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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DEPARTMENTAL REGISTRY PROCEDURE MANUAL

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1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Objective:

The objective of this manual is to inform registry staff as well as all other staff what the correct procedures is to ensure that all records in the Department of Public Works are handled according to the standards of the National Archives.

1.2 Value of registry and records:

Registries (general as well as human resource) are the heart of the Department, they ensures that all information received and distributed is sorted and filed in a logical and easily accessible manner. Registries ensure that the Department of Public Works is able to retrieve information (records) effective and efficiently and is accountable for all activities and decisions in the Department.

1.3 Nature of public records:

Public records are records that are created as a result of business activities or processes that transpired on a particular day or period. They can also be defined as records received by the Department from internal and external stake holders. This includes correspondences in various formats (e.g. documents, reports, memo's, electronic maps, registers etc.)

Public records could be classified as top secret, secret, confidential or restricted correspondence (see point 3.3.1, 4.3.1 and 5.2.1).

Public records are records with current value (the retention period has not collapsed yet). These records could be in closed volumes or current volumes. Public records could also be terminated records (records with archival value or need of disposal).

Public records are vital and non vital records (see point 12).

2. SUPERVISION AND DUTIES OF RECORDS MANAGERS / STAFF:

2.1 Functions of Records Managers:

- To promote effective, efficient and accountable management of records and ensure monitoring of registries.
- To ensure compliance with the acts and best practice model.
- Maintain records management unit.
- Formulate and implement record management strategy, policy procedures and action plans.

- Compile and maintain approved record classification system.
- Implement systematic disposal programmes to reduce the storage costs for records that are no longer active.
- Keep all records in safe custody.
- Inspect sub offices/districts to ensure that sound record management procedures are followed.
- Ensure that record management and registry staff are trained to apply proper registry procedures to facilitate sound management of records.
- Train creators of records to allocate file numbers according to approved file plan
- Provide access to information contained in records in terms of PAIA.

2.2 Appointment of staff:

All registry staff must be vetted upon appointment to ensure safe custody of records/information and also they must sign oath of secrecy. Appointment must be done in writing and duties must be clearly defined including expected performance standards.

2.3 Duties:

- Receive post, parcels and transferable items.
- Allocate correct file numbers on all incoming correspondences and other documents.
- Ensure that file numbers allocated is correct.
- File all documents received.
- Circulate and search for long overdue files.
- Control movement of files.
- Control the opening, closure and termination of files and records other than correspondence files.
- Prepare file covers and replace worn out covers.
- Check the use of daily files.
- Keep and maintain different registers in registry.
- Keep and maintain records according to the relevant acts and the best practice model.
- Lists records that must be disposed.

2.4 Supervision:

Both the Deputy Managers, General records and Human Resource Records are in charge of:

- Supervising registry staff.
- Control, manage and monitor registries.

- Train registry staff.
- Formulate records management strategy, policies, procedures and action plans.
- Ensure implementation of registry procedures, manuals, policies and best practice model.
- Compile and maintain approved record classification system.
- Implement systematic disposal programmes to reduce the storage costs for records that are no longer active.

3. REGISTRY PROCEDURES : GENERAL RECORDS

3.1 Postal / postbag:

3.1.1 Collecting of post:

The post in the Department is handled by registry personnel. The post bag must be collected daily at the post office counter with a sealed bag by the messenger.

3.1.2 Opening of post:

When opening the private bag and all official mail whether coming by hand or post the registry personnel must be assisted by a responsible Senior Officer. Registry personnel who open the post must be appointed by letter i.e. not anyone can open the post and the authorization must be filed in the personal file of the relevant personnel.

During the process of opening the post staff members must be informed when the registry will be closed for opening of the post. Only urgent matters and telephone enquiries will be attended to i.e. activities like photocopying, faxing will not be entertained during the process.

Opening of the post include the following:

- ❖ Sorting of post according to Official and Private.
- ❖ Remove contents from the envelope and discard the envelopes.
- ❖ Attach loose leaves together.
- ❖ Make note of letters that are incorrectly addressed and return them to Post Office.
- ❖ Apply date stamp on all received correspondence.
- ❖ Read letters and reference them.
- ❖ Register the received letters into the incoming register.
- ❖ Make photocopy and forward the copy to whom it is intended to.
- ❖ Send original record to general records registry for filing.
- ❖ Secret and confidential envelopes are delivered to the recipient unopened.
- ❖ Envelopes marked staff confidential are delivered unopened to the official.

Private mail must be delivered to the recipient unopened. Staff must be discouraged from using official address for private correspondences.

The money that is posted to the Department in the form of Cheques is registered in the remittance register. The following will be recorded:

- ❖ The date of the receipt.
- ❖ Whether received by ordinary or registered post.
- ❖ From whom it was received.
- ❖ The nature and amount of remittance.
- ❖ Signature of the official present at the opening of the mail.
- ❖ Signature of the official to whom it was handed over.

Hand delivered remittances must be verified by the registry clerk and should be recorded the same as remittances received through post.

3.2 Handling of mail:

3.2.1 Internal:

Every official letter must be date stamped with the official stamp of the Department on the same date of receipt. To avoid further loss of information on all incoming and outgoing official documents a copy for every document will be made and forwarded to the recipient whereas originals will be filed.

