

Task: Establish & Maintain Departmental Filing System

Objective

At the end of this module, employees will be able to set up or revamp and maintain an effective filing system for their department. An effective filing system is a centralized location where documents are organized in a systematic and practical manner. It allows documents to be retrieved easily and re-filed quickly.

Background Information

The secretary should be familiar with indexing rules, classification systems, and HCC records management policy.

Downloadable Documents

Navigation:

From HCC home page at <http://www.hccs.edu>

- > Faculty & Staff
- > Information Technology (under IT)
- > Forms (under Records Management)
- > Select from the following:

- [Activity Log Request](#)
- [Inventory Form](#)
- [Transfer Records Form](#)
- [Record Destruction Certificate](#)
- [Record Retention Schedule](#)
- [Digital Imaging Security Request Form](#)

Process for Completing Task

When setting up a filing system or revamping an existing system, obtain input from your supervisor and other team members on what broad categories and subcategories of information would be most appropriate for the documents in your department.

Here are some questions to get you started:

1. Types of Records - Which records will be kept?

There are several types of records, such as:

Vital Records - Essential to the department and often not replaceable (e.g., class sign-in sheets, time sheets, overtime sheets)

Important Records - Needed in the smooth operation of the department, and expensive or difficult to replace (e.g., transcripts, invoices)

Useful Records - Convenient to have, but replaceable (e.g., spreadsheets, training manuals, manual reports)

Non-Essential Records - Used once or very seldom (e.g., old versions of updated documents, materials)

Historical Records - No longer used, but they provide useful information as an archive

2. Categories - Which categories do you need?

A category is a group/collection of things that belong together. There are many types of categories and although many are similar across departments, some are specific to particular departments. Here are some examples:

General - Used throughout the whole company or institution (e.g., correspondence, district forms)

Specific - Customized or can be tied to a certain area or function of the department (e.g., training manuals, training materials)

Departmental - Directly related to or impacting the department (e.g., budget, timesheets, position postings, equipment records)

Within each category, there are three basic methods of classifying records:

A. Alphabetic Classification Method - Probably the most commonly used method. Within an alphabetic classification system, there are three primary ways of ordering the files:

(1) Alphabetic by Name - Records are arranged according to the names of people, departments and organizations. This is the easiest system to create and use. To get started, group together all the files for one category.

Example:

Group together all the documents that relate to Active Students (broad category). Place all the documents for one student in an individual file folder and label it with the student's name (subcategory). The label should list the student's last name first, followed by the first name and middle initial, such as "Amland, Cyrus T."

These student files which are part of the Active Students category whose last names begin with "A" would then be arranged in alphabetical order in the following *subcategories*:

Abaroa, Carmen
Abbey, Eldon
Adams, Joseph
Amland, Cyrus T.

- (2) Alphabetic by Subject** - Records are arranged according to the content subject.

Example:

The Equipment Instructions & Warranties (broad category) might contain the following *subcategory* files arranged in alphabetical order by subject:

Computer
Copier
Fax Machine
Printer

- (3) Alphabetic by Geographic Location** - Records are arranged according to the campus, college or region, where something occurs or is located.

Example:

The Campus Operations (broad category) might contain the following *subcategory* files arranged in alphabetical order by geographic location:

Codwell
Northline
Pinemont

- B. Numeric Classification Method** - Records are arranged by using numbers or dates to organize information.

Example:

The library classification system known as the *Dewey Decimal Classification* system is a proprietary system developed by Melvil Dewey in 1876. This system organizes books on library shelves in a specific and repeatable order that makes it easy to find any book and return it to its proper place. This system has undergone 22 major revisions. It consists of 10 main categories. Each of these is divided into 10 secondary classes or subcategories, which in turn each have 10 subdivisions.

The 10 main categories are:

000 - Computer science, information & general works
100 - Philosophy & psychology
200 - Religion
300 - Social sciences
400 - Languages
500 - Natural sciences & mathematics
600 - Technology (Applied science)
700 - Arts & recreation
800 - Literature & rhetoric
900 - History, geography & biography

- C. Alphanumeric Classification Method** - Records are arranged using a combination of letters and numbers, which are derived from a combination of personal or business names and numbers, or more commonly subject names and numbers. First, the alphabetic divisions or topic headings and appropriate subdivisions are determined, then the number categories are assigned. Smaller divisions within each letter of the alphabet can be used, depending on the quantities of records which

will be stored within the system. A list of number codes assigned to each letter of the alphabet or to its division should be listed in an "index."

Example:

The state department of motor vehicles utilizes the alphanumeric system to identify the automobile records within its jurisdiction.

ABC357
ACC123
BEM493
CAD198
DEP135
EBS002
ESP236

File Management Tools

A *Filing Key* (or index) should be made once the categories and subcategories have been decided. The filing key is a listing of all the categories and subcategories in the order they are filed. It should be laid out so everyone understands the system, and files can be easily retrieved. Provide everyone with a copy of it and make sure anyone who files understands the key and how to use it for filing. A new file should not be created unless you are absolutely sure the material does not logically fit into an existing file. Put the new file in the correct category and subcategory, update the filing key and provide an updated filing key to everyone as soon as new categories are added.

Sample:

Category	Topic	Date	<i>Tab/Title</i> Folder Title	End User
ELOD	Blank Forms & Paper			
			<i>Specialty Paper</i>	
			Bond Paper	
			Letterhead	
			<i>Catering</i>	
			Catering	
			<i>Copy Forms</i>	
			Copy Center	

Key Resource Persons

YOUR SUPERVISOR

DISTRICT RECORDS MANAGEMENT

713-718-5155

Applicable Policy/Procedure

Navigation:

From HCC home page at <http://www.hccs.edu>

> Policies & Procedures (under Employee Support)

> B:2, Operations (under Finance & Operations)

> B:2.4, Records Management