



Office of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

RECORD RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (OPFCC) will ensure that information is not kept for longer than is necessary, and will retain the minimum amount of information that it requires to carry out its statutory functions.

INTRODUCTION

Retention periods are given in whole years and are from the end of the financial year to which the records relate. Records should be disposed of by arranging for collection of confidential waste for destruction or shredding, including all copies on whatever format.

Aside from the standard procedure, set out below, whenever there is a possibility of litigation, a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act 2018, any records that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has ended, the Subject Access Request has been actioned or the appeal processes under the Freedom of Information Act have been exhausted. In these circumstances the Monitoring Officer (the Chief Executive) should be consulted.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy and standards will help the OPFCC to:-

- Ensure the retention and availability of the minimum amount of relevant information that is necessary for the OPFCC to operate.
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the other relevant legislation.
- Save employees' time and effort when retrieving information by reducing the amount of information that may be held unnecessarily.

- Minimise the administrative overhead to the OPFCC and save money in terms of storage costs where hard copy information is taking up office space and electronic documents are using excessive storage capacity on computer equipment such as network servers.
- Ensure archival records that are of historical value are appropriately retained for the benefit of future generations.

STANDARD PROCEDURE

This procedure applies to records which do not need to be retained. Information which is duplicated, unimportant or of short term use can be destroyed under this standard procedure, including:

- compliment slips
- catalogues and trade journals
- telephone message slips
- non-acceptance of invitations
- messages or notes not related to OPCC business
- requests for standard information provided by the OPCC
- out of date distribution lists
- working papers which lead to a final report (including OPCC and decision making papers etc)
- duplicated and superseded material such as stationery, manuals,
- drafts, address books and reference copies of annual reports
- e-copies of documents where a hard copy has been printed and filed.

The following schedules set out the retention periods for particular records.

OPFCC Business, Management and Administration		
Function	Records	Retention
Meetings (where the OPFCC owns the record – includes formal, partnership, agency and external meetings)	Minutes, agendas and reports Indexes Note books General correspondence	Permanent Permanent Destroy on completion of book 2 years after date of meeting
External meetings (where the OPFCC does not own the record)	Minutes, agendas and reports	3 years
Working Groups/Steering Groups	Minutes, agendas and reports	3 years
PFCC Decisions	Decision Records	Permanent
Assurance – process of assessing quality, efficiency or performance of the Force	Minutes, agendas, reports, supporting documentation, dip sampling records	5 years
Appointment of Chief Constable	Advertisements, application forms, interview reports	2 years
	Personnel Files	6 years after termination
Dismissal of Chief Constable	Resignation, redundancy, dismissal, death, retirement	6 years after termination of employment
Complaints	Correspondence, summary reports, details of investigations	5 years
Independent Custody Visiting	Minutes, agendas, reports, registers of visits, custody visitor details	3 years
	Handbook	Until superseded
Statutory Inspections, reviews and external audit reports	External Audit reports, HMIC reports	Permanent
	Correspondence	2 years
Governance	Corporate Governance Framework, standing orders/financial regulations	Until superseded

Ethical Framework	Code of conduct Register of interests, register of gifts and hospitality, Commissioner's oath	2 years after period of appointment ends Permanent
Allowances/Expenses	Claim forms, letters	3 years after period of appointment ends
Policy Development	Policies, procedures, joint protocols	Until superseded
Public/Partner Consultation	Forum notes, records, questionnaires, correspondence, supporting papers	3 years
Information Management	Filing indices, records of transfer to archives, disposal records	Permanent
	Routine correspondence with OPFCC	1 year
Media Relations	Media reports, press releases	3 years
Marketing	Developing and promoting OPFCC events	2 years
	Information about the OPFCC	Until superseded
Office management	Contracts with suppliers	3 years from end of contract
Diaries and calendars	Electronic and manual diaries/calendars	2 years
Health and Safety	Risk assessments, accident books, RIDDOR correspondence and fire certificates	Destroy after 3 years
Freedom of Information Act requests	Requests received and responses	5 years
Unstructured Records	Records that do not support a business process ie there is no existing place for them in the filing structure and non will be created. This applies to paper and electronic formats including emails.	Destroy as soon as use has ceased

