

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Document Version Control and File Sharing Protocols

This SOP details **document version control and file sharing protocols**, including standardized methods for tracking document revisions, maintaining version histories, ensuring document integrity, and adopting best practices for secure and efficient file sharing among team members. The objective is to promote consistency, prevent data loss, and facilitate seamless collaboration across departments by implementing clear guidelines for document management and access control.

1. Purpose

To define standardized procedures for version control and sharing of documents to ensure accuracy, integrity, security, and collaboration across the organization.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees who create, modify, store, or share digital documents within the organization.

3. Definitions

- **Version Control:** The process of managing changes to documents by assigning version numbers and maintaining revision histories.
- **File Sharing:** The process of making digital documents accessible to authorized personnel or departments.
- **Access Control:** Measures used to ensure only authorized users can access, edit, or share documents.

4. Responsibilities

- **Document Authors:** Ensure accurate versioning, updating history logs, and following naming conventions.
- **Team Leads/Managers:** Monitor compliance with version control and file sharing protocols.
- **IT Department:** Provide and manage secure collaborative platforms and access control systems.

5. Procedure

1. Document Version Control

- Use the following file naming convention: [Project/Dept]_[DocType]_[Description]_v[Major].[Minor]_[YYYYMMDD].[ext] (e.g., HR_Policies_LeavePolicy_v1.0_20240621.docx).
- Update version numbers as follows:
 - **Major:** Increment for significant changes or revisions.
 - **Minor:** Increment for minor edits or corrections.
- Maintain a changelog or revision history at the beginning or end of each document, detailing:
 - Date of change
 - Editor(s)
 - Summary of changes
- Retain at least the last 3 major versions for reference and audit.

2. Version Control Table (Sample Format)

Version	Date	Author	Description of Changes
1.0	2024-06-21	J. Smith	Initial draft
1.1	2024-06-22	K. Patel	Minor grammar corrections

3. File Storage Protocols

- Store official documents in shared, cloud-based repositories (e.g., SharePoint, Google Drive) with proper folder hierarchies.
- Restrict editing rights to designated contributors; assign read-only rights as necessary.
- Avoid personal desktop/laptop storage for official documents.

4. File Sharing Protocols

- Share documents via secure, organization-approved platforms only.
- Set link permissions to 'view' by default; grant 'edit' permissions only as needed.
- When sharing externally, require password protection and time-limited access if platform supports it.

5. Document Integrity and Backup

- Enable automatic backup and version history features wherever possible.
- Do not overwrite existing versions-always save as a new version with an updated number and date.

6. Compliance and Auditing

- Quarterly audits to ensure adherence to versioning and sharing protocols.
- Deviations are reported to the department manager for corrective action.

7. References

- Company IT Security Policy
- Data Retention Guidelines
- Collaboration Platform User Manuals

8. Revision History

Version	Date	Editor	Summary of Changes
1.0	2024-06-21	Admin	Initial release