

# Retention Schedule

Version 3 | July 2023

## Purpose

The PHSO Retention Schedule identifies the main classifications of corporate records held by the PHSO and provides appropriate retention rules for each. It should be read in conjunction with the [PHSO Information Management Policy](#). This retention schedule sets out how long PHSO keeps or retains the business or organisational information, generally referred to as records, it has created and stored as part of carrying out its functions. This includes information that constitutes personal data as defined by data protection law. It is intended to provide a transparent guide to what we hold and why we hold it for the public, the people we work with and for and other interested parties.

## Scope

This retention schedule applies to all records (information artefacts) created or acquired by PHSO including evidence obtained during the course of our investigations.

## Core principles

1. This retention schedule expressly allows for the secure deletion of duplicates under the oversight of the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and their deputies.
2. The most common standard retention period for PHSO is either two or six years from the date of last active use e.g., modification or saving. Viewing a record does not constitute active use.
3. A minimum two-year retention period also applies to any record not expressly identified in this retention schedule where there is no legal, statutory or other business justified requirement to retain for longer.

The latest version of the Retention Schedule is always published in PHSO's publication scheme on [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)  
Version 3 | Retention Schedule | July 2023

4. Any request to 'hold' a record outside of the retention schedule, for example to extend how long we keep tender evaluation scoresheets for in event of a legal challenge to our procurement, or to add a new record type to the schedule must be made to the Data Protection Officer via HelpHub (internal PHSO staff) or [dpo@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:dpo@ombudsman.org.uk) (external).
5. Email messages held in Outlook or Teams chat messages are not categories of information; any emails that record a final decision or are evidence of a critical business process should be saved separately. Emails within Outlook are held for three months and then archived for two years. Teams instant messages sent via the Chat feature, or within Channels are held for three months and then deleted. Exceptions to this rule may be made for specific senior staff e.g. CEO.

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

### Contents

1. [Payroll and pensions](#)
  2. [Accounting and financial records](#)
  3. [Buildings and facilities](#)
  4. [Health and safety](#)
  5. [Health and safety risk assessments](#)
  6. [Sites and safety](#)
  7. [Legal and Regulatory](#)
  8. [Data, Security and Privacy](#)
  9. [Casework](#)
  10. [Clinical advice](#)
  11. [People](#)
  12. [Governance](#)
- [Version control](#)

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

### 1 Payroll and pensions

Record Type	Retention period	Owner	Requirement Source
Payroll Records	6 years minimum from end of the year they relate	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Employee pension contributions	6 years	Assistant Director Finance	Pension regulator
Automated enrolment records	6 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory
Job holder opt-in notice	6 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory
Job holder opt-out notice	4 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory
Date worker became active member	6 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory
Workers joining notice	6 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory
Details of personal pension schemes	6 years	Assistant Director of HR	Non-statutory

### 2 Accounting and financial records

Record Type	Retention period	Owner	Requirement Source
Accounting records	6 years from financial year end	Assistant Director Finance	Tax purposes
Signed copies for Parliament	6 years from financial year end	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Budgets and periodic internal financial reports	6 years from year end	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Bank statements	2 years	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Credit card statements	2 years	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Asset registers	6 years after asset or last one in the register is disposed of	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Depreciation registers	6 years after asset or last one in the register is disposed of	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory
Financial statements	6 years	Assistant Director Finance	Non-statutory

### 3 Buildings and Facilities

Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Requirement Source
Drawings - plans and buildings	Lifetime of the building	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Leases - the grant of leases, licences and other rights over property	Period of the lease plus 12 years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Maintenance contracts (routine)	7 years from end of contract	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Plans - building (as built)	Lifetime of building	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Agreements with contractors and consultants	Review 16 years after date of final paper	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Drainage services	Review 15 years after issue	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Building condition surveys	Review 25 years after issue	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Fire precautions and services	Review 10 years after issue	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Maintenance schedules	Review 16 years after superseded	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Maintenance diaries or logs	Destroy 16 years after final entry	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Installation surveys (plant and services)	Review 16 years after date of survey	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Maintenance contracts and related correspondence	Review 12 years after end of contract	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Meetings with contractors a) agenda, minutes (record set) b) agenda, minutes (other copies) c) drafts, domestic arrangements	a) Review five years after date of meeting b) Destroy six years after date of meeting c) Destroy three years after date of meeting	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Leases (signed copies)	Destroy 16 years after expiry	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Subletting agreements	Destroy 12 years after termination	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Landlords' consents	Destroy 16 years after surrender, expiry or	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

	termination of lease or memoranda of terms		
Fire certificates	Destroy 12 years after expiry or superseded	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Planning consents and correspondence a) alterations to buildings b) new buildings	a) Review 25 years after issue b) Review 25 years after issue	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

