

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Obsolete Document Removal and Archival Procedures

1. Purpose

This SOP defines **obsolete document removal and archival procedures**, detailing the systematic process for identifying, removing, and securely archiving outdated documents to ensure accurate record keeping and compliance with regulatory requirements. It covers document review schedules, criteria for obsolescence, methodical removal steps, secure archiving practices, and proper documentation to maintain organizational efficiency and data integrity.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all physical and electronic documents maintained by [Organization/Department], including but not limited to policies, procedures, records, reports, manuals, and forms.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Obsolete Document	Any document no longer current, in use, or required for reference or regulatory compliance.
Archival	The process of securely storing documents not required for daily operations but preserved for legal, historical, or compliance reasons.
Document Owner	The individual or team responsible for the maintenance and oversight of a document.

4. Responsibilities

- **Document Owners:** Identify and flag obsolete documents; initiate removal and archiving procedures.
- **Records Management Team:** Oversee the removal and archival of documents and maintain logs.
- **Quality/Compliance Officer:** Audit adherence to procedures and regulatory requirements.

5. Procedure

- Document Review Schedule**
 - Conduct scheduled reviews of all documents at least annually or as defined by policy.
 - Document Owners to review documents for currency, relevance, and regulatory updates.
- Criteria for Document Obsolescence**
 - Superseded by updated versions.
 - No longer applicable to current processes, technologies, or regulations.
 - Expired retention periods as per organizational or industry standards.
- Identification and Approval**
 - Document Owners flag obsolete items and notify the Records Management Team.
 - Obsolescence is confirmed and approved by Supervisor or Compliance Officer.
- Removal of Obsolete Documents**
 - Electronic: Move files to designated “Obsolete” folder; restrict access to authorized personnel.
 - Physical: Remove from active files; securely store for interim period awaiting archival or secure destruction.
- Secure Archiving**
 - Transfer obsolete documents to secure archive (physical records room or digital archive system).

- Label documents clearly with “Obsolete”, archive date, owner, and retention period.

6. Documentation and Tracking

- Update document control logs/spreadsheets to reflect removal and archiving status.
- Record reason for obsolescence, date of action, and archive location.
- Maintain audit trail for compliance verification.

7. Destruction (If Applicable)

- After the archive retention period, authorize secure destruction in compliance with destruction policy.
- Log destruction date, method, and personnel involved.

6. Records

- Obsolete Document Register
- Archival Log
- Destruction Certificates (if applicable)

7. References

- [Relevant Regulatory Guidelines or Standards]
- [Internal Document Control Policy]

8. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author/Approver
1.0	[Enter Date]	Initial release	[Name]