

SOP: Documentation and Record-Keeping Standards

This SOP defines the **documentation and record-keeping standards** essential for maintaining accurate, consistent, and secure records across all organizational processes. It covers the proper methods for creating, storing, accessing, and disposing of records to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, facilitate efficient information retrieval, support auditing procedures, and safeguard data integrity. Adhering to these standards promotes transparency, accountability, and operational effectiveness within the organization.

1. Purpose

To establish standards for documentation and record-keeping that ensure consistency, reliability, and legal compliance across the organization.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees and contractors involved in the creation, maintenance, access, and disposal of organizational records, regardless of medium (paper, digital, etc.).

3. Responsibilities

- **Employees & Contractors:** Follow all documentation and record-keeping practices outlined herein.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure compliance among team members; provide necessary training and resources.
- **Records Officer/Administrator:** Oversee record management activities, monitor compliance, and maintain secure storage systems.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Record	Any document or file created, received, and maintained as evidence of business activities or decisions.
Documentation	Written or electronic material providing official information or evidence or serving as a record.
Retention Period	The minimum duration a record must be retained as dictated by legal, regulatory, or organizational requirements.

5. Procedure

1. **Creation**
 - Ensure all records are clear, accurate, dated, and, where appropriate, signed or electronically authenticated.
 - Use approved templates and formats where available.
2. **Storage**
 - Store records in secure physical or digital environments with suitable access controls.
 - Classify and index records for easy retrieval.
3. **Access and Retrieval**
 - Grant access to records only to authorized personnel.
 - Track access and changes to sensitive or regulated records.
4. **Retention**
 - Retain records for the duration specified in the relevant retention schedule or as dictated by law.
 - Review and update retention schedules regularly.
5. **Disposal**
 - Dispose of records securely at the end of their retention period using appropriate methods (shredding, permanent deletion, certified destruction, etc.).
 - Document disposal actions as required.

6. Compliance and Auditing

- Conduct periodic audits of record-keeping practices to ensure compliance with this SOP and relevant regulations.
- Report and address any non-conformances or breaches without delay.

7. References

- Relevant local, state, and federal record-keeping laws and regulations
- Organizational Information Security Policy
- Records Retention Schedule

8. Revision History

Date	Version	Description	Author
2024-06-30	1.0	Initial SOP template created	[Author Name]