Legal		
Litigation	Correspondence, criminal and civil case files, medical appeal files, employment tribunal files	7 years after last action
Legal Advice	Briefing notes, correspondence, Counsel's opinion	3 years
Agreements	Service level agreements, Section 22 Agreements and MOUs	6 years after agreement expires
Asset acquisition/disposal	Legal docs relating to purchase/sale Leases Tender documents	Destroy 6 yrs if under £50,000 Destroy 12 yrs if over £50,000
Contract development (ordinary)	Tender specification	6 years after terms have expired
Contract development (under seal)	Tender specification	12 years after terms have expired
Conveyance	Conveyance Files	Destroy 12 years after closure
Evaluation of tenders (ordinary)	Evaluation criteria Successful tender document	6 years after terms have expired
Evaluation of tenders (under seal)	Evaluation criteria Successful tender document	12 years after terms have expired
Post tender negotiation	Minutes Correspondence	1 year after terms of contract have expired
Tenders	Tender envelope	1 year after start of contract
Unsuccessful tender documents	Tender documents quotations	Destroy 1 year after start of contract
Property acquisition	Plans and reports	Life of property plus 12 years
Property disposal	Survey reports, tender documents, conditions of contracts	Destroy 15 years after all obligations end
Insurance	Insurance policies, correspondence	Destroy 7 years after terms expire

Human Resources		
Personnel administration	Personnel file (including contracts, probation records, appraisals, references, sickness records, reasonable adjustment requirements) and disciplinary records (including warnings and grievance records)	6 years after individual leaves employment
Staff recruitment	Advertisements, applications forms, interview notes, references	(Unsuccessful) 6 months (Successful) 6 years after end of employment
Appointment of Members (Audit Committee, Misconduct Panels)	Personnel files	4 years after appointment ends
Employee relations	Agreements, correspondence re formal negotiations Correspondence re minor and routine matters	Permanent 2 years
Medical records	Medical examinations, adjustment to work examinations	6 years after individual leaves employment
Staff leave monitoring	Leave records	2 years
Staff termination	Resignation, redundancy, dismissal, death or retirement	6 years after termination or, if pension paid 6 years after last pension payment
Police Appeals Tribunals	Correspondence, reports, agendas, minutes	6 years
Appointment of Statutory Officers	Vacancies & applications records Interview notes prospective staff records Registers of applicants	2 years after date of appointment

	Unsuccessful applications records	
Disciplinary & grievance investigations (proved)	Disciplinary records Grievance Records	Oral warning – 6 mths Written warning – 1 year Final warning – 18 mths Dismissal – after determination of all internal and external appeals 2 years
Disciplinary & grievance investigations (unproved)	Disciplinary records Grievance records	Destroy immediately after appeal
Finance		
Annual reports	Annual statements of accounts	Permanent
Approvals/purchase	Purchase/sales order	Destroy 7 years after end of financial year
Asset Acquisition and Disposal	Management of the acquisition (by financial lease of purchase) & disposal (by sale or write off) process for assets	Destroy 6 years, if under £50 or 12 years if over £50, after all obligations/entitlement are concluded
Asset monitoring & maintenance	Asset registers Inventories Stocktaking Acquisition & disposal reports Service/maintenance records	Destroy 7 yrs after the end of the financial year Destroy 2 yrs after admin use Destroy 7 yrs after sale or disposal
Budget setting	Final annual budget Draft budgets and estimates Quarterly budget reviews	Permanent Destroy 2 yrs after budget set Destroy after following yrs budget adopted

Expenditure	Invoices/receipts Bank statements Vouchers/ledger Write offs of Public monies	Destroy 6 years after end of financial year
	Processes to balance & reconcile financial accounts	Destroy 2 years after admin use is concluded
Finance reports	Quarterly budget reports, working papers	Destroy when admin use complete
Taxation records	Taxation records	5 years after end of financial year
Budget monitoring adopted	Quarterly statements	Destroy after next year's annual budget
Internal inspections, audits and reports	Internal audit reports	6 years

