



POLICY MEMORANDUM 7 FOR ALL DIVISION STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

SUBJECT: Document Retention and Destruction

PURPOSE: To explain requirements associated with maintaining records. Effective beginning January 1st, 2015. The Policy Memorandum is in effect until revoked or amended.

DISCUSSION:

The New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are moving towards a paperless claim processing system. Notwithstanding the retention and destructions below, any documents that are entered into DVA's electronic case management system and retained electronically in the same condition and format as the original can be destroyed.

All destroyed documents must be shredded.

Veterans Counseling Case Files:

Records may be destroyed after ten years of no activity after completing the most recent counseling service. The most recent counseling service is completed when a final response on the matter is received.

Case summaries and records relating to discharge, birth, marriage, and divorce may be destroyed after 10 years from the date of the Veteran's death or 100 years from the date of a Veteran's birth if the date of death is unknown.

Veterans Discharge Records:

Records may be destroyed 30 days after electronically preserved.

Field Office Administrative Records:

Records from the preceding fiscal year may be destroyed at the end of the subsequent fiscal year.

Electronic Records:

Electronic communications can be deleted after 90 days unless required to be maintained for legal or operational purposes.

Questions should be directed to **DVA's** General Counsel, by calling (518) 474-6114.

For questions regarding your rights to access records, please feel free to call the Committee on Open Government at (518) 474-2518 or visit their website at the following link:

<http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/>

Violations of this Policy Memorandum can lead to adverse administrative action including dismissal.