

SOP Template: Documentation and Archiving of Internal Correspondence

This SOP defines the procedures for **documentation and archiving of internal correspondence**, including the proper recording, categorization, storage, retrieval, and preservation of all internal communications. The goal is to ensure systematic organization, easy access, confidentiality, and compliance with regulatory requirements for all internal documents and correspondences within the organization.

1. Purpose

To establish a consistent process for the documentation, categorization, storage, retrieval, and preservation of all internal correspondence in alignment with organizational and regulatory requirements.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees and departments within the organization involved with creating, handling, or storing internal correspondence, regardless of format (physical or electronic).

3. Definitions

- **Correspondence:** Any written or electronic communication exchanged between employees or departments within the organization, including emails, memos, letters, meeting notes, and reports.
- **Archiving:** The long-term storage and preservation of records for potential future reference or regulatory compliance.

4. Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Ensure proper documentation and submission of internal correspondence for archiving.
- **Document Control Personnel:** Oversee categorization, storage, retrieval, and destruction of archived correspondence according to retention schedules.
- **Department Heads:** Ensure compliance within their departments.

5. Procedure

1. **Documentation:**
 - Record all internal correspondence promptly using approved formats (e.g., company email, official memo templates).
 - Include date, subject, sender, recipient, and brief description or summary.
2. **Categorization:**
 - Assign appropriate categories and tags based on content, department, confidentiality, and importance.
 - Use unique identifiers or reference numbers where applicable.
3. **Storage:**
 - Store electronic correspondence in the designated document management system or secure shared drives with proper access controls.
 - Store physical correspondence in locked file cabinets within secure and authorized workspaces.
4. **Retrieval:**
 - Retrieve archived correspondence using search tools, reference numbers, or manual logs as required.
 - Maintain a log of all retrievals for audit purposes.
5. **Preservation and Retention:**
 - Preserve correspondence according to regulatory and company retention schedules.
 - Ensure confidentiality and protection from unauthorized access, damage, or loss.
6. **Destruction:**
 - Destroy correspondence securely (e.g., shredding physical documents, permanent deletion of digital files) after the retention period has elapsed, following approval from document control personnel.

6. Confidentiality and Security

- Restrict access to confidential correspondence to authorized personnel only.
- Apply encryption and password protection for electronic files containing sensitive information.

- Regularly back up archived correspondence and test backup restoration procedures.

7. Records and Documentation

- Maintain logs of all documented, archived, retrieved, and destroyed correspondence.
- Keep records of staff training related to documentation and archiving procedures.

8. Compliance and Review

- Review this SOP at least annually or upon significant changes in processes or regulations.
- Document and address non-compliance incidents promptly.

9. References

- Company Record Retention Policy
- Applicable Industry and Regulatory Requirements

10. Revision History

Revision Date	Version	Description of Changes	Approved By
2024-06-01	1.0	Initial SOP template issued	Document Control Manager