely	
Fixed assets register	Indefinitely	
Agreements With suppliers, leases, rental and HP, Licensing, Indemnities and guarantees, loan agreements, other contracts and agreements	Under seal – 12 years after expiry Other – 6 years after expiry	
Lottery returns and associated information	3	
Legacies	6 years after the estate has been wound up	
Annual Accounts	30	
Documents relating to money or valuables deposited for safe keeping	3	

5. Facilities

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Maintenance of premises	3	
Maintenance of equipment	3	
Medical gas, safety, storage and transport	6	
Permits	5	
Water safety	5	
Water Risk Assessment/Management Plan	2	
Electrical testing	3	
Fire safety	3	
Waste Transfer notes	2	
Temporary Records: Fridge Freezer	6 months	

6. Staff

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Job advertisements	1	
Application forms for unsuccessful candidates	12 months	Recommend retention period (CIPD, 2007)
Assessments under H&S Regulations	Permanently	Recommend retention period (CIPD, 2007)
Senior Executive Records	Permanently	For historical purposes. By Senior means all members of HMT. Recommend retention period (CIPD, 2007)
CVs for non-executive directors (successful)	8	Following term of office
CVs for non-executive directors (unsuccessful applicants)	2	2 years after the recruitment process
HR files and training records (including disciplinary records and WTR)	6 for non-clinical staff 30 for clinical staff	After subject leaves service or until his/her 70 th birthday – whichever is later. Only a summary needs to be kept to age 70
HR Files relating to attendance, annual leave, timesheets etc.	2	Records also stored within Payroll
Redundancy details, calculations of payments, refunds, notification to the secretary of state	6	From the date of redundancy. Recommend retention period (CIPD, 2007)
Leavers dossiers (provided summary retained)	6 for non-clinical staff, 30 for clinical staff	
Sickness Records	3 years	From the end of each tax year for Statutory Sick Pay purposes
Organisation charts	Permanently	
Email accounts and work documents	3 months after the person leaves	Person encouraged to tidy documents and pass on any relevant information before leaving and line manager given 3 months maximum access to the information after they leave to extract any relevant documents.

7. Volunteers

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Volunteer files	2	

8. Administration

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Litigation Dossiers (complaints including accident reports)	10	Where legal action has been commenced, keep as advised by legal representatives
Meeting papers – committees, sub-committees (master copies)	Permanent	Including works councils and consultations on H&S
Minutes of Council or major committees and sub-committees – signed	Permanent	
Minutes – reference copies	1	
Press cuttings	1	
Record of custody and transfer of keys	1.5	
Software licences	Lifetime	
Accident reports	3	After settlement
Operational policies and procedures – current and previous version	3	
Adverse Events Records	3	
Risk Assessments – current and previous one (retain latest one until new one replaces it)	3	
Duty Rosters – clinical and catering	4	

9. Clinical Records

Record Type	Retention Period (Years)	Notes
Patient who was under the age of 17 at the date on which the treatment to which the records refer was concluded.	Until patient's 25 th birthday	
Patient who was aged 17 at the date on which the treatment to which the records refer was concluded.	Until patient's 26 th birthday	
Patient who died before attaining the age of 18.	8 years from the date of patient's death	
Patient who was treated for mental disorder during the period to which the records refer	20 years from the date of the last entry in the record	
Patient who was treated for mental disorder during the period to which the records refer and who died whilst receiving that treatment	8 years from the date of patient's death	
Patient who records relate to treatment by a general practitioner	10 years from the date of the last entry,	
Patient who has received an organ transplant	11 years from the date of the patient's death or discharge whichever is the earlier.	
All other cases	8 years from the date of the last entry on record.	
Documentation relating to the use of physical restraints, where held separately to the clinical record	3	
Completed Controlled Drugs Record Books	2 years from the date of the last entry	
Drug Stock Order Books	2 years from the date of the last entry	
Death Certificate Stubs	5	

10. STORAGE OF RECORDS

- 10.1 Records should be stored in a secure location when not being used, e.g. lockable filing cabinets, cupboards, rooms (locked and/or alarmed outside of normal working hours).
- 10.2 The accommodation should comply with health and safety requirements and have proper environmental controls and adequate protection against fire, flood and theft.

11. DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

- 11.1 Disposal is wider than just destruction (see below), it can also refer to the transfer of records from one media to another, e.g. paper records to CD Rom, or the transfer of records from one organisation to another, e.g. authorised archive office.
- 11.2 When using another organisation to archive records, it is essential an agreement/contract is in place detailing how the records will be archived and who will be allowed access to them.
- 11.3 When an archived record is accessed, a note must be made of:
- The date access occurred;
 - The details of the person gaining access; and
 - The reason access was required.
- 11.4 When a record is removed from the archive, a note must be made of:
- The taker of the record;
 - The taker's signature or a receipt from them;
 - The expected date of return; and
 - The date the record is returned.

12. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

- 12.1 The destruction of records is an irreversible act. Many records contain sensitive and/or confidential information and their destruction must be undertaken in secure locations and proof of secure destruction may be required. Destruction of all records, regardless of the media, should be conducted in a secure manner to ensure there are safeguards against accidental loss or disclosure.
- 12.2 The normal destruction methods used are:
- Shredding; and
 - Pulping.
- Pulping is for confidential documents only, i.e. Financial documentation, Medical Records, HR documentation and Purchasing documentation/contracts.
- 12.3 For the secure destruction of computer media this is normally undertaken by IT experts using software called Webroot Washer which formats media and hard discs to military standard DOD 5220.22-M and is very secure.
- 12.4 The destruction of records is normally undertaken on site or by an approved contractor. There should be a formal contract between the contractor/supplier and St Oswald's Hospice Ltd and St Oswald's Hospice Promotions Ltd to detail the security and confidentiality requirements associated with transportation and destruction of confidential information. Proof of destruction should be provided in the form of a certificate. A register of destruction should be kept by St Oswald's Hospice Ltd and St Oswald's Hospice Promotions Ltd as an audit trail.