

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES

**Headquarters, Copenhagen
Revision 1: 19 December 2011**

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTIVE No. 12 (rev. 1)**UNOPS Record Retention Policy****1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES (UNOPS) recognises the fact that UNOPS produces records as part of its daily business and that UNOPS must thus unambiguously classify as well as register, file, transfer, archive, maintain and dispose of records as an indispensable part thereof. In order to promote a transparent and traceable business operation, UNOPS commits itself to controlling the records it produces as an organisation.
- 1.2. UNOPS recognises that, given the numerous and heterogeneous records it produces, the specific handling of records is best defined within its Practices. Thus, this Organizational Directive (OD) is in line with the Practice Approach defined in OD 15 UNOPS Global Structure.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. *Disposal*: The transfer of non-current records to their final state, either destruction or infinite storage in an archive, if so specified in the Record Retention and Disposition Schedule.
- 2.2. *Electronic records*: Records created through means of Information Technology or transferred into electronic format by e.g. scanning.
- 2.3. *Personnel*: All UNOPS Staff members and other individuals engaged by UNOPS under specific contractual arrangements to perform services for UNOPS project activities or administrative support.
- 2.4. *Record*: Any information, regardless of physical form or characteristic, which originate from or are received by UNOPS within the framework of its official activities.
- 2.5. *Retention and Disposition Schedule*: A list formally defining records to be kept, as well as at least retention periods and consequent disposition actions authorised for those records contained in the schedule.

3. Purpose

3.1. This OD aims to fulfil three major purposes:

- 3.1.1. To ensure UNOPS meets the requirements of ISO 9001 with regard to record retention;
- 3.1.2. To ensure transparency and traceability of UNOPS business conduct; and
- 3.1.3. To foster efficiency and effectiveness as regards the conduct, traceability and documentation of UNOPS business operations.

4. Scope

4.1. This OD covers the classification, registration, storage, transfer, maintenance and disposal of all records, paper-based or electronic, originating from or received by UNOPS.

5. Principles

- 5.1. Records must be captured and managed in a coherent, integrated way. The relationship between individual records must be treated as an integral component thereof.
- 5.2. In capturing and managing records, the duplication of efforts and the fragmentation of records should be minimized.
- 5.3. UNOPS business processes should be the basis for identifying and assigning ownership of records.
- 5.4. Paper-based and electronic records, including scanned documents, shall have equal validity, where electronic records are preferred to paper-based records.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. UNOPS Practice Leads are responsible for:

- 6.1.1. Defining which records must be kept and for how long; and establishing a framework for capturing the importance of records. In doing so, Practice Leads should consider and align their decisions to relevant existing UN policies on Record Retention.
- 6.1.2. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities with regard to Record Retention. This shall include responsibilities for records from other offices, e.g. in case of close-down.

6.2. Regional and HQ Directors are responsible for:

- 6.2.1. Acting in a consultative role to Practice Leads in defining the framework for record retention and disposition in UNOPS.
- 6.2.2. Ensuring the establishment of appropriate storing facilities for both electronic and paper-based records.

6.2.3. Ensuring that the established regulations and rules with regard to Record Retention are complied with.

6.2.4. Operationalizing the framework for record retention and disposition in their region/business unit as established by the Practice Leads.

6.3. UNOPS personnel are responsible for:

6.3.1. Complying with the record retention requirements within their respective practices.

7. Basic Requirements

7.1. All records that represent any administrative, fiscal, historical, informational or legal value shall be kept.

7.2. All records shall be kept as long as required in line with their content and under consideration of other relevant internal and external regulation as outlined in [Annex A](#).

7.3. Ownership of records must be established in line with the processes producing them. In case where a record is co-produced by different Practices, Practices should duly coordinate to define ownership and responsibilities.

7.4. Records must, from the moment they are produced to, if applicable, the moment they are ultimately disposed of, remain legible, retrievable, and useful.


7.5. Records must be stored in the simplest way possible while sustaining their integrity, retrievability and legibility.

7.6. Records must be created and stored in a way that preserves the contained information identically to how it was originally produced.

7.7. In capturing and managing records, existing tools including data bases should be used. In cases where existing tools cannot be utilized, justification must be presented to the owner of the relevant record retention schedule.

8. Final Provision

8.1. This Revision is effective **30 December 2011**.



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