

# SOP: Criteria and Authorization Process for Record Disposal

This SOP defines the **criteria and authorization process for record disposal**, detailing the conditions under which records are eligible for disposal, the necessary approvals required before destruction, and the methods for secure and compliant disposal. It ensures proper handling of records to maintain confidentiality, legal compliance, and organizational data management policies.

## 1. Purpose

To outline the standardized procedure for disposing of records, ensuring adherence to legal, regulatory, and organizational requirements.

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all physical and electronic records managed by [Organization Name].

## 3. Definitions

- **Records:** Documents or data created, received, and maintained as evidence or information of the organization's activities.
- **Disposal:** Process of permanently destroying records to prevent recovery or reconstruction.
- **Retention Period:** The length of time a record must be kept before eligible for disposal, as defined by regulatory or internal policy requirements.

## 4. Criteria for Record Disposal

1. Records must have reached the end of their designated **retention period**.
2. No legal, contractual, audit, or investigative holds apply to the records.
3. Records have been reviewed and verified as non-essential for ongoing business operations.
4. Disposal does not contravene any applicable regulatory or compliance requirements.

## 5. Authorization Process

1. **Identification:** Custodian identifies records eligible for disposal according to the retention schedule.
2. **Review:** Records are reviewed to confirm eligibility and check for any legal or audit holds.
3. **Documentation:** Prepare the "Record Disposal Request Form" listing all records proposed for disposal.
4. **Approval:**
  - Submit the form to the Department Manager for preliminary review and sign-off.
  - Forward the approved form to the Records Management Officer.
  - Final authorization from Compliance/Legal Department (if required).
5. **Retention of Approval Records:** Maintain documentation of approvals and disposal actions for audit purposes.

## 6. Record Disposal Methods

Record Format	Disposal Method
Physical (paper/hard copy)	Shredding or incineration
Electronic	Permanent deletion from all storage devices; degaussing or physical destruction of media as appropriate
Other media (e.g. CDs, tapes)	Physical destruction

## 7. Compliance and Confidentiality

- All disposal actions must maintain the confidentiality and security of sensitive information.
- Disposal must be conducted in compliance with relevant legislation (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA), regulatory requirements, and internal policies.

## 8. Responsibilities

- **Custodians:** Identify eligible records and complete disposal request forms.
- **Department Managers:** Review and provide initial authorization.
- **Records Management Officer:** Final review and coordination of disposal actions.
- **Compliance/Legal:** Provide guidance and final authorization (if required).

## 9. Document Control

- This SOP will be reviewed annually or upon major regulatory or policy change.
- Record of revisions shall be maintained in the document control log.