

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Document Disposal and Shredding Procedures

This SOP details **document disposal and shredding procedures** to ensure secure and compliant destruction of sensitive information. It covers the identification of documents for disposal, appropriate shredding methods, handling of shredded materials, record-keeping requirements, and guidelines to prevent unauthorized access. The objective is to protect confidential data, comply with legal regulations, and maintain organizational information security through effective document destruction practices.

1. Purpose

To define standardized procedures for the secure disposal and shredding of confidential and sensitive documents, ensuring compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees, contractors, and temporary staff who handle, process, or dispose of physical documents containing sensitive or confidential information within the organization.

3. Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Identify documents for disposal and follow proper procedures for shredding and disposal.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Oversee compliance, conduct periodic training and audits.
- **Records Management Team:** Update retention schedules, maintain disposal logs, and coordinate secure shredding.

4. Procedure

4.1 Identification of Documents for Disposal

1. Consult the **records retention schedule** to determine eligibility for disposal.
2. Documents containing personal, financial, proprietary, or sensitive information must **always** be shredded after retention period expires.
3. Obtain managerial approval for disposing of documents not clearly listed in the schedule.

4.2 Document Preparation

1. Remove all non-paper materials (e.g., binders, clips, disks) prior to shredding unless the shredder supports these materials.
2. Sort documents into batches based on sensitivity level (e.g., confidential, restricted).

4.3 Shredding Methods

Document Type	Shredding Method	Security Level
General Internal Documents	Strip-cut shredder	Basic
Confidential / Sensitive Documents	Cross-cut or micro-cut shredder	High
Regulated Data (PII, PHI, Financial)	Micro-cut shredder or third-party certified destruction service	Maximum

4.4 Handling Shredded Materials

1. Collect shredded paper in secure, labelled receptacles.
2. Arrange for timely removal/recycling by authorized personnel or certified disposal service providers.
3. Do not leave shredded materials unattended in public or non-secured areas.

4.5 Documentation and Record-Keeping

1. Maintain a destruction log including:
 - Date of destruction

- Description/category of documents destroyed
 - Volume/quantity destroyed
 - Employee responsible
 - Method used (in-house/third-party)
2. For third-party destruction, retain certificates of destruction for audit purposes.

4.6 Security and Compliance

1. Ensure shredders and storage bins are in secured locations with access controls.
2. Do not dispose of unshredded sensitive documents in regular trash or recycling bins.
3. Report any observed or suspected breaches of procedure to Information Security or Management immediately.

5. Training

All relevant staff must be trained on these procedures annually or upon hire, and acknowledge understanding of secure document disposal requirements.

6. Review & Revision

This SOP shall be reviewed annually or as required by policy changes, legal, or regulatory requirements. Revisions shall be documented and communicated to all stakeholders.

7. Related Documents

- Records Retention Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Certificate of Destruction Template

8. Approvals

Name	Title	Date	Signature