STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Employee Records Management SOP

Document no.	SOP-HR-006
Revision	1.0
Owner	HR Director
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Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To keep employee records accurate, complete and secure from hire through separation, with access limited to people who need it and disposal handled per policy and law.

2. Scope

Applies to personnel files, payroll and benefits records, and performance and disciplinary documentation for all employees. Handled per company policy and applicable local employment law.

Definitions

Personnel file	The core record for an employee, including hiring documents, role changes, performance and, where applicable, disciplinary history.
HRIS	The human resources information system used to store and manage employee records.
Access control	The rules that determine who can view or edit a given employee record, based on role and need to know.

3. Responsibilities

HR Generalist	Creates and updates employee records, verifies documents and responds to routine records requests.
HR Manager	Approves access levels, reviews unusual requests, and oversees the retention and disposal schedule.
IT Administrator	Manages system access permissions and technical security controls for the HRIS.
Employee	Provides accurate personal information and updates it promptly when it changes.

RACI matrix

Activity	HR Generalist	HR Manager	IT Administrator	Employee
Create record at hire	R/A	I	C	R
Update records for role or personal changes	R/A	I	-	R
Set and review access permissions	C	A	R	-
Respond to records requests	R	A	-	I

Activity	HR Generalist	HR Manager	IT Administrator	Employee
Retire and dispose of records	R	A	C	-

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- HRIS or document management system
- New-hire document checklist
- Access control and permissions matrix
- Records retention and disposal schedule
- Secure physical filing cabinet, where paper records are kept

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Create the record at hire** The HR generalist creates a new employee record in the HRIS at hire, using the signed offer, employment agreement and identity and eligibility documents collected during onboarding.	HR Generalist	☐
5.2	**Verify document completeness** The HR generalist checks the new-hire document checklist to confirm every required document is collected, signed and filed before the record is marked complete. **Checkpoint:** No record is marked complete with missing required documents.	HR Generalist	☐
5.3	**Set access permissions** The IT administrator sets HRIS access for the employee's record according to the access control matrix, limiting visibility to HR, the direct manager and payroll as applicable. **Checkpoint:** Access to sensitive fields, such as pay and medical information, is limited to roles with a documented need to know.	IT Administrator	☐
5.4	**Update records for changes** The HR generalist updates the record whenever there is a role change, pay change, address change or other update, using the employee's submitted request or manager notification.	HR Generalist	☐
5.5	**File performance and disciplinary documents** The HR generalist files signed performance reviews, warnings and related documents in the employee's record as they are generated by the relevant SOPs.	HR Generalist	☐
5.6	**Respond to internal records requests** The HR generalist verifies the requester's identity and authorization before sharing any part of an employee record, and logs the request and what was shared. **Warning:** Never share medical, disciplinary or investigation details with anyone outside HR without a documented need to know.	HR Generalist	☐
5.7	**Respond to external records requests** The HR manager reviews any request from outside the company, such as a reference check or legal request, and responds according to company policy and, where needed, with legal counsel.	HR Manager	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.8	**Audit records periodically** The HR manager runs a periodic audit of a sample of employee records to check for missing documents, outdated information or incorrect access permissions. **Checkpoint:** Audit findings are corrected and logged, not just noted.	HR Manager	☐
5.9	**Retire records at separation** When an employee leaves, the HR generalist marks the record as separated in the HRIS, removes day-to-day access, and moves the file to inactive storage.	HR Generalist	☐
5.10	**Dispose of records on schedule** The HR manager reviews inactive records against the retention and disposal schedule and arranges secure disposal or deletion of records past their retention period, per your records retention policy and local law.	HR Manager	☐

6. Quality checks

- New-hire records are complete within the first week of employment.
- Access permissions match the current access control matrix during periodic review.
- Records requests are logged with who requested what and what was shared.
- Separated employee records are moved to inactive storage promptly.

7. Records

- Personnel file with hiring, role and pay history
- Access control and permissions matrix
- Records request log
- Retention and disposal schedule with disposal confirmations

8. KPIs

- Percentage of new-hire records complete within the first week
- Number of access exceptions found during audits
- Average time to respond to a records request
- Percentage of records disposed of on schedule

9. Common mistakes

- Storing medical or disciplinary details in the general personnel file instead of a restricted one.
- Granting broad HRIS access instead of following the access control matrix.
- Sharing employee information without verifying the requester's identity.
- Keeping separated employee records indefinitely instead of following the disposal schedule.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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