

Finance Policy and Procedure 216
Retention and Destruction Guidelines for
General Ledger Transaction Records

Purpose

From the perspective of the department¹ originating a general ledger transaction, to identify the general ledger transaction records (“records”) to be retained, to define the retention period the department is required to retain the records, and to define the period when the department should destroy the records. The following were given consideration in defining the retention period and destruction period: a) legal requirements that specify retention periods; b) the Uniform Preservation of Private Business Records Act and the federal Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (guidelines for retention where there is no legal requirement for keeping a particular record or in the absence of a specific retention time for a particular record); and c) general business practices of the university that included retention for historical reference purposes. This policy does not pertain to records for which primary responsibility for the determination and communication of retention and destruction guidelines rests with other departments.²

Policy

This policy requires the department originating the transaction to utilize a systematic approach to retaining and destroying records in accordance with the guidelines established herein. For purposes of this policy, no distinction is made as to whether the record relates to unrestricted or restricted activities of the university. This policy identifies the records to be kept, provides the amount of time the record is to be stored and maintained, and provides for systematic destruction of obsolete or unnecessary records.

¹ Department refers to a unit within a major operating area of responsibility: major operating areas of responsibility include Academic Affairs, Administration, Development and Alumni Relations, Executive and Central Divisions, Finance, General Counsel, Information Technology, Investments, Medical Center, Public Affairs, and University Affairs and Athletics

² Policy does not pertain to (partial listing): personnel and employment records; faculty records and files; student records; endowment asset and investment records; fixed assets; bond documents; records of projects funded by bond proceeds; donor pledges and gift receipt records; patient records; sponsored research grant records; alumni records; institutional publications; and institutional Board of Trust records

RECORDS TO BE KEPT:

The department is responsible for storing and maintaining records such that a record is retrievable by the department upon request during the retention period. Records to be stored and maintained include the following:

- General ledger (GL) system generated reports
- GL journal entries and supporting documentation
- 1180 forms
- GL sub-system interfaces (e.g., payroll, accounts payable, plant operations, ITS, student accounts, dining, gift receipts, grant accounting)
- GL reconciliation schedules
- Daily cash deposits and supporting documentation
- Check requests including petty cash fund reimbursements
- Original vendor invoices and support documentation (e.g., packing slips, bill of lading)
- Payment card transactions receipt/invoice, packing slip, internet confirmation
- Travel expense reports and supporting documentation
- Purchase requisitions
- Original contracts and agreements including services contracts, lease agreements

AMOUNT OF TIME RECORDS TO BE KEPT:

The amount of time a record is to be stored and maintained is eight years. The eight year retention period is based upon a five-year sponsored research award/project plus the minimum retention period of three years after the expiration of the grant or grant renewal. Records should be destroyed as soon as practical after the eight-year retention period (or longer if the sponsored research award/project extends beyond a five-year period) is met.

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS:

The originating department is to systematically identify the obsolete or unnecessary records to be scheduled for destruction by an appropriate purging process based on the type of record, the confidentiality associated with the record, and the cost of purging the record.

References to Finance Policies and Procedures

Policy 205: Responsibilities of Division Fiscal Officers

Policy 211: Responsibilities of Authorized Signers

Policy 215: Roles and responsibilities of Center Responsible Persons

Policy 217: University Central Departmental Online Confirmation of General Ledger Activity Reconciliation Policy and Procedures

Policy 401: Sub-system Interface Control

Policy XXX: Journal Entry Submission to Finance

Trustee and Effective Dates

Relative to ongoing review for continued applicability and/or updating, the trustee for this policy is Finance.

Effective: June 2004

Last Revised: April 2013