### 4 Health and Safety

Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Requirement Source
Accident Reports - adults	3 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	RIDDOR 1995, Social Security (claims and payments) regulations 1979
RIDDOR reportable incident	3 years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Investigation of Accidents	40 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Limitation Act 1980
Witness Statements	12 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Limitations Act 1980
Accident Book	3 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	RIDDOR 1995



## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Record of health and safety training for employees	Permanently	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Development and establishment of H&S policy	50 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Audit and review of H&S provision	10 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Formation of a safety committee under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.	50 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
Data and analysis of performance against H&S policy	1 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
Proceedings and decisions of a safety committee formed under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.	50 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
Election of representatives of employee safety under the Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996	1 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

### 5 Health and safety risk assessments

Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Requirement Source
Manual Handling Assessments	6 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non Statutory
DSE Assessments: Screen test records	6 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
DSE Assessments: Risk assessment	6 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
DSE Assessments: Corrective Appliance Voucher records	6 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
Risk Assessments and recommended actions	At least until a further assessment has taken place	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

### 6 Sites and safety

Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Requirement Source
Fire certificate	3 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Fire Precautions Act 1971
RIDDOR notification to HSE	12 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Specifications for first aid facilities and equipment	5 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (First Aid) regulations 1981

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Assessment of requirements for first aid facilities and equipment	5 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Health and Safety (First Aid) regulations 1981
Assessment of requirements for fire-fighting systems and equipment	5 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Fire Precautions (Workplace) regulations 1997
Site & Safety Inspections	5 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Arrangements with external emergency service organisations	5 Years	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Fire Precautions (Workplace) regulations 1997, Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

## 7 Legal and Regulatory

Record Type	Minimum Retention	Owner	Requirement Source
Contracts executed as a deed	12 years after performance	Senior Financial Accountant	Tax / Limitation
Other Contracts	6 years after performance	Senior Financial Accountant	Tax / Limitation
Contracts relating to building, building maintenance, repairs etc.	15 years after performance	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Insurance policies, proposal forms, renewal notices and certificates	6 years or until all claims are settled	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Legal advice	6 years	Senior Lawyer	Non-statutory
Legal and jurisdictional advice	6 years	Senior Lawyer	Non-statutory
Casework litigation	6 years from close of case	Senior Lawyer	Non-statutory
General legal administration	6 years from close of case	Senior Lawyer	Non-statutory

## 8 Data, Security and Privacy

Record Type	Minimum Retention	Owner	Requirement Source
Information rights requests including Data Protection, FOIA, internal review cases and Material Evidence requests	6 years from case closure	Deputy Data Protection Officer	FOIA, Data Protection Legislation
Data breaches and incidents	6 years from date of incident	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Data Protection Legislation
Policies			Non-statutory
Correspondence with the ICO	6 years from last active usage	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	
Data Protection Impact Assessments	Should be kept from life of the activity to which it relates + 6	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Data Protection Legislation

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

	years; if relating to a one-off activity then 6 years from completion activity		
Record of processing activity	Until register is superseded	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Data Protection Legislation
Data retained outside of source systems and applications for reporting purposes. (Data : Exports / Extracts / Dumps / Snapshots / Views etc.)	6 years from creation	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Non-statutory
Technical documentation and architecture	6 years from date of accreditation	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Non-statutory
Accreditation certificates and evidence	6 years from date of accreditation	DPO/Assistant Director of Data Security and Privacy	Non-statutory

## 9 Casework

Record Type	Minimum Retention	Owner	Requirement Source
Complaint files	2 years from closure of case or last significant activity	Deputy Director of Operations	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Investigation reports	Permanently	Deputy Director of Operations	Non-statutory
Material evidence (secondary data)	2 years from closure of case or last significant activity	Deputy Director of Operations	Non-statutory
Case Stubs	Five years from closure of case or last significant activity	Deputy Director of Operations	Non-statutory

### 10 Clinical advice

Record Type	Minimum Retention	Owner	Requirement Source
Clinical advisor recruitment agreements	Deleted three months after agreement discontinued		Non-statutory
Clinical Advice	Deleted along with associated case		Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

