

RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

March 2012

I. Purpose:

The Society for the Improvement of Conditions for Stray Animals (“SICSA”) shall retain records for the period of their immediate or current use, unless longer retention is necessary for historical reference or to comply with contractual or legal requirements. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the necessary records and documents are adequately protected and maintained and to ensure that records that are no longer needed, or are of no value, are discarded at the proper time.

II. Policy:

This policy represents the SICSA’s policy regarding the retention and disposal of records.

III. Administration:

The Executive Director is in charge of the implementation and administration of this policy and, as such, all questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Executive Director. Prior to the implementation of this policy, training will be provided to all the relevant individuals.

The Executive Director is also responsible for the implementation of processes and procedures to ensure that the Records Retention Schedule (see paragraph VII below) is followed. The Executive Director is authorized to make modifications to the Records Retention Schedule from time to time to ensure that it is in compliance with local, state and federal laws and includes the appropriate document and record categories. The Executive Director shall also monitor local, state and federal laws affecting record retention; annually review the record retention and disposal program; and monitor compliance with this policy.

IV. Suspension of Record Disposal:

In the event SICSA is served with any subpoena or request for documents or any Board member or staff employee becomes aware of a governmental investigation, audit, or the commencement of any litigation against or concerning SICSA, such individual shall inform the Executive Director and any further disposal of documents shall be suspended until such time as the Executive Director, with the advice of counsel, determines otherwise. The Executive Director shall take such steps as is necessary to promptly inform all relevant individuals, including all staff employees, of any suspension in the further disposal of documents.

V. Applicability:

This policy applies to all physical records generated in the course of SICSA's operation, including both original documents and reproductions. This policy applies to all Board members and staff employees – everyone is personally responsible for adhering to this policy.

VI. Electronically Stored Information:

This policy is also applicable to the retention of electronically stored information (ESI). ESI includes e-mails, Web page files, PDF documents, and all text/formatted files (e.g. Microsoft Word documents). The following guidelines should be adhered to concerning the retention of ESI:

1. E-mail: All e-mail should be retained for the same period as the document it pertains to or supports, pursuant to the Records Retention Schedule below (paragraph VII). Otherwise, all e-mail – from internal or external sources – is to be deleted after 12 months.
 - Everyone will strive to keep all but an insignificant minority of their e-mail related to official SICSA matters.
 - SICSA will archive e-mail for six months after it has been deleted by the individual users, after which time the e-mail will be permanently deleted.
 - All official SICSA-related email that is vital to the performance of your job should be copied to the [**H: drive**] folder and printed and stored in your workspace.
 - No one should store or transfer SICSA-related e-mail on non-work-related computers except as necessary or appropriate for SICSA purposes.
 - Everyone should take care not to send confidential/proprietary SICSA information to outside sources.
2. Electronic Documents: Retention also depends on the subject matter.
 - PDF documents – The length of time that a PDF file should be retained should be based upon the content of the file and the type of record it is applicable to under the Records Retention Schedule below (paragraph VII). PDF files that are deemed vital to the performance of your job should be printed and stored in your workspace.
 - Text/formatted files – Everyone should conduct annual reviews of all text/formatted files (e.g., Microsoft Word documents) and delete all those they consider unnecessary or outdated. The maximum period that all text/formatted files should be retained is 5 years, other than manuals, policy documents and the like that may be updated periodically, which may be kept as word processing files for easier updating. Text/formatted files that are deemed vital to the performance of your job should be printed and stored in your workspace as well as in electronic form.
3. Web Page Files: Internet Cookies
 - All SICSA computers: Web browsers should be scheduled to delete internet cookies once per month.

SICSA does not automatically delete electronically stored information beyond the dates specified in this policy. It is the responsibility of everyone to adhere to the guidelines specified in this policy.

VII. Records Retention Schedule:

The Records Retention Schedule below has been approved as the initial maintenance, retention and disposal schedule for physical records of SICSA. The retention periods begin at the end of the fiscal year during which the document was created, not from the date of the document. For items supporting tax returns or other government filing requirements, the retention period begins on the filing date of the return or its due date (with extension), whichever is later.

TYPE OF RECORD	RETENTION PERIOD
Annual financial reports	Permanently
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank deposit slips	7 years
Bank reconciliations	7 years
Bank statements	7 years
By-laws	Permanently
Checks (paid and cancelled)	7 years
Contracts (vendors, etc.)	Permanently
Correspondence: Accounting General IRS Legal Personnel	5 years 3 years Permanently Permanently 7 years
Deeds and titles	Permanently
Depreciation schedules: Equipment and furniture Real property	10 years Permanently
Employment records (after terminations): Contracts Earnings records Paychecks Personnel files Salary and wage rate changes Workers' compensation reports	7 years 7 years 7 years 7 years 7 years 10 years
Equipment leases (after expiration)	7 years
Expense reports	7 years
Fidelity bonds	7 years
Fixed asset records	10 years

Insurance policies (after expiration)	7 years
Invoices	7 years
Ledgers and journals: Cash receipts and disbursements journal Checkbooks General ledger Payroll journal	10 years 10 years Permanently 10 years
Minute books	Permanently
Mortgages	Permanently
Notes payable (after expiration)	7 years
Petty cash records	7 years
Reports: Monthly financial reports Annual reports to members	10 years 10 years
Securities (brokerage slips)	10 years
Surety bonds (after termination)	7 years
Tax records (including worksheets, statements, and agent's reports)	10 years
IRS returns: Forms 990 Payroll Social Security	Permanently 7 years 7 years