

SOP: Documentation and Record-Keeping Standards

This SOP details **documentation and record-keeping standards** to ensure accurate, consistent, and secure management of all organizational records. It covers record creation, classification, retention, storage, retrieval, and disposal procedures, emphasizing compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The objective is to maintain data integrity, facilitate efficient access, support operational transparency, and enable effective auditing and reporting across all departments.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for documenting, retaining, accessing, and disposing of records in compliance with internal policies and external regulations.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees, contractors, and departments responsible for producing, handling, or managing organizational records in any format (paper, electronic, etc.).

3. Responsibilities

- **Record Owners:** Ensure completeness, accuracy, and timely creation of records.
- **Department Heads:** Monitor staff compliance with record-keeping standards.
- **IT/Admin:** Oversee secure storage (physical and electronic) and access controls.
- **All Staff:** Follow this SOP for all aspects of record handling.

4. Procedures

4.1 Record Creation & Entry

- All records must be created promptly and accurately at the point of activity or transaction.
- Records must include clear titles, dates, responsible personnel, and relevant details.
- Templates/forms should be used where available for consistency.

4.2 Record Classification

- Records must be classified according to type (e.g., financial, HR, operational).
- Classification should follow the approved organizational records taxonomy.

4.3 Record Retention

- Refer to the organization's **Record Retention Schedule** for details on minimum retention periods.
- Records must not be destroyed before their retention period elapses.

4.4 Storage and Security

- Physical records must be stored in secure, access-controlled locations.
- Electronic records must be backed up regularly and protected by passwords/access controls.
- Sensitive or confidential records require additional safeguards.

4.5 Record Retrieval & Access

- Records must be indexed and catalogued for rapid retrieval.
- Access is restricted to authorized personnel only, tracked via logs where possible.

4.6 Record Disposal

- When retention expires, records are to be reviewed and properly destroyed (shredded or securely deleted) according to regulation.
- Disposal must be documented, including method and authorized personnel.

5. Compliance & Auditing

- Departments must periodically review records and processes for compliance.
- Audits will be conducted as scheduled; findings must be addressed promptly.

6. Related Documents

- Record Retention Schedule
- Information Security Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Department-specific SOPs

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author/Approver
1.0	2024-06-10	Initial SOP Release	Compliance Officer