

Policy Name:	Record Retention and Destruction	Policy Number:	AD-17-001
Date Approved by Council:	Approved – April 10, 2018		
Revised Date:	N/A	Review Date:	Biennially – April 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide The Alberta Association of Architects (AAA) a standard guideline with respect to the management, retention and disposal of inactive member, company, complaint and hearing files.

Scope

All Council, volunteers and staff members must comply with this policy and associated records retention and destruction procedures in their conduct of official and day-to-day business for the AAA. The Executive Director shall be the administrator in charge of implementing this policy. The administrator's responsibility includes supervising and coordinating the retention and destruction of documents pursuant to this policy. The administrator is also authorized to make modifications to the file retention and destruction schedule from time to time as long as he/she ensures compliance with legal and legislative obligations.

This policy applies to all recorded information in regulated member, practice entity, complaint and hearing files generated during the AAA's operation. It includes all original documents and reproductions.

Definitions

- Inactive Status** – Regulated Members and Practice Entities that are no longer registered due to suspension, voluntary cancellation or deceased status.
- Inactive Member Files** – Members that are no longer registered (Intern Architect, Intern Interior Designer, Registered Architect, Licensed Interior Designer, Associate Member, Retired Member, Honorary Member, Affiliate Member and Restricted Practitioner files)
- Inactive Company Files** – Companies and firms that are no longer registered (Architect Corporation, Licensed Interior Design Corporation, Architect Firm, Licensed Interior Design Firm, Non-practising Corporation, Joint Firm – Architecture and Engineering Practice files)
- Closed Complaint Files** – Complaint files are generated when an individual lodges a formal complaint with the AAA. A file is closed when the outcome of the complaint is mediation or resolution by the Registrar or dismissal by the Chair of the Complaint Review Committee
- Closed Hearing Files** - Once a complaint has been referred to a hearing in front of a Complaint Review Committee panel, it becomes a hearing file. The file is closed after a decision is made by the hearing panel.
- Destruction Certificate** – The record of file name and database number kept as reference for all destroyed paper files.
- Decision Document-Closed Complaint File** – The resolution document of an inactive complaint file. i.e. Decision letter from Chair of Complaint Review Committee
- Decision Document-Hearing File** – The written decision from initial hearing and written decision of any appeal.

Policy

The AAA will retain files only as long as they are required to do so by legislation and as further recommended by legal counsel and directed by AAA Council. After that time, records will be destroyed in a confidential and secure manner.

This policy ensures:

- a. The management of AAA records meets all operational, legislative and historical requirements.
- b. To meet legal guidelines for the protection, storage and retrieval of information.
- c. The regular, authorized destruction of obsolete records meets the AAA's legal and public interest mandated under the *Architects Act*.

Procedure

Inactive regulated member and company files that have been inactive for a period of 10 years will be destroyed through a confidential shredding service.

In each case, a destruction certificate is used to record the file name and database file number for reference.

The AAA will retain inactive regulated member, practice entity, closed complaint and closed hearing files for 10 years. The 10 year inactive date is defined when the regulated member and practice entity is no longer registered due to suspension, death or voluntary cancellation. A destruction certificate will record the file name and database reference number of all inactive files.

Guidelines for complaint files:

- a. Closed complaint files (i.e. all matters that have been resolved by the Registrar or investigated and dismissed by the Chair of Complaint Review Committee) will be retained for a period of 10 years after the complaint file is closed.
- b. If the regulated member is still registered, retain the complete complaint file.
- c. If the regulated member is deceased, retain the decision document and apply the standard 10-year inactive timeline.
- d. If the regulated member is no longer registered in Alberta, retain the decision document and apply the standard 10-year inactive timeline.

Decision documents related to closed complaint and hearing files will be stored electronically in a manner that preserves the integrity of the information and cannot be destroyed or altered.

Authority

1. The Executive Director is responsible for the interpretation, application and administration of this policy.
2. This policy supersedes all previous document retention procedural functions.

Cross References

1. Record Retention and Destruction Process Guideline and File Retention Table
2. Destruction Certificate

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Hard copy inactive files are destroyed by confidential shredding. The destruction certificate is used to record the file name and database file number for reference.

Decision documents related to closed complaint and hearing files will be stored electronically in a manner that preserves the integrity of the information and cannot be destroyed or altered.

File Retention and Destruction Table

Inactive Status: Practice Entity or Regulated Member is no longer registered with the AAA. Inactive due to suspension, death or voluntary cancellation

File Type	Database Status	Inactive Date	Document
AC Architect Corporation FM Firm ACBO Architect Corporation-Branch Office FMBO Firm Branch Office AEC Architect and Engineering Corporation AECBO Architect and Engineering Corporation Branch Office IDC Interior Design Corporation IDCBO Interior Design Corporation Branch Office	Suspended or Inactive	Standard 10-year inactive timeline-based on original IMIS join date	Destruction Certificate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File Name • Database Number • License date • Original Join Date • Destruction Date
RA Registered Architect LID Licensed Interior Designer IA Intern Architect IA5 Intern Architect – 5 years IA7 Intern Architect – 7 years IID Interior Designer IID5 Intern Interior Designer – 5 years IID7 Intern Interior Designer – 7 years AF Affiliate Member AS Associate Member RM Retired Member	Suspended, Deceased or Inactive	Standard 10-year inactive timeline-based on IMIS join date	Destruction Certificate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File Name • Database Number • License date • Original Join Date • Destruction Date

Closed Complaint File

A complaint is generated when an individual lodges a formal complaint with the association. A complaint file is closed when the outcome of a complaint is mediation or resolution by Registrar or dismissal by Chair of Complaint Review Committee.

Decision Document / Resolution Document – a written dismissal letter from Complaint Review Committee Chair or mediation or decision by Registrar

Closed Hearing File

When a complaint that has been referred to hearing before a Complaint Review Committee panel has been completed and an outcome determined.

Decision Document – This is the written decision from initial hearing and written decision of appeal.

Regulated Member Status	Complaint	Procedure	Document
Active Registered Regulated Member	Closed complaint file (resolution and decision made) – if the regulated member is still registered, retain the complete file	Retain closed complaint file	Keep paper complaint file information to cross reference with active regulated member
Deceased Regulated Member	Closed complaint file	Retain complaint file for 10 years from date they passed away	Retain decision document- Registrar, Chair Complaint Review Committee or Council decision letter and resolution
Regulated Member- Voluntary Cancellation	Closed complaint file	Retain complaint file for 10 years from the date registration was terminated	Retain decision document- Registrar, Chair Complaint Review Committee or Council decision letter and resolution
Active Registered Regulated Member	Closed hearing file – decision made by hearing panel	Retain closed complaint file	Keep paper complaint file information to cross reference with active regulated member
Deceased Regulated Member	Closed hearing file – decision made by hearing panel	Retain hearing complaint file 10 years from date regulated member passed away	Retain hearing decision document- written decision from hearing panel or resulting documentation from any appeal
Regulated Member- Suspended	Closed hearing file – decision by hearing panel to cancel or suspend member	Retain hearing complaint file 10 years from the date of hearing panel decision	Retain hearing panel decision document – written hearing panel decision and written decision of appeals