# SOP Template: Case File Creation and Documentation Standards

This SOP defines **case file creation and documentation standards**, including guidelines for organizing case files, standardizing documentation formats, ensuring accuracy and completeness of records, maintaining confidentiality and security protocols, procedures for file storage and retrieval, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The goal is to establish consistent practices for managing case files efficiently while preserving the integrity and accessibility of critical information.

## 1. Purpose

To establish consistent practices for creating, organizing, documenting, storing, and retrieving case files while ensuring accuracy, completeness, security, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff, contractors, and stakeholders involved in the management of case files within [Organization/Department Name].

## 3. Responsibilities

- **Case Managers:** Ensure accurate and complete documentation.
- **Administrative Staff:** File organization, storage, and retrieval.
- **Supervisors:** Oversee compliance with documentation standards.
- **IT/Records Management:** Maintain electronic file integrity and security.

## 4. Procedures

### 4.1 Case File Creation

1. Assign a unique case file number using the standardized numbering system.
2. Record essential case information on the case cover sheet (see format below).
3. Initiate the case file in approved physical or electronic record systems.

### 4.2 File Organization

- Use standardized cover sheets/titles for all files.
- Arrange documents in chronological order within each section/type.
- Include tabs or digital folders for key sections (e.g., Intake, Correspondence, Reports, Legal Documents, Notes).
- Update the case file index/log as new documents are added.

### 4.3 Documentation Standards

- Use the approved template for all major forms and documents (see sample below).
- Date and sign/initial all entries; include time where appropriate.
- Ensure records are factual, objective, and free from personal opinions or unapproved abbreviations.
- Proofread entries for accuracy and completeness.

### 4.4 Confidentiality and Security

- Protect files using physical locks and/or electronic access controls.
- Do not leave files unattended in public or unsecured areas.
- Share case information only with authorized individuals as per privacy policies and applicable laws.
- Report suspected breaches to the designated authority immediately.

### 4.5 Storage and Retrieval

1. File completed documents promptly in the correct location (physical or electronic).
2. Store active cases in accessible, secure locations; archive closed/inactive cases as per retention schedule.
3. Log file movements or access in the records management system.

4. Retrieve files only for authorized activities and return promptly after use.

**4.6 Compliance**

- Observe all relevant legal, regulatory, and organizational recordkeeping requirements.
- Participate in regular audits and compliance reviews.
- Complete mandatory training on documentation and confidentiality protocols.

# 5. Standard Case File Cover Sheet Format (Sample)

| Field | Description |
|---|---|
| Case Number | Unique, sequential identifier for the case |
| Case Name/Subject | Short description/title |
| Date Opened | MM/DD/YYYY |
| Case Manager | Name and contact information |
| Status | Open/Closed/Pending/etc. |

# 6. Record Retention and Disposal

- Retain case files for the minimum period required by law or policy.
- Securely destroy/dispose of files upon expiration of the retention period, following documented procedures.

# 7. Revision History

| Date | Version | Description | Author |
|---|---|---|---|
| YYYY-MM-DD | 1.0 | Initial SOP creation | [Name/Department] |