



**Office of Human Resources
Standard Operating Procedure
HR SOP #906**

Subject: Retention and Disclosure of Personnel Records

Effective Date: September 1, 2020

Policy Statement:

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources will maintain, retain, disclose, and dispose of information from department personnel records in accordance with Georgia law.

Definitions:

Official Personnel File: Records documenting an employee's work history with an agency maintained in the DNR Office of Human Resources.

Retention Schedule: A set of disposition instructions prescribing how long, where, and in what form a record series shall be kept.

Procedure:

Divisions/Regions/facilities may maintain limited duplicates of personnel records however the official employee personnel file is located in the Office of Human Resources. All personnel records, regardless of location must,

- be maintained in a locked, secured location.
- have limited accessibility. Access to personnel records is limited to persons with a legitimate Department business need, except as otherwise required by law or with the affected employee's consent. Typically, only the site manager, human resources representative, the employee's manager and the employee have a legitimate Department business need to see an employee's personnel file.
- be accurate, complete and relevant.

Employee Obligations:

Employees are required to provide the Office of Human Resources with accurate, up-to-date personal information, including but not limited to, name, home address, telephone numbers, tax withholding information, marital status, number of dependents, beneficiary designations, and emergency contacts.

Disclosure:

The Department is often required by court order, subpoena, and the Georgia Open Records Act to produce copies of personnel records. Any such request should be forwarded to the Department's Office of Human Resources for review and processing in consultation with the Department's Office of Legal Services.

File Review:

An employee may review his or her local personnel records upon request to the local personnel office. Review of the file will be by appointment and during normal business hours when staff is available to monitor the review. An employee cannot remove any contents of the file.

An employee may review his or her official personnel file upon request to the Office of Human Resources. Review of the file will be by appointment and during normal business hours when staff is available in the Human Resources office to monitor the review. An employee cannot remove any contents of the file. Photocopies will be provided at the employee's expense, pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act.

Third parties such as prospective employers performing pre-employment investigations will be allowed to review an employee's personnel file upon written authorization of the employee. Review of the file will be by appointment and during normal business hours when staff is available in the Human Resources office to monitor the review.

Georgia Open Records Act:

Unless specifically exempted by federal law, state law, or by an order of court, employment records are public records. Individuals may request to review records or receive a photocopy at their expense. Documents produced to individuals other than the employee, will have confidential information redacted from the file prior to release. Georgia Opens Records requests for documents are received and reviewed by the department legal office.

Record Transfer:

In the event of an employee transfer from DNR to another executive branch agency, the employee's official personnel file will be transferred to the new employing agency. Confidential employment records will not be transferred.

Retention:

Retention of personnel records will be in accordance with the Georgia Records Act (O.C.G.A. Section 50-18-90 et seq.) The State Government Records Retention Schedule published by the Georgia Archives is located at the link below.

https://www.georgiaarchives.org/records/state_government/schedules/70

Records must be maintained for the legally required retention periods listed in the retention schedule. Once maintained for the period specified in the retention schedule, the records should be destroyed unless retention is required for another authorized purpose such as a litigation hold.

Attachments:

None