3.2.2 External:

All outgoing mail, parcel or registered mail should go through registry. Every outgoing letter must be submitted into 3 original signed copies. One copy for filing, one for the daily file and one to be distributed by post. Outgoing letters must be clearly addressed by the responsible official. Outgoing mail will be date stamped on the envelope and registered in the postal register.

3.2.3 Faxes:

All faxes coming through registry fax must be recorded like any incoming post. Urgent faxes will be delivered within an hour if the messenger is not available for some reason the delay may not be more than 3 hours. Faxes that are received through other fax machines in the department must be referred to general registry. To avoid further loss of information on all incoming and outgoing official documents a copy for every document will be made and forwarded to the recipient whereas originals will be filed.

Incoming and outgoing faxes must be recorded in a relevant register.

3.2.4 Franking machine:

Only official letters will be franked and recorded. The franking machine in the registry must be kept at all times under lock and key. All officials operating the franking machine must be appointed in writing and an appointment letter will be placed in their personal files.

3.3 Classification of documents:

3.3.1 Internal:

In an attempt to improve information security in our Department in terms of the Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS) all documents i.e. memo's, letters, reports created must be classified as follows:

- ❖ Restricted
- ❖ Confidential
- ❖ Secret
- ❖ Top secret.

The responsibility of determining the value of documents rest with the author. The classification status must be written on the header and footer of the document.

Every document created must be allocated a reference number taken from either the general or staff file plan.

3.3.2 External:

All documents created within the Department destined for external stakeholders must be classified and allocated reference numbers (refer to point 3.3.1)

3.3.3 Faxes:

Refer to points 3.3.1 and 3.3.2

3.4 Filing of documents:

Filing of documents and the updating of the control sheets must be done everyday. Documents are filed according to their main series as prescribed by the filing system. The importance of filing is to store documents and access documents with ease at least in less than 5 minutes.

3.4.1 Opening of files:

All files must be opened according to the best practice model as well as the filing system. The Z20 file cover must be clearly marked with a black marking pen and a stencil when opening the file. Only the description/subject name (e.g. only hardware, school name etc.), file reference number (on the top under file no. and left upper under file no. when turned in a horizontal way), opening date, volume number, office name and name of the department must be clearly marked on the outside of the file cover. The control sheet must be placed in each file on the left hand side of the folder when it is opened. A backing card with a paper fastener and a washer or Indian tags is stapled on the middle inside part of the Z20 file to hold correspondence firmly in place. The paper fastener/Indian tag is pushed through the backing card only and not through the cover

since this will cause files to stick together and get damage. An audit trail form should be put inside loose in each file. Every file opened must be recorded into an Excel register for files opened. In case the opened file is missing a temporary file can be opened and also entered into the registered marked temporary until the original file is found. When the original file is found the contents from the temporary file must be transferred to the original file and the temporary file should be destroyed.

3.4.2 Numbering of folio's:

All folios must be numbered with a red pen numerically on the top right hand corner starting from the first folio upwards. In a case where there is a document each folio must be marked consecutively (from bottom upwards) as if it were loose folios. This will ensure that removed/missing pages could be identified immediately.

3.4.3 Correctness of filing (documents/files):

All registry staff should ensure that documents/files are filed correctly. Registry staff should also ensure that the correct reference numbers where used.

3.4.4 Registers:

In order to track the movement of files everyday and to have control of the correspondence that are shipped in and out of the Department there must be registers. The following types of registers should be used in registry:

- ❖ Correspondence register (incoming and outgoing)
- ❖ Dispatch register
- ❖ Remittance register
- ❖ Franking machine register
- ❖ Register of items posted
- ❖ Register of opened files
- ❖ Register of movement of files
- ❖ Disposal register
- ❖ Register for transferred certificates
- ❖ Destruction register

In an attempt to have control of what has been created in the Department and to ensure that whatever is being created end up in the registry for safe custody each building will be allocated a messenger to deliver and collect documents/items for distribution. All documents meant for registry should be marked e.g. F for general registry another copy DF for the day file, these documents must be placed in the out trays that are identified for collection by the messenger.

3.4.5 Closing of files:

Files that have reach 3cm in thickness or \pm 150 folios must be closed and a new volume must be created. If a file is closed the closing date should be indicated on the outside of the file just under the opening date (this could be done with a black ball point pen – because of space) and a stamp should be put on top of the file under the name of the department in the middle to indicate that the file is closed. Closed files should have as the last folio filled a blank page indicated that the file is closed and that the next volume should be used. Every file closed should also be recorded into the Excel register for files opened. All the files that are closed must be placed next to current volumes of their main series as prescribed by the best practice model.

3.4.6 Versa file boxes:

Versa file boxes must be used to put all current and closed volumes of Z20 files in. The versa file box must be marked by pasting a printed label with only the reference number on. Only when one reference number is been used for more than one institution/building etc. may the institution name also be added with the reference number for example 11/1/6 - Swonghosi High School (this should be done in two lines). The volume number if more than one versa file for the same reference number is used should be printed and paste at the bottom of the versa file box.

3.5 Day files:

A day file is a mechanism to ensure that there is transparency and knowledge is shared among staff members. The records manager determines which documents must be placed within the day file e.g. confidential documents cannot be placed in a day file. Types of records that can be included in the day file are e.g. routine enquiries, reminders, new circulars, policy documents and outgoing correspondences. Daily files must circulate among senior staff members according to the list.

