



ACTS Document Retention and Destruction Policy

Office of the Executive Director

April 2014

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Executive Director

ACTS
Document retention and destruction policy

Developed 2014

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DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY

I. Purpose

This policy provides for the systematic review, retention, and destruction of documents received or created by the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in connection with the transaction of ACTS business. This policy covers all records and documents, regardless of physical form, contains guidelines for how long certain documents should be kept and how records should be destroyed. The policy is designed to ensure compliance with government laws state laws and regulations, to eliminate accidental or innocent destruction of records and to facilitate ACTS operations by promoting efficiency and freeing up valuable storage space.

II. Document Retention

ACTS follows the document retention procedures outlined below. Documents that are not listed, but are substantially similar to those listed in the schedule, will be retained for the appropriate length of time.

III. Organization Records

No.	Type of Document	Minimum Requirement
1	Accident Reports and Workers Compensation Records	7 Years
2	Accounts Payable Ledgers and Schedules	7 Years
3	Annual Reports to Stakeholders and donors	7 Years
4	Staff performance contracts and Appraisals	Permanently
5	Articles of Incorporation, The charter, registration certificate, Host country agreement with ministry of Foreign affairs and finance documents	Permanently
6	Audit Reports	Permanently
7	Bank Deposit Slips	7 Years
8	Bank Statements and Reconciliations	7 Years
9	Board Meeting and Board Committee Minutes	Permanently
10	Board Policies and Resolutions	Permanently
11	By-laws	Permanently
12	Cash Receipts	3 years
13	Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
14	Grants agreements Contracts and subcontracts	7 Years after Expired
15	Construction Documents	Permanently
16	Copyright Registrations	Permanently
17	Correspondence (General)	3 Years
18	Correspondence (Legal and Important Matters)	Permanently
19	Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
20	Credit Card Receipts	3 years
21	Deeds and Bills of Sale	Permanently
22	Depreciation Schedules	Permanently
23	Donor Records and Acknowledgement Letters	10 years
24	Duplicate Deposit Slips	2 years

25	Earnings Records	7 years
26	Electronic Fund Transfer Documents	7 years
27	Employment Applications	7 years
28	Environmental Studies, evaluations and audits	Permanently
29	Expense Analyses/Expense Distribution Schedules	7 years
30	Filings with the Registrar of Non Governmental Organizations	10 years
31	Financial Statements	Permanently
32	Fixed Asset Records	Permanently
33	Garnishment Records	7 years
34	General Ledgers	Permanently
35	Grant Applications, Agreements and Contracts	7 years
36	Insurance Policies, Current Accident Reports, Claims	Permanently
37	Intellectual Property and Trade Secrets	Life
38	Internal Audit reports	5 years
39	Inventories of Product, Materials, and Supplies	7 years
40	Invoices	7 years
41	Journal Entries	7 years
42	Leases (office space, equipment etc)	7 years
43	Legal Files	10 years
44	Minute Books or Charter	Permanently
45	Mortgages and hire purchase documents	7 years
46	Notes	7 years
47	Patents and Related Papers	Permanently
48	Payroll Records	7 years
49	Personnel Files (terminated employees)	7 years
50	Petty Cash Vouchers	3 years
51	Records of promotion	7 years
52	Retirement and Pension Plan Documents	Permanently
53	Salary Schedules	5 years
54	Sales Records	5 years
55	Government Tax Returns	Permanently
56	Stock and Bond Records	Permanently
57	Timesheets	7 years
58	Withholding Tax returns and Statements	7 years

IV. Glossary of Terms

1. Board and Board Committee Materials. Meetings minutes should be retained in perpetuity in the ACTSminute book.
2. Commercial Fundraiser. A commercial fundraiser for charitable purposes must maintain during each solicitation campaign, and for not less than 10 years following the completion of each solicitation campaign, records including any electronic records, containing information regarding:
 - a) The date and amount of each contribution received as a result of the solicitation campaign and, for non-cash contributions, the name and mailing address of each contributor.
 - b) The name and residence address of each employee, agent or other person involved in the solicitation campaign.
 - c) Records of all revenue received and expenses incurred in the course of the solicitation campaign.
 - d) For each account into which the commercial fundraiser deposited revenue from the solicitation campaign, the account number and the name and location of the bank or other financial institution in which the account was maintained.
 - e) If commercial fundraiser sells tickets to events and represents that they will be donated for use by another, then he or she must keep the number of tickets purchased and donated by each contributor, name address of all organizations receiving donated tickets.

ACTS must maintain a copy of its contract with the commercial fundraiser and records of solicitations and donations according to the table above.

3. Contracts. Final, executed copies of all contracts entered into by ACTS should be retained. ACTSshould retain copies of the final contracts for at least seven years beyond the life of the agreement, and longer in the case of publicly filed contracts.
4. Development/Intellectual Property and Trade Secrets. Development documents are often subject to intellectual property protection in their final form (e.g., patents and copyrights). The documents detailing the development process are often also of value to ACTS and are protected as a trade secret where ACTS;
 - a) Derives independent economic value from the secrecy of the information; and
 - b) ACTS has taken affirmative steps to keep the information confidential.

- c) ACTS should keep all documents designated as containing trade secret information for at least the life of the trade secret.
5. Legal Files. Legal counsel should be consulted to determine the retention period of particular documents, but legal documents should generally be maintained for a period of ten years.
6. Personnel Files. Government statutes require Organization's to keep certain recruitment, employment and personnel information. ACTS should also keep personnel files that reflect performance reviews and any complaints brought against ACTS or individual employees under applicable government statutes. ACTS should also keep all final memoranda and correspondence reflecting performance reviews and actions taken by or against personnel in the employee's personnel file. Personnel records should be retained for seven years.
7. Press Releases/Public Filings. ACTS should retain permanent copies of all press releases and publicly filed documents under the theory that ACTS should have its own copy to test the accuracy of any document a member of the public can theoretically produce against ACTS.
8. Tax Records. Tax records include, but may not be limited to, documents concerning payroll, expenses, proof of deductions, business costs, accounting procedures, and other documents concerning ACTS revenues. Tax records should be retained permanently, Payroll tax returns can be retained for only seven years.

V. Electronic Documents and Records

Electronic documents will be retained as if they were paper documents. Therefore, any electronic files, including records of donations made online, that fall into one of the document types on the above schedule will be maintained for the appropriate amount of time. If a user has sufficient reason to keep an email message, the message should be printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file or moved to an "archive" computer file folder. Backup and recovery methods will be tested on a regular basis.

V. Emergency Planning

ACTS records will be stored in a safe, secure and accessible manner. Documents and financial files that are essential to keeping ACTS operating in an emergency will be duplicated or backed up at least every month and maintained off site.

VI. Document Destruction

ACTS Designated Person responsible for the ongoing process of identifying its records, which have met the required retention period and overseeing their destruction. Destruction of Financial and Personnel related documents will be accomplished by shredding.

Document destruction will be suspended immediately, upon any indication of an official investigation or when a lawsuit is filed or appears imminent. Destruction will be reinstated upon conclusion of the investigation.

VII. Compliance

Failure on the part of employees to follow this policy can result in possible civil and criminal sanctions against ACTS and its employees and possible disciplinary action against responsible individuals. The Designated Person will periodically review these procedures with legal counsel or ACTSCertified Public Accountant to ensure that they are in compliance with new or revised regulations.

Signed:  _____

Dr. Cosmas Ochieng
Executive Director

This day of: 25/02/2015