



## **Record Retention and Destruction Policy**

### **Policy**

This policy covers all documents (including e-mail messages and electronic documents) created or received by the Society of Fire Protection Engineer's (SFPE). The policy is designed to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, to reduce the risk of accidental destruction of records earlier than intended, and to facilitate operations by promoting efficiency and freeing up valuable storage space.

Unless a specific federal or state law provides for a longer or shorter retention period than the Record Retention Guidelines specified below, SFPE follows the general document retention procedures outlined below to the extent feasible. However, no adverse inference is to be drawn from an inadvertent failure to retain a document in accordance with the guidelines below. Documents that are not listed below, but that are substantially similar to those listed in the schedule, will be retained for the appropriate length of time.

### **SUSPENSION OF RECORD DISPOSAL IN EVENT OF LITIGATION OR CLAIMS**

Irrespective of the retention guidelines specified below, upon (i) receiving notice of a lawsuit, government investigation, or other legal action against or involving the Society, or, (ii) learning of circumstances likely to give rise to such an action, proceeding or investigation, all documents in any way relating to such matter shall be preserved and safeguarded and disposal suspended until such time as the Executive Director, with the advice of the SFPE's legal counsel determines otherwise.

### **RECORD STORAGE AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS**

Any or all of SFPE's records may be stored via an electronic storage system rather than as a paper document. All electronic documents will follow the guidelines below and will be maintained for the appropriate amount of time. If a user has a sufficient reason to retain an e-mail message, the message should be kept in an appropriate electronic file folder or moved to an archived electronic file folder. Any of the SFPE's email, regardless of the nature of the content, may be subject to disclosure in the course of a government investigation or litigation involving the Society. SFPE provides its employees with email as a tool for performing its employees' work functions. While SFPE understands that employees may use their email to conduct personal business, employees should be aware that they have no expectation of privacy for any information or communications contained in work-related email accounts. SFPE reserves the right to review any email stored on its server, whether it pertains to business of SFPE or the employee's personal business.



## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Records containing confidential information, whether hardcopy or electronic, should be labeled and/or stored in a manner to limit access to those employees or other individuals with authorization to view such records. Hiring documents, including I-9s, W-4s, employee medical records, drug test results, background and documents containing employee social security numbers will be segregated from personnel files.

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

SFPE's Executive Director shall serve as the Records Administrator and be responsible for administration of this policy and implementing reasonable processes and procedures concerning the record retention and destruction guidelines. Destruction of hardcopy financial and personnel-related documents will be accomplished by shredding. The policy will be periodically reviewed to ensure compliance with new or revised laws and regulations.

## **REPORTING POLICY VIOLATIONS**

SFPE is committed to enforcing the Policy as it applies to all forms of records. The effectiveness of the SFPE's efforts, however, depends largely on its employees. If an employee believes that the employee or someone else may have violated this policy, deliberately or accidentally, the employee should report the incident immediately to the Records Administrator. SFPE prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for reporting incidents of inappropriate conduct of any kind, pursuing any record destruction claim or cooperating in related investigations.

## **PARTICIPANTS TRAINING RECORDS**

Under the guidelines of this Policy SFPE will maintain all documents related to participants training records to include sign in sheets, assessment results, certificates of participation and demographic information collected for the purposes of participating in a course or learning event.



## RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE

| <b>A. ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Record Type</b>  | <b>Retention Period</b>                                    |
| Annual Audit Reports and Financial Statements   | Permanent  |
| Corporate Records (minutes and resolutions of the Board, articles of incorporation and amendments, bylaws and amendments, annual corporate reports) | Permanent  |
| State Charitable Solicitation Reports   | Permanent  |
| Donor Gift Agreements (or other documents evidencing terms of gifts)  | 7 years after expiration                                   |
| Board Policy and Procedures Manuals   | Permanent  |
| Publications  | Permanent  |
| Original Purchase/Sale/Lease Agreements (and related transaction materials)   | Permanent  |
| Trademark Registrations, Patents ,Copyrights and Intangibles  | Permanent  |
| Employee Handbooks  | Permanent  |
| Equipment Records   | 7 years after disposition                                  |
| Contracts and Related Correspondence  | 7 years after expiration or termination                    |
| Litigation Files (including disposition orders)   | 10 years after settlement or exhaustion of all             |
| Membership applications   | Membership term, plus 3 years                              |
| Correspondence relating to member discipline matters  | Membership term, plus 3 years                              |
| Meeting registrations   | 3 years, after completion of audit for year event was held |
| Participant training records and CEUs   | 7 years after completion                                   |
| All Other Society Records (not specifically addressed)  | 5 years  |



| <b>B. ACCOUNTING &amp; FINANCE RECORDS</b>   |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Record Type</b>   | <b>Retention Period</b> |
| General Ledgers (year-end balances)  | Permanent               |
| General Subsidiary Ledgers (AP and AR)   | 7 years                 |
| Bank Reconciliations   | 7 years                 |
| Bank statements and related cancelled checks, bank credits and debits  | 7 years                 |
| Books of original entries (e.g., cash receipts/ accounts receivable, Cash disbursements/ accounts payable, sales, purchases) | 7 years                 |
| Chart of Accounts  | 7 years                 |
| Depreciation records   | 7 years                 |
| General subsidiary ledgers   | 7 years                 |
| Internal and interim financial statements  | 7 years                 |
| Vendor invoices and other supporting documentation   | 7 years                 |
| All other Accounting and Finance Records of the Society.   | 7 years                 |

| <b>C. TAX RECORDS</b>                              |  |
|--|--|
|  | <b>Retention Period</b>                  |
| Tax-Exemption Documents and Related Correspondence | Permanent                                |
| IRS Rulings  | Permanent                                |
| IRS 990 and 990T and applicable state filings      | Permanent                                |
| IRS or other Government Audit Records              | Permanent                                |
| Employment Tax Records                             | 7 years (after tax paid or return filed) |
| 1099 and 1096 Forms                                | 7 years (after year issued)              |



| <b>D. PERSONNEL RECORDS</b>  | <b>Retention Period</b>  |
|--|--|
| Employee Earnings Records  | 7 years after termination  |
| Payroll Check Registers (gross and net)  | 7 years after termination  |
| Forms I-9  | 3 years after date of hire or 1 year after termination, whichever is later |
| W-2, W-3, W-4  | 7 years after termination  |
| Employee Personnel Records (including individual attendance records, application forms, job or status change records, performance evaluations, accommodation due to disability, termination papers, withholding information, test results, training and qualification records) | 7 years after termination  |
| Records for Non-Hired Applicants   | 1 year from date of personnel action                                       |
| Documents Pertaining to COBRA Benefits   | 7 years after termination  |
| Workers Compensation Records   | 7 years after termination  |
| Unemployment Security Records  | 7 years after termination  |
| Employee Benefit Plans and Records (including testing and compliance documentation)  | 7 years after termination of plan  |
| Retirement Plans   | 7 years after termination of plan  |
| Group Insurance Plans - Active Employees   | Until plan is amended or terminated  |

| <b>E. INSURANCE RECORDS</b>  | <b>Retention Period</b>         |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Insurance Policies   | Life of the policy plus 3 years |
| Insurance Certificates Issued to the Society   | 10 years                        |
| Insurance Claims Files (including correspondence, medical records, injury documentation, etc.) | 7 years                         |