

Natural Hazard Mitigation Association

DOCUMENTATION RETENTION/DESTRUCTION POLICY

Approved by:
Revision Approved by:

Date:
Date:

1. Purpose.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that nhma manages data in an efficient and effective manner, maintains historical records related to its financial and administrative operations, and purges documents as part of its normal management process. By establishing a specific timeline for document purging, this shall also ensure compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which prohibits the alteration, falsification or destruction of documents that are part of any official proceeding. If anyone associated with the Institute becomes aware of any investigation, the Institute shall be notified immediately so that document purging will cease and all relevant documents will be appropriately identified and protected. Documents requested and subpoenaed by legally authorized personnel will be provided within five (5) business days. The Board Chair and Executive Director will authorize provision. No documents will be concealed, altered or destroyed with the intent to obstruct the investigation or litigation.

2. Definitions.

- “Document” refers to any item listed in the table below, in either hard copy, or electronic form. Electronic files also include those in audio/visual or emailed forms.
- “Administrative” refers to documents pertinent to the day-to-day operations of the Institute.
- “Historic” refers to documents that are valuable for maintaining knowledge of the history of the Institute and its work.
- “Legal” refers to any document that is a contract or agreement between parties, which contains financial information relevant to IRS filings, or that must be maintained to comply with laws and regulations.
- “Recycle/scrap paper” includes disposal by normal recycling methods or reuse as scrap paper for internal printing or note taking.
- “Shred” means using a shredder machine to properly shred and dispose of documents.
- “Delete” means to delete or purge an electronic file.

3. Labeling and Storage.

All files, both hard copy and electronic, shall be labeled by topic and year (if applicable). Electronic copies shall be saved in appropriate folders on network drive. Hard copies shall be stored in file cabinets, or archived in the Executive Officer’s office. Archived hard copy files shall be stored in firm, water and animal proof containers, clearly labeled with “NHMA,” topic, and year. If documents of similar type and with the same retention and destruction requirements are stored together, they shall also be labeled with a “destroy after” date so that they do not have to be reviewed additional times.

4. Review and Purging.

Review and purging of files may take place in an ongoing manner, but will occur annually, and must follow the minimum retention requirements stated below. Such review and purging must also occur prior to archival storage of any files.

5. Document Drafts.

Once the final copy of a document has been completed, the drafts may be recycled or deleted, unless they are documents of legal value. For documents determined to be of legal value, drafts containing comments shall be saved for a minimum of two years, and drafts without comment may be destroyed once the final version is complete.

6. Minimum Retention Requirements.

<u>Document Type</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Minimum Retention Requirement</u>	<u>Destruction Method</u>
Organizational founding documents (e.g. Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, IRS Letter of Determination, annual corporate filings)	Legal, historic	Permanently	N/A
Formal meeting notes (e.g. Board, Advisory Committee)	Administrative, historic	Permanently	N/A
Informal (handwritten) meeting notes (e.g. staff meetings)	Administrative	2 years, or longer if topics remain relevant	Recycle/scrap paper
Funded grant proposals, reports, correspondence, etc.	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years after closure	Shred financial and private information, or recycle/scrap; delete electronic version
Rejected grant proposals, correspondence, etc.	Administrative, historic	2 years after rejection	Shred financial and private information, or recycle/scrap; delete electronic version
Timesheets	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years after end of employment	Shred if contains personal information, or recycle/scrap
Expense reports	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years after end of employment	Shred if contains financial information, or recycle/scrap
Budgets	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years	Shred; delete
Subscriptions/memberships	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years after end of subscription	Shred if contains financial information, or recycle/scrap
Employee evaluations	Administrative, historic, legal	2 years after end of employment.	Shred; delete
Contracts with, invoices from, vendors	Administrative, historic, legal	7 years after expiration/payment	Shred; delete
Workshop files	Administrative, historic, and/or legal		
• Marketing		• 7 years	• Recycle/scrap; delete
• Attendee list		• 7 years	• N/A
• Invoices from consultants or payment record from attendees		• 7 years	• N/A
• Contracts with consultants		• 7 years	• N/A
• Payments for food/supplies		• 7 years	• Shred
• General information		• 2 years	• Recycle/scrap; delete
Topical information	Administrative	2 years, or as long as still relevant	Recycle/scrap; delete
Correspondence (general)	Administrative, historic	2 years or as long as still relevant	Recycle/scrap; delete

Presentations given • Presentations that can be reused • Presentations for one use	Administrative, historic	• 7 years	• Recycle/scrap; delete
		• 2 years	• Recycle/scrap; delete
Photographs • High quality with details of event • Photos missing details of event • Low quality	Administrative, historic	• 10 years, or may keep for historical purposes	• Recycle/scrap; delete
		• 2 years	• Recycle/scrap; delete
Press clippings	Historic	• 2 years Permanently if electronic or a hard copy without electronic backup; 2 years for hardcopy with backup	• Recycle/scrap; delete Recycle/scrap
Accounting records – general ledgers, financial statements, and all documentation supporting such accounting records.	Administrative, historic, and/or legal	7 years, unless item is needed to fulfill current legal contracts	Recycle/scrap; delete
Tax Records – Form 990s, payroll registers, 1099s to contract workers, W2s, payroll withholding records	Administrative, historic, and/or legal	7 years, unless item is needed to fulfill current legal contracts	Recycle/scrap; delete
Insurance Records	Administrative, historic, and/or legal	Permanent	N/A

End.