

Records Management Procedure

1. Introduction

The College of Acupuncturists of Alberta (College) is responsible for regulating the Acupuncturist Profession under the *Health Professions Act* (Act). The Act requires the College to keep certain records for 10 years, as set out in s.121 (a)-(c). The College sets records management requirements for other records in its custody or control. **Records** are valuable resources and assets created to meet operational, legislative, financial, and historical requirements. **Records** under the custody and control of the College are managed as part of the usual and ordinary course of business at the College. **Records** may exist in multiple formats, such as paper and electronic formats, and must be managed throughout the **information lifecycle** in accordance with applicable policy, procedures, and standards.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the actions required by those acting on behalf of the College to manage **transitory records**, retain **records**, safeguard and store **records**, **records** access, **convert records**, and **destroy records**.

3. Definitions

Active records: official records that have not passed their destruction date.

Confidential information: information that is personal, health-related, or belongs to a third-party.

Conversion: the process of changing records from one format to another while maintaining the characteristic of the record.

Destruction (or destroyed): the disposal of records with the objective of obliteration beyond any possible reconstitution.

Final Record: the instance of a record that is authoritative, final, and complete.

Individual acting on behalf of the College: includes employees, Council members, Regulatory Committee members, consultants, and contractors.

Information lifecycle: the series of stages that a record follows during its lifespan from when it is created/collected through to its classification/organization, use, maintenance, preservation, and destruction.

Official record: records that are created to meet operation, legislative, financial, or historical obligations.

Record: documents, data, or information in any form or in any medium, whether in written, printed, photographic or electronic form or any other form, but does not include a computer program or other mechanism that can produce a record.

Records Request Form: form that must be completed by current or past regulated members to request access to **records** in possession of the College that pertains to their registration file.

Regulated Member: an individual registered on the general, provisional, or courtesy register with the College.

Secure: protocols are in place to protect **records** from being accessed by unintended recipients.

Source record: the original **record** that was digitized to create an electronic **official record**.

Transitory Record: **records** that have no ongoing operational, informational, evidential, or historical value.

4. Procedure

4.1 Management of Transitory Records

- 4.1.1 **Transitory records** shall not be preserved in a record-keeping system and should not be retained beyond their usefulness.
- 4.1.2 Where multiple copies of **official records** are generated, a **final record** shall be identified. All other copies may be treated as **transitory** providing the **record** has no future business, financial, legal, research, or historical value.
- 4.1.3 **Transitory records** that contain **confidential information** shall be protected and **destroyed** according to the procedures set out in this document.

4.2 Retention of Official Records

- 4.2.1 The College will retain **official records** for the timeframes outlined in Appendix 1: Retention Schedule. Once passed the retention timeline, **records** shall be **destroyed**.

4.3 Safeguarding and Storing Records

- 4.3.1 **Official records** shall be properly labelled to be easily identifiable.
- 4.3.2 Paper-based **active records** less than five (5) years old shall be stored and managed on-site in a **secure** manner, unless **conversion** is taking place.
- 4.3.3 Paper-based **active records** that are five (5) years old or older may be stored in a **secure** off-site location.
- 4.3.4 All electronic **official records** shall be stored on a secure server.
- 4.3.5 **Records** identified for **destruction** shall be stored in a **secure** manner until their **destruction**.
- 4.3.6 **Records** shall not be shared with the **public** or **regulated members** unless a **records request form** is submitted.
 - 4.3.6.1 If a **records request form** is submitted, **records** shall only be shared if they apply to the registration file of the individual making the request.

4.3.6.2 The College will retain the original copies of all **records**, and individuals shall receive a copy of the original **record**.

4.3.6.3 The College may charge a fee to release **records**, depending on the circumstances of retrieving those records.

4.4 Access to Records

4.4.1 Employees shall only access **records** they have a rational and appropriate reason to access.

4.4.2 **Individuals acting on behalf of the College** shall only be granted access to **records** that pertain to the service they are providing.

4.4.2.1 **Individuals acting on behalf of the College** shall be required to ensure any **records** they are granted access to are stored in a **secure** manner.

