SOP Template: Minutes Archiving and Retrieval Protocol

This SOP details the **minutes archiving and retrieval protocol**, covering the systematic process for documenting, organizing, storing, and retrieving meeting minutes. It ensures accurate record-keeping, secure storage both digitally and physically, and easy access to past minutes for reference, audit, and compliance purposes. The protocol emphasizes proper indexing, version control, confidentiality, and timely archiving to maintain an efficient and reliable documentation system.

1. Purpose

To establish a standardized protocol for archiving and retrieving meeting minutes, ensuring accuracy, security, and accessibility for compliance and reference purposes.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees responsible for recording, archiving, and retrieving meeting minutes within the organization.

3. Responsibilities

- **Minute Taker:** Accurately records meeting proceedings and prepares the minutes draft.
- **Meeting Chair/Approver:** Reviews and approves meeting minutes.
- **Records Officer/Archivist:** Manages the storage, indexing, retrieval, and secure handling of minutes.

4. Procedure

4.1 Documentation of Minutes

- Use the standardized minutes template.
- Include meeting details: date, time, location, attendees, agenda items, discussion points, actions, and decisions.
- Assign a unique reference code (meeting date + department/committee + sequence number).
- Submit draft to the meeting chair for review and approval within two (2) working days.

4.2 Organization and Indexing

- Organize minutes by year, committee/department, and meeting sequence.
- Maintain an electronic index (spreadsheet or database) with references, titles, and storage locations.
- Apply version control for updates. Mark superseded versions as "obsolete" and restrict access.

4.3 Storage

Format	Details
Digital	- Store in a secure, backed-up digital repository (e.g., shared drive, DMS). - Restrict access with user permissions based on role. - Use file naming conventions: *YYYY-MM-DD_Dept_MeetingType_SeqNo_Version*
Physical	- File approved printed minutes in locked cabinets within designated archive rooms. - Label folders clearly with reference codes and date ranges. - Maintain a physical register/logbook of all minutes stored.

4.4 Retrieval

- Requests for minutes retrieval must be submitted in writing (email or approved request form) to the Records Officer.
- The Records Officer locates the requested minutes using the index and provides access within two (2) working days.
- Track all retrievals in a log (requestor, purpose, date of retrieval and return if physical copy).
- Confidential or restricted minutes require additional authorization before release.

4.5 Retention and Disposal

- Retain minutes as per the organization's retention policy/legal requirements.
- Upon expiration, minutes must be securely destroyed (shredding for physical, permanent deletion for digital), with records kept of disposal actions.

5. Confidentiality & Security

- All staff must adhere to data protection, privacy, and confidentiality agreements.
- Restricted minutes (e.g., closed sessions) must be labeled and access limited to authorized personnel only.
- Report any breaches or unauthorized access immediately to management.

6. Review & Updates

This SOP shall be reviewed annually or following significant process changes, audit findings, or regulatory updates.

7. References

- Organizational Records Management Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Regulations
- Internal Audit Guidelines