3.6 Mini registries:

No mini registries (a small holding of records by another section other than registry) should exist. If a section needs to keep the files with them they need to indicate in writing why the files should be kept with them. The Records Manager may or may not give approval. If approval is granted to the requesting section to keep these files, they should ensure that the environment is safe and the records are kept according to the best practice model. Training (in-house) should be provided to these sections.

4. REGISTRY PROCEDURES : MINISTERIAL RECORDS

4.1 Handling of mail:

4.1.1 Internal:

Every official letter must be date stamped with the official stamp of the Department on the same date of receipt. To avoid further loss of information on all incoming and outgoing official documents a copy for every document will be made and forwarded to the recipient where as originals will be filed.

4.1.2 External:

All outgoing mail, parcel or registered mail should go through registry. Every outgoing letter must be submitted into 3 original signed copies. One copy for filing, one for the daily file and one to be distributed by post. Outgoing letters must be clearly addressed by the responsible official. Outgoing mail will be date stamped on the envelope and registered in the postal register.

4.1.3 Faxes:

All faxes coming through registry fax must be recorded like any incoming post. Urgent faxes will be delivered within an hour if the messenger is not available for some reason the delay may not be more than 3 hours. Faxes that are received through other fax machines in the department must be referred to general registry. To avoid further loss of information on all incoming and outgoing official documents a copy for every document will be made and forwarded to the recipient whereas originals will be filed.

Incoming and outgoing faxes must be recorded in a relevant register.

4.2 Classification of documents:

4.2.1 Internal:

In an attempt to improve information security in our Department in terms of the Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS) all documents i.e. memo's, letters, reports created must be classified as follows:

- ❖ Restricted
- ❖ Confidential
- ❖ Secret
- ❖ Top secret.

The responsibility of determining the value of documents rest with the author. The classification status must be written on the header and footer of the document.

Every document created must be allocated a reference number taken from either the general or staff file plan.

4.2.2 External:

All documents created within the Department destined for external stakeholders must be classified and allocated reference numbers (refer to point 4.2.2)

4.2.3 Faxes:

Refer to points 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

4.3 **Filing of documents:**

Filing of documents and the updating of the control sheets must be done everyday. Documents are filed according to their main series as prescribed by the filing system. The importance of filing is to store documents and access documents with ease at least in less than 5 minutes.

4.3.1 Opening of files:

All files must be opened according to the best practice model as well as the filing system. The Z20 file cover must be clearly marked with a black marking pen and a stencil when opening the file. Only the description/subject name (no headings/series names), file reference number (on the top under file no. and left upper under file no. when turned in a horizontal way), opening date, volume number, office name and name of the department must be clearly marked on the outside of the file cover. The control sheet must be placed in each file on the left hand side of the folder when it is opened. An audit trail form should be put inside loose in each file. Every file opened must be recorded into an Excel register for files opened. In case the opened file is missing a temporary file can be opened and also entered into the registered marked temporary until the original file is found. When the original file is found the contents from the temporary file must be transferred to the original file and the temporary file should be destroyed.

4.3.2 Numbering of folio's:

All folios must be numbered with a red pen numerically on the top right hand corner starting from the first folio upwards. In a case where there is a document each folio must be marked consecutively (from bottom upwards) as if it were loose folios. This will ensure that removed/missing pages could be identified immediately.

4.3.3 Correctness of filing (documents/files):

All registry staff should ensure that documents/files are filed correctly. Registry staff should also ensure that the correct reference numbers where used.

4.3.4 Registers:

In order to track the movement of files everyday and to have control of the correspondence that are shipped in and out of the Department there must be registers. The following types of registers should be used in registry:

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- ❖ Dispatch register
- ❖ Remittance register
- ❖ Franking machine register
- ❖ Register of items posted
- ❖ Register of opened files
- ❖ Register of movement of files
- ❖ Disposal register
- ❖ Register for transferred certificates
- ❖ Destruction register

In an attempt to have control of what has been created in the Department and to ensure that whatever is being created end up in the registry for safe custody each building will be allocated a messenger to deliver and collect documents/items for distribution. All documents meant for registry should be marked e.g. F and another copy DF, these documents must be placed in the two out trays that are identified for collection by the messenger.

4.3.5 Closing of files:

Files that have reach 3cm in thickness or \pm 150 folios must be closed and a new volume must be created. If a file is closed the closing date should be indicated on the outside of the file just under the opening date (this could be done with a black ball point pen – because of space) and a stamp should be put on top of the file under the name of the department in the middle to indicate that the file is closed. Closed files should have as the last folio filled a blank page indicated that the file is closed and that the next volume should be used. Every file closed should also be recorded into the Excel register for files opened. All the files that are closed must be placed next to current volumes of their main series as prescribed by the best practice model.

5. **REGISTRY PROCEDURES : HUMAN RESOURCE RECORDS**

5.1 **Handling of mail:**

5.1.1 Internal:

Every official letter must be date stamped with the official stamp of the Department on the same date of receipt. All original letters relating to human resource (HR) except for Z81 application forms (only the list of applications) must be submitted to HR records and must

be file on the correct file and a copy of the letter could be given to the relevant section to handle/respond.

5.1.2 External:

All outgoing mail or registered mail for human resource (HR) matters a copy of the original letter must be submitted to HR Records for filing. Outgoing letters must be clearly addressed by the responsible official. Outgoing mail will be date stamped by the general registry staff on the envelope and registered in the postal register.

