



Purpose of Personnel Records

- Legal compliance
 - State and federal regulations regarding records retention
- Employment and employee decisions
 - Salary decisions
 - Performance management

Personnel File – an official personnel file is a compilation of communications and documents containing employment details and all HRIS records for an employee. The personnel file serves as the historical record of information pertaining to an employee from their initial employment application through their separation date. These files are securely maintained in each college/VP unit or department. The senior HR professional (SHRP) determines if they are to be located in the college/VP unit or in the department.

The General File and the Controlled Access File must be maintained separately. Below is a suggested set up for the contents of each.

Personnel File	
General File	Controlled Access File
<p><i>(Generally shared in response to a public records request; consult with HR Employee and Labor Relations or Legal Affairs regarding requests for any of these documents)</i></p> <p>General information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance letter • Acknowledgement of receipt of auditor of state fraud reporting system information • Application (signed upon hire) • Compensation information • Letter of offer • Non-medical test results • Personnel data information • Position description • Requests for Personnel Actions <p>Performance information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awards, certifications, achievements • Disciplinary actions issued (e.g., verbal or written reprimand, suspension, termination) • Examples of work • Letters of commendation or letters of complaint • Performance evaluations • Requests for corrective action • Training sessions attended <p>Miscellaneous information <i>(May or may not be subject to Public Records Law)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee requests to examine their personnel file • Exit interview questions • Leave forms (not medically or FML related) • Letter of resignation • Records of policy or job information given to employee 	<p><i>(Generally not shared in response to a public records request; consult with HR Employee and Labor Relations or Legal Affairs regarding requests for any of these documents)</i></p> <p>General information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit plan choices and beneficiary information • Charges of discrimination • Education records (any records other than directory information, directly related to a student and maintained by the university, including employment records of individuals employed as a result of their status as a student) • EEO/Affirmative action data • Grievances • Interview evaluation forms and reference checks • Investigatory notes and attorney-client communications • Legal actions including EEOC/OCRC complaints • Promotion and Tenure records <p>Medical Information File cannot be released without prior consent and written release from the employee. Contact HR Employee and Labor Relations for assistance with a consent and release form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FML information • Genetic information • Injury reports • Medical certifications • Physical exam reports • Reasonable accommodation requests (ADA)



The following documents are to be kept separate from the personnel file:

I-9 - Employment Eligibility Verification

- Filed centrally for entire department or college/VP unit (location determined by the SHRP)
- Required for employees hired on/after November 7, 1986

DMA Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Non-assistance to a Terrorist Organization form

- Filed centrally for entire department or college/VP unit (location determined by the SHRP)
- Required for all final candidates under consideration for employment between April 14, 2006 and September 10, 2012

Supervisory Notes

Files kept by supervisors containing employment related information may be subject to public disclosure. This file should be maintained in a secure location (e.g., locked drawer in supervisor's desk). All documents in this file are to be dated and contain factual, not subjective information. While not part of the personnel file, this file may be used to document observed work performance and behavior and may include informal notes to be used in future discussions regarding an employee's job performance. Supervisors must be consistent and equitable in record keeping.

Maintaining Personnel Files

- Personnel files should only contain job related information. This is especially important because they are subject to public records law.
- Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may request that information be purged from their personnel file in accordance with the contract.
- Employees may submit a statement disputing information in their file, and this statement is to be maintained with the document under dispute in the personnel file.
- Employees have a right to inspect and request a copy of their personnel file. A copy of the file must be issued to the employee within a reasonable period of time.
- Access is generally limited to managers considering an employee for employment or to those with a legitimate need to know. However, since file contents are subject to public records law they may need to be disclosed upon request, unless exempted by law.
- Access to the Controlled Access File should be scrutinized and redacted as appropriate in consultation with Employee and Labor Relations.
- The current employing unit is responsible for maintaining the personnel file.
- The entire personnel file must transfer with the employee to their new employing unit, including I-9 and DMA documents.
- The prior employing unit may maintain a copy of the personnel file for record-keeping purposes.

Retention Schedules are located at library.osu.edu/projects-initiatives/osu-records-management/retention-schedules

A college/VP unit may have an individualized retention and management schedule, provided that it has been approved by University Archives.