### 11 People

Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Access	Source
Senior executives' records (that is, those on a senior management team or their equivalents)	Permanently for historical purposes	HR Director	HR staff	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (Non Statutory requirement)
Personnel files including AL, Welfare records, absence, maternity/paternity and training records (including disciplinary records)	6 years after employment has terminated	HR Director	HR staff	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (Non Statutory requirement - recommended)
Written particulars of employment, contracts of employment, and changes to terms and conditions	6 after termination of employment	HR Director	HR staff	Non Statutory
Record of dismissal	2 years	HR Director	HR staff	Non Statutory
Job advertisements	1 year	HR Director	Public	Non Statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Recruitment records (unsuccessful)	1 year	HR Director	HR staff	Because of the time limits in the various discrimination Acts, minimum retention periods for records relating to advertising of vacancies and job applications should be at least 6 months. A year may be more advisable as the time limits for bringing claims can be extended. Successful job applicants documents will be transferred to the personnel file in any event.
Record Type	Retention Period	Owner	Access	Source
Job Descriptions	3 years after post has been filled	HR Director	Public	No protection needed as published
Redundancy details, calculations of payments, refunds, notification to the Secretary of State	6 years from the date of redundancy.	HR Director	HR staff	Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators
Statutory Maternity Pay records, calculations, certificates (Mat B1s) or other medical evidence	3 years after the end of the tax year in which the maternity period ends	HR Director	HR staff	The Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1960) as amended



## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Statutory Sick Pay records, calculations, certificates, self-certificates	3 years after the end of the tax year to which they relate	HR Director	HR staff	The Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982 (SI 1982/894) as amended
Equal opportunities information	10 years	HR Director	HR staff	Non Statutory
Trade Union agreements	10 years	HR Director	HR staff	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (Non Statutory requirement - recommended)
Notes of formal meetings with trade unions	10 years	HR Director	HR staff	Non Statutory
<b>Line Manager Team records</b> 1:1 records, absence, sickness, performance reviews	2 years	HR Director	HR staff	Non Statutory

**Please note:**

- HR Information to be stored on Sharepoint and accessible to all HR professionals
- Information rights professionals will have search permissions when responding to an information rights request
- HR information held in personal one drives will be subject to information discovery and removed if duplicate or incorrectly stored

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

### 12 Governance

Record Type	Minimum Retention	Owner	Source
Register of Corporate risks	10 years	Assistant Director of Business Management	Non-statutory
<b>Committees &amp; Board meetings</b> Agendas and minutes of board meetings, committees, sub-committees, departmental (master copies, including associated papers)	7 years	Chief of Staff	Non-statutory
Policies and Procedures	6 years after superseded	Pertinent Assistant Director	Non-statutory
Receipts for registered and recorded mail	3 years unless complaint pending	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Visitor Logs	1 year after the calendar year to which they refer	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory
Intake Telephone recordings	1 month from date of call	Assistant Director of ICT and Accommodation	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

<b>Internal &amp; External communications</b> Internal communications and announcements for PHSO staff	6 years	Assistant Director of Insight and Public Affairs	Non-statutory
Public affairs, stakeholder relations, insight and analysis	6 years	Assistant Director of Insight and Public Affairs	Non-statutory
Media relations, pPress announcements, work with the media	6 years	Assistant Director of Communications	Non-statutory
<b>Surveys and Performance Reports</b> Operational performance reports	2 years from end of financial year	Assistant Director of Quality and Improvement	Non-statutory
Insight surveys - internal, employees, complainants	2 years from end of financial year	Assistant Director of Quality and Improvement	Non-statutory
Performance information - caseworker quality performance reports (individual)	2 years	Assistant Director of Quality and Improvement	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Review and feedback reports (individual)	2 years	Assistant Director of Quality and Improvement	Non-statutory
Performance and review reporting (corporate)	6 years	Assistant Director of Quality and Improvement	Non-statutory
<b>Projects &amp; planning</b> Project Documentation - risk logs, business cases, financial tracking, project plans.	3 years from closedown	Pertinent Assistant Director	Non-statutory

## Appendix A | PHSO Retention Schedule 2023

Programme Documentation - risk logs, business cases, financial tracking, project plans.	3 years from closedown	Pertinent Assistant Director	Non-statutory
Strategy Documents	5 years after superseded	Pertinent Assistant Director	Non-statutory

General principles for records not specifically mentioned with no is delete after 2 years from last updated or modified

### 13 Version control

Date	Version	Content/changes made	Owner of changes
10/09/2018	1.0	Initial draft version	██████████
10/09/2018	1.1	Updates after FOI Manager guidance	██████████
10/09/2018	1.2	Updates after SIRO guidance	██████████
17/12/2018	2.0	Approved by SIRO	██████████
16/06/2021	2.1	Reformat and refresh of schedule	██████████
31/08/2021	2.2	Updated following comments	██████████
31/3/2023	3.0	Changes pre wider review	AJ/AD
28/07/2023	3.1	Published version	AD

---