

Retention Schedule

Retention periods given in this schedule are for those types required for operational purposes



Record Type	Retention Start	Minimum Retention period	Action at end of retention period	Notes
Adult health records not covered by any other section in this schedule	Discharge or data subject last seen	8 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Check for other involvements that could extend the retention (e.g. serious incidents, RIDDOR, etc.). Review prior to destruction, taking into account any serious incident retentions.
Children's records	Discharge or data subject last seen	25 th or 26 th birthday (see notes)	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Basic health and social care retention requirement is to retain until 25 th birthday or if the patient was 17 at the conclusion of the treatment, until their 26 th birthday. Check for other involvements that could extend the retention (e.g. serious incidents, RIDDOR, etc.). Review prior to destruction, taking into account any serious incident retentions.
Electronic Patient Records system	See notes	See notes	Destroy	Once records have reached the end of their retention periods they should be inaccessible to users of the system and upon decommissioning, the system (along with audit trails) should be retained for the retention period of the last entry related to the schedule.
Record of long term illness or an illness that may reoccur	Discharge or patient last seen	30 years or 8 years after the patient has died	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Necessary for continuity of clinical care. The primary record of the illness and course of treatment must be kept where the illness may reoccur or is a life long illness.
Clinical Audit	Creation	5 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Clinical Diaries	End of the year to which they relate	2 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Clinical Protocols	Creation	25 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Clinical protocols may have archival value. They may also be routinely captured in clinical governance meetings.
Destruction Certificates or records of clinical information held on destroyed physical media	Destruction of record or information	20 Years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Destruction certificates are not covered by an instrument of retention and if not classed as a record of archival importance they are to be destroyed after 20 years.
Equipment maintenance logs	Decommissioning of the equipment	11 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Inspection of equipment records	Decommissioning of equipment	11 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Notifiable disease book	Creation	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Patient Property Books	End of the year to which they relate	2 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Referrals not accepted	Date of rejection	2 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	The rejected referral to the service should also be kept on the originating service file.
Recorded conversation which may later be needed for clinical negligence purpose	Creation	3 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	The period of time cited by the NHS Litigation Authority is 3 years

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Recorded conversation which forms part of the health record	Creation	Store as a health record	Review and if no longer needed destroy	It is advisable to transfer any relevant information into the main record through transcription or summarisation. Call handlers may perform this task as part of the call. Where it is not possible to transfer clinical information from the recording to the record, the recording must be considered as part of the record and be retained accordingly.
The telephony systems record (not recorded conversations)	Creation	1 year	Review and if no longer needed destroy	This is the absolute minimum specified to meet the NHS contractual requirement.
Incidents (serious)	Date of Incident	20 Years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Incidents (not serious)	Date of Incident	10 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Non-clinical quality assurance records, including complaints, concerns and compliments	End of year to which the assurance relates	12 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Policies, strategies and operating procedures including business plans	Creation	Life of organisation plus 6 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Intranet site	Creation	6 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Service user information leaflets	End of use	6 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Press releases and important internal communications	Release Date	6 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Press releases may form a significant part of the public record of an organisation which may need to be retained
Public consultations	End of consultation	5 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Website	Creation	6 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Duty Roster	Close of financial year	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Occupational Health Reports	Staff member leaves	Keep until 75th birthday or 6 years after the staff member leaves whichever is sooner	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Occupational Health Report of Staff member under health surveillance	Staff member leaves	Keep until 75th birthday	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Staff record	Staff member leaves	Keep until 75th birthday (see Notes)	Create Staff Record Summary then review or destroy the main file.	This includes (but is not limited to) evidence of right to work, security checks and recruitment documentation for the successful candidate including job adverts and application forms. May be destroyed 6 years after the staff member leaves or the 75 th birthday, whichever is sooner, if a summary has been made.
Staff record Summary	6 years after the staff member leaves	75th Birthday	Place of Deposit should be offered for continued retention or destroy	
Timesheets (original record)	Creation	2 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	

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Staff training records	Creation	See Notes	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Records of significant training must be kept until 75th birthday or 6 years after the staff member leaves. It can be difficult to categorise staff training records as significant as this can depend upon the staff member's role. Recommendations: 1. Clinical training records - to be retained until 75th birthday or six years after the staff member leaves, whichever is the longer 2. Statutory and mandatory training records - to be kept for ten years after training completed 3. Other training records - keep for six years after training completed.
Contracts sealed or unsealed	End of contract	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Tenders (successful)	End of contract	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Tenders (unsuccessful)	Award of tender	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Building plans and records of major building work	Completion of work	Lifetime of the building or disposal of asset plus six years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Building plans and records of works are potentially of historical interest and where possible be kept and transferred to a place of deposit
CCTV		See ICO Code of Practice	Review and if no longer needed destroy	The length of retention must be determined by the purpose for which the CCTV has been deployed. The recorded images will only be retained long enough for any incident to come to light (e.g. for a theft to be noticed) and the incident to be investigated.
Equipment monitoring and testing and maintenance work	Completion of monitoring or test	10 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Inspection reports	End of lifetime of installation	Lifetime of installation	Review	
Leases	Termination of lease	12 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Minor building works	Completion of work	retain for 6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Photographic collections of service locations and events and activities	Close of collection	Retain for not more than 20 years	Consider transfer to a place of deposit	The main reason for maintaining photographic collections is for historical legacy of the running and operation of an organisation. However, photographs may have subsidiary uses for legal enquiries.
Surveys	End of lifetime of installation or building	Lifetime of installation or building	Review and consider transfer to Place of Deposit	
Accounts	Close of financial year	3 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Includes all associated documentation and records for the purpose of audit as agreed by auditors
Expenses	Close of financial year	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Final annual accounts report	Creation	Before 20 years	Transfer to place of deposit if not transferred with the board papers	Should be transferred to a place of deposit as soon as practically possible
Petty cash	End of financial year	2 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Salaries paid to staff	Close of financial year	10 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	

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Complaints case file	Closure of incident (see Notes)	10 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	The incident is not closed until all subsequent processes have ceased including litigation. The file must not be kept on the patient file. A separate file must always be maintained.
Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and responses and any associated correspondence	Closure of FOI request	3 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	Where redactions have been made it is important to keep a copy of the redacted disclosed documents or if not practical to keep a summary of the redactions.
FOI requests where there has been a subsequent appeal	Closure of appeal	6 years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Industrial relations including tribunal case records	Close of financial year	10 Years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	Some organisations may record these as part of the staff record but in most cases they will form a distinct separate record either held by the staff member/manager or by the payroll team for processing.
Litigation records	Closure of case	10 years	Review and consider transfer to a Place of Deposit	
Patents/trademarks/copyright/intellectual property	End of lifetime of patent or termination of licence/action	Lifetime of patent or 6 years from end of licence /action	Review and consider transfer to Place of Deposit	
Software licences	End of lifetime of software	Lifetime of software	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Subject Access Requests (SAR) and disclosure correspondence	Closure of SAR	3 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	
Subject access requests where there has been a subsequent appeal	Closure of appeal	6 Years	Review and if no longer needed destroy	