Document & Retention Policy

Purpose

Family Guidance and Outreach (FGO) is committed to effective record retention and management. This policy provides for the systematic review, retention, and destruction of documents received or created by the organization in connection with the conduct of business. The purpose is to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promote data integrity, and support sound governance practices.

Policy Statement

FGO records will be retained for the period necessary to comply with legal, regulatory, and operational requirements. Documents that are no longer needed, or are of no value, will be securely and appropriately destroyed.

Scope

This policy applies to all physical and electronic documents created or received by FGO in the course of its operations. It includes but is not limited to:

- Governance records (e.g., bylaws, board minutes)
- Financial and accounting records
- Personnel files
- Grant and donor records
- Legal documents
- Program materials
- Email and electronic files

Retention Guidelines

The following are general retention periods. A detailed retention schedule may be maintained as an appendix to this policy.

- Permanent: Articles of Incorporation, IRS Determination Letter, Bylaws, Board Meeting Minutes, Annual Financial Statements, Audit Reports
- 7 Years: Tax returns, payroll records, grant applications and reports, expense records, donor records
- 5 Years: Personnel files (after separation), insurance policies (after expiration)
- 3 Years: General correspondence, internal reports, marketing materials
- As Needed: Emails and electronic documents not classified above should be retained as long as they are relevant to active projects, litigation, audits, or regulatory matters.

FAMILY GUIDANCE and outreach
est.1982

Document & Retention Policy

Electronic Records
Electronic documents will be backed up regularly and stored securely. Systems used for document management must have appropriate access controls and data protection measures. When destroying electronic files, steps will be taken to ensure data cannot be recovered.

Destruction Process
When documents reach the end of their retention period, they will be destroyed in a manner that protects sensitive or confidential information. This includes shredding physical documents and permanently deleting digital files.

Litigation Hold
If FGO is involved in any pending or threatened litigation, audit, or investigation, all document destruction must be suspended for records relevant to the matter. The Executive Director will issue a written “litigation hold” notice when necessary.

Oversight and Compliance
The Executive Director is responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy. Any questions regarding document retention or destruction should be directed to them. Noncompliance may result in disciplinary action.

Review and Updates
This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to reflect best practices and ensure legal compliance.