5.1.3 Faxes:

All faxes relating to human resource matters incoming/outgoing through registry should be recorded by the general registry staff and submitted to HR records for filing and a copy (of incoming) must be submitted to the relevant section to handle/respond. A copy of any urgent faxes received from general registry must be submitted to the relevant HR section immediately. Faxes on human resource matters received/send through other fax machines in the department must be referred to the HR registry.

Incoming and outgoing faxes must be recorded in a relevant register.

5.2 **Classification of documents:**

5.2.1 Internal:

All documents (memo's, letters, reports etc.) that are created in the Department regarding personnel must be classified as follows:

- ❖ Restricted
- ❖ Confidential
- ❖ Secret
- ❖ Top Secret

The person who wrote the document must classify the record and also indicate the reference number (general or staff file plan must be used) on which it must be filed. The classification status must be written on the header and footer of the document. If a person is not sure about the correct reference number to use the person should contact the registry section for assistance.

5.2.2 External:

All documents created within the Department destined for external stakeholders must be classified and a reference number must be allocated as explained in point 5.2.1.

If documents are received from stakeholders, the document must be date stamp and a reference number must be allocated for filing.

5.2.3 Faxes:

The same steps must be followed as in point 5.2.1 and 5.2.2

5.3 **Filing of documents:**

Filing of documents and updating of control sheets must be done everyday. Documents are filed according to their main series or as case files as prescribed by the staff file plan. The importance of filing is to store documents and access documents with ease in less than 5 minutes. It is also importance that filing is done daily to ensure the effective and efficient retrieval of information/records.

In an attempt to have control of what has been created in the Department and to ensure that whatever is being created end up in the registry for safe custody each building will be allocated a messenger to deliver and collect documents/items for distribution. All documents meant for registry SF for staff filing these documents must be placed in the out trays that are identified for collection by the messenger.

5.3.1 Each employee must have the following four files:

An employee must have a personal file, PMS file, Leave file and a financial file.

Documents that must be in each file include the following:

5.3.1.1 Personal file:

- All appointment documents (application form, formal, original approval of the appointment by the executing authority, letter of appointment as well as acceptance form/letter, certified proof of previous employment and the completed employment contract.
- Letter of promotion, secondment or transfer certificates/letter, rank/CORE, occupational classification, salary code and level, Department, date of entry and departure.
- Certified copy of identity document or passport and work permits for non SA citizens.
- Pay as you earn (PAYE) directive.
- Former staff record card (if available).
- Union membership documents.
- Letter of service termination, indicating the termination type and date.
- Package structuring form (where applicable).
- Print out of CV from PERSAL (should be done annually).
- Grievances.

5.3.1.2 Development file:

- Certified copies of all formal qualifications (if possible, approval of the SA Qualifications Authority for international qualifications).
- Certified copies of certificates indicating the type of courses attended.
- A copy of letter of promotion, secondment or transfer certificates/letter, rank/CORE, occupational classification, salary code and level, Department, date of entry and departure.
- Documents related to the award of bursaries (if a bursary file does not exist).
- Competency profile.
- Certified proof of registration to professional bodies if required in terms of employment.

5.3.1.3 Leave file:

- Former leave record cards (if available).
- Certificate validating the calculated leave accrued on 30 June 2000.
- Proof of written claims and accompanying proof in respect of leave payouts.
- The form on which the employee has nominated his/her beneficiaries of leave pay outs in the event of death.
- Normal sick leave forms as well as medical certificates from a registered medical practitioner in respect of sick leave for each period of three days or more.
- Temporary disability leave (if a PILAR file does not exist) -
 - ✚ Medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner for each period of absence regardless of the duration of the incapacity or illness.
 - ✚ The original report of the medical practitioner in the event where the Head of Department has requested a second opinion.
 - ✚ The memorandum/submission in which the Head of Department has decided on granting temporary disability leave.
 - ✚ Record of the finding of the investigation by the Department into the extent and nature of the illness/incapacity.
- Permanent disability leave (if a PILAR file does not exist) -
 - ✚ Medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner for each period of absence regardless of the duration of the incapacity or illness.
 - ✚ The original report of the medical practitioner in the event where the Head of Department has requested a second opinion.
 - ✚ The memorandum/submission in which the Head of Department has decided on granting temporary permanent disability leave.
 - ✚ Record of the finding of the investigation by the Department into the extent and nature of the illness/incapacity.
- Maternity leave -
 - ✚ Medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner.
 - ✚ Medical certificate from the attending practitioner to certify that an employee is fit to return to work prior to the compulsory six weeks maternity leave.

- ✚ Proof of miscarriage, stillbirth or termination of pregnancy during the third trimester of pregnancy.
- Adoption leave – Proof of adoption.
- Family responsibility leave – Proof of illness, birth or death – the Head of Department must determine the type of proof required for example an affidavit, an account of the attending doctor, birth certificate or funeral letter.
- Special leave – According to the Department policies for e.g. a copy of an examination roster.
- Leave for office bearers/shop stewards – Supporting documents for e.g. letters from unions.