4.4.2.2 **Individuals acting on behalf of the College** shall **destroy records** once their contract has been closed.

4.4.2.3 **Individuals acting on behalf of the College** must maintain confidentiality of any **records** they are granted access to in the course of their service.

4.4.3 Current and past **regulated members** may request access to their own registration **records** by filling out the **Records Request Form**. Members shall receive the requested **record(s)** within thirty (30) days of the College receiving their **Records Request Form**.

4.5 Conversion of Records

4.5.1 **Conversion** applies when **source records** are converted to a new format and the new format becomes the **official record**.

4.5.2 **Conversion of records** shall be done in a manner that ensures the continuing authenticity, integrity, reliability, and usability of the converted **records**.

4.5.2.1 When **records** are converted to a new format, steps must be taken to ensure the quality and understanding of the converted **record** is not lost.

4.5.2.2 The target system for converted **records** must be **secure**.

4.5.2.3 Prior to destruction of **source records**, a quality assurance check must be completed to confirm that the converted **records** continue to have integrity, reliability, and useability.

4.6 Destruction of Records

4.6.1 **Official records** shall be destroyed according to the retention timeline outlined in Appendix 1.

4.6.2 **Records** shall be destroyed safely, securely, and in a timely manner to minimize the risks associated with **destruction of records**.

4.6.3 **Official records**, and **transitory records** that contain **confidential** information, shall be **destroyed** by making them unreadable. Appropriate methods of destroying:

- 4.6.3.1 Paper-based **records** in custody of the College should be shredded by a third-party destruction service provider.
- 4.6.3.2 Paper-based **records** in custody of an **individual acting on behalf of the College** are required to be **destroyed**, but it is not required to use a third party.
- 4.6.3.3 Electronic **records** shall be permanently deleted.
- 4.6.3.4 Physical storage media shall be **destroyed** by a third-party destruction service provider. Hard drives should be wiped clean prior to **destruction**.
- 4.6.4 **Official records** stored offsite shall be labelled with a **destruction** date and periodically reviewed to identify **records** that have reached their **destruction** date and have them **destroyed** in the manner detailed above.
- 4.6.5 **Official records** converted to a different format or media are considered **source records** and may be **destroyed**.

5. Authority

This policy is established under the authority of Corporate Governance Policy G.1.2, which delegates the authority for the Chief Executive Officer to establish policies and procedures for the management and operation of the College for regulatory program policies.

6. Scope

Compliance with this document is required by all **individuals acting on behalf of the College**.

7. Related Policies and Procedures

- O.4.0 Records Management Policy

8. Version History

Date	Notes
August 10, 2023	Approved by the Chief Executive Officer

Appendix 1 – Retention Schedule

Record Type	Retention Timeline (years)
Bylaws (all versions)	indefinitely
Council and Regulatory Committee meeting minutes	indefinitely
Expired policies and procedures	indefinitely
Insurance policies	5 (after superseded)
Contracts and leases	5 (after superseded or expired)
Regulated member records	10
Examination results and reports	10
Examination candidate answer sheets and score sheets	5
Examination result letters to candidates	10
Records of professional conduct complaints, investigations, ratified settlements or agreements, hearings, and decisions	10
Annual reports	indefinitely
Other financial records	10



Appendix 2 – Records Request Form



Records Access Request

Use this form to request records regarding your registration file. Submit requests to info@acupuncturealberta.ca or mail to:

College of Acupuncturists of Alberta
201-9612 51 Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T6A 5A6

All requests require a clear copy of valid identification. Provide one of the following: driver's license, passport, or identification card.

According to the Records Management Procedure, a fee may apply to a records request depending on the circumstances of retrieving the requested records.

Records will be provided to members by email.

Requester Information	
Last Name	First Name
Date of Birth	Registration Number
Email Address	
Date Requested	Signature
<input type="checkbox"/> I am the regulated member this information pertains to. <input type="checkbox"/> I have attached a copy of valid identification.	

What information is being requested?

Office Use	Received date:	
	Date information sent to requester:	