

SOP: Archiving Schedule and Retention Timelines

This SOP defines the **archiving schedule and retention timelines** for organizational records, detailing procedures for systematic data storage, preservation period assignments, periodic review cycles, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and secure disposal methods. The purpose is to ensure effective management of records by maintaining accessibility, minimizing storage costs, and mitigating risks associated with data retention and deletion.

1. Scope

This SOP applies to all physical and electronic records created, received, or maintained by the organization and its employees.

2. Responsibilities

- **Records Manager:** Oversees implementation and ensures compliance.
- **Department Heads:** Ensure adherence within their teams.
- **Employees:** Follow archiving and disposal procedures as instructed.

3. Archiving Schedule and Retention Timelines

Record Type	Storage Location	Retention Period	Review Cycle	Disposal Method
Financial Records	Secure Drive / Locked Filing Cabinet	7 Years	Annual	Shredding (paper), Secure Erase (digital)
Employee Records	HRMS / Restricted Folder	6 Years post termination	Semi-Annual	Shredding (paper), Secure Delete (digital)
Client Contracts	Contract Repository	7 Years post expiry	Annual	Shredding (paper), Secure Erase (digital)
Email Correspondence	Email Archive Server	3 Years	Annual	Permanent Deletion
Project Documents	Project Management Tool	5 Years post completion	Annual	Secure Erase

4. Procedures

4.1. Data Storage

- Records shall be stored in designated, secure, and access-controlled locations.
- Electronic data must be backed up in accordance with IT policies.

4.2. Assignment of Retention Periods

- Retention periods shall be assigned based on legal, regulatory, and business requirements.
- Updates to retention schedules must be approved by the Records Manager.

4.3. Periodic Review

- Scheduled reviews must be conducted to identify records eligible for disposal.
- Document the review findings and actions taken.

4.4. Secure Disposal

- Dispose of expired records using approved secure destruction methods: shredding for paper, secure erase tools for digital files.
- Complete and file a "Records Destruction Log" for audit purposes.

5. Compliance & Auditing

- Periodic audits shall be performed to ensure adherence to the SOP.
- Non-compliance shall be reported and corrective actions enforced.

6. Related Documents

- Records Management Policy
- IT Security SOP
- Legal & Regulatory Compliance Manual
- Records Destruction Log Template

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	2024-06-15	Initial SOP Release