5.3.1.4 Financial file:

- Service bonuses.
- Leave payment advice (in terms of PSCBC Resolution 7 of 2000).
- Medical Assistance.
- Home owner allowance (if no housing file exist).
- Motor finance scheme (MFS) for senior employees.
- Voluntary severance package.
- Overtime.
- Standby and danger allowances.
- Transport between residence and work.
- Official journeys.
- Accommodation while on official journeys.
- Camping.
- Separation allowance.
- Resettlement.
- State and other housing.
- Clothing for work.
- Assistance with boarding school and lodging fees.
- Allowances for personnel serving executing authorities.
- Special recruitment allowances for selected health personnel.
- Allowance for secretaries to a head of department.
- Recognition of long service.
- Cash payment for additional qualifications.
- Employer-initiated retrenchments.
- Awards and bonuses for performance.
- Innovations or achievement.
- Grading and remuneration.
- Documents regarding debt.
- Documents regarding state guarantee (if no housing file exist).

5.3.1.5 Accident file:

- Documents related to injury on duty indicating the date and nature of the injury.

- Documents related to agreements in terms of compensation for injury on duty.

5.3.1.6 Workplace Relations file:

- Disciplinary warnings.
- Documents related to misconduct, appeals, grievances (if not on the Personal File) and disputes arising after an appeal and suspensions.

5.3.1.7 Performance Measurement (PMS) file:

- All performance contracts.
- Reviews of performance contracts.
- Letter of performance rewards granted indicating the nature and value of the award as well as the date granted.

5.3.2 Opening of files (Z20 file covers):

All files must be opened according to the best practice model as well as the filing system. The Z20 file cover must be clearly marked with a black marking pen and a stencil when opening the file. Series files must have the reference number on the top (horizontal) as well as the left hand upper side (when turn in a horizontal way). Employee files must have the employee's PERSAL number on the top (horizontal) as well as the left hand upper side (when turn in a horizontal way). The description/subject on the series files must be according to the staff file plan (only the subject no series names) and in an employee's file it must be the persons surname and initials. The different case file names are use in between the two arrows on the Z20 cover according to the staff file plan (e.g. S.P., S.L. etc.). All other information (volume number, opening date office name and name of the department) must be marked clearly on the outside of the file cover. A confidential stamp must be stamped on each Z20 employee file cover in the middle bottom block. The control sheet must be placed in each file on the left hand side of the folder when it is opened. A backing card with a paper fastener and a washer or Indian tags is stapled on the middle inside part of the Z20 file to hold correspondence firmly in place. The paper fastener/Indian tag is pushed through the backing card only and not through the cover since this will cause files to stick together and get damage. An audit trail form must be put inside loose in each file. The audit trail form must indicate the file number/description. Every file opened must be recorded into an Excel register for files opened. In case the opened file is missing a temporary file can be opened and also entered into the registered marked temporary until the original file is found. When the original file is found the contents from the temporary file must be transferred to the original file and the temporary file should be destroyed.

5.3.3 Numbering of folio's:

All folios must be numbered with a red pen numerically on the top right hand corner starting from the first folio upwards. In a case where there is a document each folio must

be marked consecutively (from bottom upwards) as if it were loose folios. This will ensure that removed/missing pages could be identified immediately.

5.3.4 Removal of documents or folios:

No document or folio on the file of an existing employee may be permanently removed or destroyed, except for written warning that must be destroyed after a 6 months period.

5.3.5 Correctness of filing (documents/files):

All registry staff must ensure that documents/files are filed correctly. Registry staff should also ensure that the correct reference numbers are used.

5.3.6 Registers:

In order to track the movement of files everyday and to have control of the correspondence that is received in the Department there must be registers. The following types of registers should be used in the HR registry:

- ❖ Correspondence register (only for records received from outside the Department)
- ❖ Register of opened files
- ❖ Register of movement of files (issuing of files to internal clients)
- ❖ Disposal register
- ❖ Register for transferred certificates
- ❖ Destruction register

All the above mentioned registers must be updated daily (manually and/or electronic) where necessary.

5.3.7 Closing of files:

Files that have reached 3cm in thickness or ± 150 folios must be closed and a new volume must be created. If a file is closed the closing date should be indicated on the outside of the file just under the opening date (this could be done with a black ball point pen – because of space) and a stamp should be put on top of the file under the name of the department in the middle to indicate that the file is closed. Closed files should have as the last folio filled a blank page indicated that the file is closed and that the next volume should be used. Every file closed should also be recorded into the Excel register for files opened. All the files that are closed must be placed next to current volumes as prescribed by the best practice model.

5.3.8 Versa file boxes:

Versa file boxes must be used to put all current and closed volumes of Z20 files in. The versa file box must be marked by pasting a printed label with only the reference

number/PERSAL number on. The volume number if more than one versa file for the same reference number/PERSAL number is used should be printed and paste at the bottom of the versa file box.

5.4 Mini registries:

No mini registries (a small holding of records by another section other than registry) should exist. If a section needs to keep the files with them they need to indicate in writing why the files should be kept with them. The Records Manager may or may not give approval. If approval is granted to the requesting section to keep these files, they should ensure that the environment is safe and the records are kept according to the best practice model. Training (in-house) must be provided to these sections.

6. STAFF AUTHORIZED TO REQUEST FILES:

6.1 General Records:

Each unit's General Manager must indicate in writing as to which staff members are allowed to request files on behalf of the unit. This will enable registry to have control on the movement of the files and to protect the information in files from unauthorized staff.

