Sponsored Projects Records Retention Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) adequately protects and maintains necessary records and documents and to ensure that records that are no longer needed or of no value are destroyed as described below.

This Records Retention Policy applies to all SPA records, regardless of format, whether paper, electronic, or other more traditional media, with the exception of the Cayuse424 record of the submitted proposal, which is retained for reporting purposes.

This policy applies to both Sponsored Projects Administration and responsible units or individuals that have copies of proposal and/or award/fiscal documents. As part of the award closeout process, SPA will alert the responsible units and individuals of the intended termination date for audit purposes.

As the University unit responsible for award administration, SPA maintains the official financial record for funded external awards. Financial and program records must be retained on file for audit purposes for the minimum number of years required by the sponsor in the award documentation or under applicable laws, regulations, and University policy. The shortest record retention period under University policy and under most federal and state government contracts and grants regulations is three (3) years from the date of the last payment made under the award. Some federal agencies and other sponsors, however, specify longer record retention periods, such as five (5) years, or in rare instances, ten (10) years. SPA is responsible for identifying the applicable record retention period for each contract or grant and for alerting responsible units and individuals. Additionally, if an account is being audited and there are any unresolved questions, the records must be kept until a resolution of the questions or dispute is found.

SPA will retain pre-award documentation for submitted proposals in the following manner:

- For funded proposals, within the same timeframe as all award-related documentation,
- For up to three years from the submission date for unfunded/pending proposals, or
- In accordance with the terms and conditions of the sponsor guidelines.

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