

	DOCUMENT NAME	DOCUMENT NUMBER
	HEALTH RECORD FILING, ARCHIVING, DISPOSING, STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM COMPLIES WITH THE LAW	

VERSION	1	
COMPILED BY		DATE
AUTHORIZED BY		07/2025
NEXT REVISION DATE		07/2027

To comply with the requirement that “**The health establishment must have a health record filing, archiving, disposing, storage and retrieval system which complies with the law,**” you need a **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** and documented processes aligned with South African legislation, particularly the **National Health Act, Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)**, and **Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)** ethical guidelines.

✅ Key Requirements for Compliance:

1. Filing System

- All health records (manual or electronic) must be:
 - Accurately labelled (Name, ID number, Date of Birth)
 - Stored in chronological order or by a unique patient identifier
 - Easy to retrieve on demand

2. Archiving

- Records that are no longer active but must be retained for legal or clinical purposes must be:
 - Archived securely
 - Indexed and retrievable if needed
 - Protected from damage, unauthorized access, or deterioration

3. Storage

- Must ensure:
 - **Confidentiality** (locked cabinets or access-controlled systems)
 - **Integrity** (protected from fire, water damage, pests)
 - **Accessibility** (accessible only to authorized personnel)
 - **Backup systems** in place if electronic

4. Disposal

- Disposal must be:
 - Done only **after legal retention periods** (e.g., 6 years for general records, longer for minors or litigation-sensitive files)
 - **Securely destroyed** (shredding, incineration for paper, secure deletion for electronic)
 - **Logged and documented** (date, method, authorizer)

5. Retrieval System

- You must be able to:
 - Locate a user’s health record **promptly**
 - Ensure traceability of record access or movement

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- Track electronic access if using a digital system

Required Documents:

- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for:
 - Filing and storage
 - Archiving process
 - Secure disposal
 - Retrieval protocols
- Record retention schedule
- Disposal logs (with authorization and method)
- Access control policy (for both physical and electronic records)

Legal Framework References:

- **National Health Act, Section 15 & 17**
- **HPCSA Ethical Guidelines Booklet 9:** "Guidelines on the Keeping of Patient Records"
- **POPIA:** Protection of patient personal information and secure disposal

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Receipt Acknowledgement for this SOP

I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of this policy for this practice. I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding this policy, I will consult with my immediate supervisor or my Human Resources staff members. Please read the policy/procedure carefully to ensure that you understand the policy/procedure before signing this document.

Employee Signature	Employee Printed Name	DATE	Employee Signature	Employee Printed Name	DATE