6.2 Human Resource Records:

The following staff could request employee or series files:

- ❖ Relevant line managers.
- ❖ Employees in the human resource unit.
- ❖ Employees in the internal audit unit.
- ❖ Employees of external audit institutions.
- ❖ Salary section (for financial files).
- ❖ Labour relations unit or people dealing with misconduct (for workplace relations file)

Each unit's General Manager must indicate in writing as to which other staff members are allowed to request files on behalf of the unit. This will enable registry to have control on the movement of the files and to protect the information in files from unauthorized staff.

6.3 External stakeholders:

All external stakeholders that need information on records that have been created and kept in the Department should use the forms as per PAIA booklet that is available in all registries. Stakeholders should read the instructions, the fee payable (if applicable) and complete forms for requests.

7. STORAGE/SECURITY AT REGISTRIES AND OF RECORDS:

7.1 Registries:

The general records registry and the human resource records registry should be two separate registries that could be hosted in the same building. A single spacious secured room should be kept for the registry and it should not be spread into various offices. Store rooms may be used but only for terminated records or records ready for disposal.

Different sort of shelving systems (movable, vertical carousel, horizontal carousel or open faced shelving) could be used but the most preferable system is movable selves. If open shelves are used, the files should be kept in Versa-file boxes and the description of the record or the PERSAL number of employees must be indicated on the outside of the Versa-file box. If drawer cabinets are used, files should be placed in folders and the folders must be clearly marked with a description or the PERSAL number of employees should be indicated on the outside of the Versa-file box.

The following security measures should be in place in the registry:

- Registry work areas must be separated from the entrance by a counter to prevent entry by unauthorized visitors and to serve clients.
- There must be a security door to prevent unauthorized entry.
- Ideally there must not be windows but if there are windows, it should be burglar proof.
- Fire safety measures must include a fire protection system. There should be no lighting of matches and gas fire extinguishers must be in the room where the files are kept.
- Storage of inflammable material or cleaning solutions in registries must be strictly forbidden.
- Roof leaks, leaks in water pipes etc. should be traced in time and repaired before damage can be done to the records.
- Registries must be free of pets and plagues – officials should immediately report any fish moths, cockroaches etc. to the Records Manager.
- Lights must be switched off whenever nobody is present in the area. The lights between the shelves must also be switched off whenever files are not being used.
- Records stored in a basement must be safeguard against floods.
- Environmental controls must be in place to regulate temperature, humidity and lighting.
- Cleaning of registries must be done while registry staff is in the offices to minimize the leak of information.

7.2 Registry staff:

Registry staff must ensure that the registry offices and store rooms are safe and that the Records Manager is immediately inform of any security risks. Registry staff must have at

least one computer with Excel software in the registry that is pass word control to two or more officers to ensure the safekeeping of information about records. Registry staff should be trained to use fire extinguishers as well as the fire protection system.

7.3 Records:

Files must be kept in the following way to ensure the risk of destruction of records:

- No eating or drinking near any files/records.
- No harmful products (ammoniac etc.) should be stored near to records.
- Records must be kept clean from dust and dust mites.
- Records must be kept in Versa files boxes to keep dust out.
- Records must not be stored near to direct light.
- Records must not be given to unauthorized personnel.
- Records must not be kept in warm places without air-conditioning.

8. WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO TO ENSURE PROPER RECORDS MANAGEMENT:

8.1 Requesting of files:

Each unit must appoint certain people to request files on their behalf in writing with their signatures and submit the names to the Records Manager to have proper control as to who are allowed to request files for the sake of accountability. Staff members who request files must attach their signatures on the necessary control mechanism (e.g. audit trail form, registers etc.).

8.2 Classifying of generated documents:

All documents that are generated must be classified e.g. according to restricted, confidential, secret or top secret. Classification must appear on the footer and the header of the document. Should staff need more clarity on how to classify they can contact the risk section for more clarity.

8.3 Referencing documents:

All documents created must be allocated reference numbers according to approved file plan (either human resource or general file plan). Should staff experience problems in terms of allocating the correct reference number they are encouraged contacting the different registries for assistance.

8.4 Submission of documents to registry for filing:

Staff members are encouraged to submit every document they generate to registry (or in the necessary out trays) for safe custody and filing. All documents submitted to registry must have above mentioned requirements and must also be in duplicate for filing if it is for

posting it must be in triplicate. All documents meant for registry should be marked e.g. F for general filing, SF for staff filing and another copy DF for the day file.

8.5 Safeguarding of documents:

It is the responsibility of every staff member not only records management to ensure that records are safely kept, locked at all times and not left unattended as to avoid wrong people having access to confidential documents. Staff members should also ensure that records are not kept in conditions where fire, water etc. can damage the records.

8.6 Timely returning of issued files:

Staff members are advised to return files everyday. If a file is needed for longer it should be requested again the next day or arrangements should be made with registry for extension. Failure to comply will result in serious consequences. Files must be returned in the same condition as they were issued (e.g. folios should not be removed, covers must not be torn etc.)

9. MINIMUM SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS:

9.1 Messenger Services:

The service delivery standards for messengers are as follows:

- Mail to all staff in offices must be collected every 2 hours.
- All recorded internal mail must be delivered to the respective destinations within 4 hours.
- Urgent mail at other Departments and institutions must be collected within 60 minutes of notification of such mail and not urgent mail must be collected within one day.
- Mail to be delivered to other Departments or institutions and not marked urgent must be delivered in 1 day.

