SOP: Documentation, Records, and Version Control

Purpose

This SOP describes the processes for **documentation, records, and version control** to ensure accurate, consistent, and secure management of all organizational documents. It covers guidelines for document creation, approval, distribution, storage, retrieval, and regular review. The procedure establishes version control protocols to track revisions, prevent unauthorized changes, and maintain historical records. Proper documentation and record keeping support compliance, accountability, and effective communication across departments.

Scope

This SOP applies to all employees involved in the creation, management, and maintenance of organizational documents and records.

Responsibilities

- **Document Owners:** Initiate and maintain documents, ensure accuracy and compliance.
- **Approvers:** Review and approve documents before release.
- **Records Manager:** Oversee storage, accessibility, and security of records.
- **All Staff:** Adhere to SOP procedures for document handling and management.

Procedure

1. Document Creation

- Use approved templates when creating new documents.
- Assign a unique document identification code and descriptive title.

2. Review and Approval

- Submit draft documents to the designated approver(s) for review.
- Approval must be documented (e.g., email confirmation, signed approval page).

3. Version Control

- Each revision must increment the version number (e.g., 1.0, 1.1, 2.0).
- Maintain a **Document Revision History** table for each controlled document:

Version	Date	Description of Change	Author	Approver
1.0	YYYY-MM-DD	Initial release	Author Name	Approver Name

4. Distribution

- Store approved documents in secure, access-controlled locations (e.g., document management system or designated shared drives).
- Communicate availability of newly approved or updated documents to affected personnel.

5. Storage and Retention

- Store documents and records in compliance with legal, regulatory, and organizational policies.
- Periodically archive outdated documents but retain according to retention schedules.

6. Retrieval and Access

- Provide access to authorized personnel only.
- Maintain a searchable index for easy retrieval.

7. Regular Review and Update

- Review documents at defined intervals (e.g., annually) or as needed.
- Update obsolete or inaccurate information promptly.

Definitions

- **Document Control:** Systematic management of documents to ensure accuracy and security.
- **Record:** Any document or data generated as evidence of activity or process.
- **Version Control:** Process for tracking updates, changes, and revisions to documents.

References

- Organizational policies and procedures
- Applicable industry standards and regulatory requirements

Appendix

Attach sample templates, forms, and checklists as required.