



Policy

Title:	Management of Personnel Information
Effective Date:	May 15, 2017
Approved By:	President’s Council
Responsible Party:	Vice-President for Human Resources
History:	May 22, 1996
Related Documents: Employment Eligibility Policy; Background Checks and Employment Verifications Policy;	

I. PURPOSE

This policy addresses how the University will maintain employee personnel files as well as guidelines for the release of employment related information by the University. This policy also affirms the rights of current University employees to review their personnel files maintained in the Office of Human Resources in compliance with the Personnel Files Act of 1978.

II. DEFINITIONS

N/A

III. POLICY

It is the policy of Salus University to comply with applicable laws and best practices with regard to the management, retention, and disposal of its human resource records in order to document its management decisions; provide historical references of employee, participant, and university-initiated transactions and events; demonstrate regulatory compliance; and enhance its operational efficiencies.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Maintenance

Salus University’s human resource records are the collection both paper and electronic communications and documents related to the employment of an individual stored under the person’s name or identification number, including but not limited to: forms, letters, memos, reports, lists, e-mails, etc. The records serve as the historical record of information pertaining to an employee from date of hire to separation, and contain some pre-employment and post-employment information.

Four categories of information make up an individual's employment record:

- Personally-identifiable information (PII) such as name, date of birth, home address, emergency contact, social security number, etc.
- Information covering employment, position classification, wage or salary, employee relations, performance management, training, organizational development, attendance and paid time-off usage, etc.
- Benefits program records covering benefit plan enrollments in such plans as health care, retirement, investments, tuition benefit, and voluntary plans, as well as beneficiaries in these plans where applicable.
- Medical records include all medical certifications, physician statements, and related information that describe the health and medical history or condition of an employee or an employee's family members. Medical records include ADA (American Disability Act) and FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) forms if applicable and correspondence, disability documents, claims for medical services, doctors' notes, workers' compensation records, injury or illness reports, and drug screening results. (Not an inclusive list.) They do not include attendance reports from time keeping systems.

The Office of Human Resource maintains the University's human resource records in paper and/or electronic format. Paper records containing confidential information are kept in locked offices, cabinets, or drawers with access controlled by the keeper of the record. Electronic records containing confidential information are maintained in a secure environment per University Information Technology policies.

Under the Health and Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), employers are required to protect medical records as confidential information to be kept separate from other business records. Medical records are not to be maintained with other employment records, although they may be stored in the same locked cabinet.

A supervisor may keep records related to an individual employee to track work in progress and performance related information, and typically includes documents of ongoing work such as notes of conversations, assignments, and status reports. A supervisor's records maintained by employee name or identification number are considered part of the official University human resource records.

Personnel files may not be taken outside of the Office of Human Resources.

B. Access

1. Internal Requests

An employee may inspect the contents of his/her personnel file once a year by making an appointment with the Office of Human Resources during normal business hours. An employee also has the right to designate a specific individual (other than themselves) who shall be authorized to inspect the employee's personnel file. Such designations must be in writing.

Access to human resource records should be restricted to those whose job duties necessitate access and to those with designated authority to review the records, such as a supervisor, department manager, or a human resource representative.

- Upon written request sent to the Vice President of Human Resources, a university employee or his/her designated representative will be provided with timely access to all of the employee's human resource records, including personnel records, benefit program records, and medical records. The determination of timeliness must reflect any policy or practical deadlines that the employee, representative, or University must meet.
- The designated representative must present a written authorization signed by the employee that clearly and specifically describes the records the representative may inspect or copy.
- The review must occur during normal business hours and in the Office of Human Resources.
- Nothing may be written by the employee on any papers in the file. The employee is permitted to make their own notes of information contained in the file.
- Nothing in the file may be copied or removed.
- At no time during the examination of the employee's records shall the records be out of the direct supervision of a representative of the Office of Human Resources.
- The employee is permitted to make corrections to such information change of address, telephone number, W-4 forms, etc.

2. External Requests

No information regarding current or former employees is released unless the Office of Human Resources receives written permission signed by the current or past employee to release the information.

If approved by the Office of Human Resources, the following information may be released: name, position or job title, verification of dates of current or past employment. Unless disclosure is required by law, any additional information in the official personnel file is not to be released without written authorization from either the employee or the University.

Law enforcement personnel of authorized agencies may have access to an employee's personnel file by obtaining the individual's consent or by the University being presented with a legal subpoena or search warrant.

3. References

No Salus University employee may issue a letter of reference to any current or former employee without the permission of the Vice President of Human Resources. However, faculty may produce letters of recommendation or reference on other faculty members for whom they have/had no supervisory responsibilities provided such letter **contain the statement:**

“This recommendation is solely the opinion of the undersigned. It does not represent the opinion of the University as a whole.”

4. Employee Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all University employees to keep their personnel information up to date (name change, address, phone number, emergency contact, etc.).

5. Retention

Except for certain medical records and other statutorily required information, personnel files of terminated employees will be retained for a maximum of seven (7) years post termination/resignation/retirement date.

6. Disposal

When the legal required retention period for a record expires, a representative of the Office of Human Resources shall initiate and authorize the process for the records disposal. Records will either be shredded in the presence of a senior officer of the Human Resources department or the University will be provided with proof of shredding conducted by an outside records storage/retention company.