9.2 Postal Services:

The service delivery standards for postal services are as follows:

- The mailbag must be collected at the Post Office daily not later than 09h00.
- The mailbag must be opened by two appointed persons 30 minutes after receiving from post.
- Mail must be sorted within 1 hour of opening and receiving of post.
- All incoming mail must be recorded within 1 hour after it was sorted.
- All mail ready for posting must be franked and delivered to the post office within 1 hour.
- Applications for employment must be sorted and recorded daily.
- A list of all recorded applications for employment will be submitted daily to HR.

- 2 days after the closing date for applications all applications must be finalized and handed over to HR.
- Numbers for circulars must be provided within 10 minutes of request and the register must be updated daily.

9.3 Records Management:

The following service standards must be followed for records management:

- Each employee must have at least 4 files, namely Personal File, Leave File, Finance File and a PMS File.
- The 4 files for new employees must be opened on the 1st day of assumption of duty.
- Files of employees transferred within the Public Service must be available in the human resource records registry within 1 calendar month after the new employee joined the new Department.
- The Human Resource Document Control register must be updated daily.
- Each personal file must contain comprehensive (for example application form, appointment and acceptance letters, Curriculum Vitae etc.) employment documents.
- New files must be opened within 1 day after the need has been identified.
- Worn out file covers must be replaced within 1 day after it has been detected.
- Register of files opened should be updated daily.
- All registers (correspondence – incoming and outgoing, dispatch, remittance, franking machine and items to be posted) must be updated at the same time when records are received, dispatched or posted.
- The disposal register must be updated 1 day after disposal authority was received or records are due for disposal.
- The destruction register must be updated at least 1 day before records are destroyed.
- All documents received must be filed 1 day after submission to Registry.
- All documents to be filed must be numbered per folio in a sequential numbering order before being filed.
- Files need to be closed immediately when it reached 3cm thickness.
- Terminated files must be closed and stored immediately after the last documents were received.
- Retrieval of a file behind the shelves will be attended to within 10 minutes.
- Control registers, control sheets and index cards will be updated at the same time when the files are issued.
- All files issued must be returned before end of day.
- Unreturned files must be followed up within 5 days.
- All records due for disposal must be disposed off within 4 months.
- The Department Records Control schedule must be updated monthly.
- All requests for information in terms of PAIA must be finalized within 30 days.
- Training of staff (in-house or formal) must take place quarterly.
- Documents must not be filed incorrectly.

- Temporary employee files must be opened 2 working days after notification of a missing file.
- Missing files that were recovered must be updated immediately through the removal of all records on the temporary file on to the recovered file.
- Temporary file covers must be destroyed on the same day that the missing file was received.

10. TERMINATED RECORDS:

Terminated records are records that were created or received and no longer been used by the Department because of various reasons for example a person have left the service, went on pension, the file plan changed etc. These records will be kept until the retention period (see point 12.1) has expired and then they will be disposed by following the disposal process (see point 12.4).

11. TRANSFER OF RECORDS:

All records that need to be transferred to other departments must be done through a transfer certificate and within 5 working days after the need have been identified.

Records that need to be transferred to archives repositories should be dealt with as indicated in point 12.5.

12. VITAL RECORDS:

12.1 What are vital records:

Vital records are records that are:

- vital to the functions and mission of the department.
- essential/needed for the continuous operations or reconstruction of the department under disaster conditions.
- necessary to protect the legal or financial rights and interests of the department
- necessary to protect and ensure the rights and interests of the employees and clients of the department.

12.2 How to identify a vital record:

The identification of vital records is very critical and should be done immediately so that arrangements could be made prior to a disaster situation. The following steps could be used to identify vital records:

Step 1: Identify the key functions or responsibilities of your department based on the following criteria:

- ❖ Operational – any functions which are vital to the operation and continuation of the department as a whole.
- ❖ Legal – any functions which provide proof of the department's legal stand on an issue.
- ❖ Emergency – any functions which are needed during an emergency, i.e. telecommunications or emergency rooms/exits.
- ❖ Fiscal – any functions which prove the Departments financial standings, i.e. accounts receivable or general ledgers.

Tools that can help you to identify the unique functions of the programme may include:

- ✓ Functional organizational chart – it provide a comprehensive list of your department's functions.
- ✓ Records classification system (File plans and schedules) – the classification system provide a list of what kind of records exist in the department, description of contents, as well as a listing of the prescribed time period (retention schedule – see section) for which they should be kept in both active and inactive storage.

Step 2: Once the key functions/responsibility of the programme was identify the following questions should assists you to identify your vital records:

- ❖ What function will we be unable to do if this record is destroyed (can the work be carried out or continue if this record is gone)?
- ❖ What records would be required in the case of emergency?
- ❖ What would we be unable to do if this record were destroyed?
- ❖ How critical is our inability to do this?
- ❖ What impact would this have on the business of the department?

Other considerations that could be considered to determine if records are vital:

- ❖ Uniqueness of the record.
- ❖ Relationship of one record to another.
- ❖ The type of information needed during and after an emergency.

12.3 Examples of vital records:

The following documents/files etc. is only examples of vital records:

Financial records:

- ✓ Accounts receivable
- ✓ General ledger
- ✓ Registers
- ✓ Records proving payment or monies owed [debtors and creditors]
- ✓ Loans
- ✓ Pension records

- ✓ Bid documents
- ✓ Location of cash and securities

Employee records:

- ✓ Organization structure and establishment
- ✓ Payroll
- ✓ Benefits [pension, leave gratuity, subsidized cars, bursaries, etc.]

Manufacturing records:

- ✓ Product specifications
- ✓ Engineering drawings
- ✓ Asset registers
- ✓ Original research data

Ownership records:

- ✓ Deeds
- ✓ Leases
- ✓ Titles
- ✓ Patents
- ✓ Franchise information
- ✓ Capital investments
- ✓ Insurance policies

Legal:

- ✓ Original contracts and agreements
- ✓ Signed contract where the signature is important

Vital objects:

- ✓ Keys
- ✓ Passwords
- ✓ Security codes etc.

Corporate Records:

- ✓ Minutes of meetings (Executive management, council, etc.)
- ✓ Policies and procedures

Negotiable Instruments:

- ✓ Stock
- ✓ Shares
- ✓ Bonds
- ✓ Cheques

13. DISPOSAL OF RECORDS:

13.1 Retention period:

The retention period of a record refers to the length of time (how many years) that a record must be retained in the Department before they are either transferred into archival custody or destroyed/deleted. The Head of the offices/programmes/records unit decides on the retention periods for **non-archival records** in accordance with the administrative use of the records and the legal obligations the records need to fulfill.

13.2 Types of disposal authorities:

There are three types of disposal authorities, namely:

- Standing disposal authority - this is used to grant standing disposal authority to destroy certain or specific types of records periodically after the expiration of the retention period without having to apply for disposal authority from National or Provincial Archives.
- Limited disposal authority – this is used for all terminated records (see point 9). This type of authority is granted to a specific Department for the destruction of certain specified records. This authority only applies to specified records and is not repetitive of nature.
- General disposal authority – this is used for specific types of records that are common in all Departments such as financial records, personnel records, etc. The existence of a General Disposal Authority does not automatically imply that the records can be destroyed. The authorities include both archival and non-archival records.

13.3 Disposal symbols:

The National Archives and Records Services as well as the Provincial Archives uses different type of disposal instructions to indicate what disposal actions that must be applied to different records. The symbols are as follows:

- A20 - The record should be transferred to the archives repository 20 years after the record was created.
- D - Destroy (the department itself determines the retention period).
- D7 - Destroy 7 years after closure.
- AP - Can remain in the custody of the department indefinitely. When disposal does take place it must be transferred to an archives repository.
- AD - Can remain in the custody of the body indefinitely. When disposal does take place it can be destroyed.
- DAU - Destroy immediately after auditing is completed.
- DAU3 - Destroy 3 years after auditing is completed.
- DAU7 - Destroy 7 years after auditing is completed.

13.4 The disposal programme:

- Records to be disposed should be identified.
- A list of all the records that need to be disposed must be drawn up (in MS-Excel or MS-Word).
- An application for disposal authority should be submitted in writing to the National Archivist or Provincial Archivist in paper-based or in electronic format.
- The application letter as well as two copies of the file plan/list/schedule should be submitted.
- Only records on the approved list by the National Archives would be disposed and no other records.
- The disposal of records can be done in two ways either i) by destroying the records that were approved with non-archival value or ii) by transferring archival records into archival custody. The information in the records should still be protected during disposal.
- If disposal authority was granted the Department will decide on a time period (retention period) that non-archival records should be preserved for their administrative value before they are disposed of.
- All copies of the records (including security copies, preservation copies and back up copies) should be destroyed.
- Security classified records should be destroyed according to the Minimum Information Security Standard (MISS).
- Electronic records are only successfully destroyed/deleted when the information on all storage media has been overwritten.
- Only ephemeral records may be destroyed.
- A destruction certificate should be compiled after the records were destroyed.
- The destruction certificate should be submitted to the National Archives and Record Services.

13.5 Disposal of records with archival value:

- Records as determined by the National Archivist with archival value must be kept by the Department for twenty years from the date that the records came into being.
- The records will be identified with an A20 symbol on the disposal schedule.
- After written disposal authority has been obtained the Department should arrange for the transfer of the archival records to an archives repository as designated by the National Archives and Records Services.
- The Head of the Department must submit in writing a request to the head of the archives repository to initiate a transfer of records.
- If written approval has been obtained records should be packed according to the Records Management Policy Manual.
- The records should then be dispatched to the archives repository.
- A copy of the transfer list should accompany the transfer and a duplicate copy of the list must be submitted together with a transfer letter to the head of the repository.
- The records should be packed in the same sequence as on the transfer list.

- If relevant registers or indexes are available it should accompany these records to the archive repository.

14. REVIEW OF FILE PLANS:

File plans must be reviewed after three years. Communication will be done to all relevant units for inputs at least three months prior to the expiry date. Units must indicate in writing amendments and additions with retention periods and what records are vital (see sections 11). All amendments and additions should be submitted to the National Archivist for approval. The new file plan could only be used after approval was granted.

15. TRAINING OF STAFF:

All staff in records management must receive formal (e.g. workshops, seminars etc.) and informal (in-house) training to ensure that records are kept and managed according to National Archives and the best practice model.

The records management section should conduct trainings on records management to all staff in the Department on a continuous basis to create awareness and to inform staff on correct procedures.

RECOMMENDED


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GENERAL MANAGER: GITO

2008/03/26
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DATE

APPROVED


.....
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

26/03/2008
.....
DATE