

## **DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY**

This policy sets forth the Document Retention and Destruction Policy of the American Agricultural Law Association (AALA). This policy is mandatory for AALA staff, board members, and committee chairs.

### **1. General Rules.**

Records should not be kept if they are no longer needed for the operation of AALA or required by law. The cost of maintaining records is an expense that can grow unreasonably, and a quantity of records also makes it more difficult to find pertinent information.

Several categories of documents that warrant special consideration are identified later in this policy.

The original or a hard or electronic copy of the original should be maintained for the period indicated. Unless special circumstances otherwise require, it is NOT useful to maintain draft documents or multiple copies of the same document.

Electronic records that need to be retained should be either printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file or downloaded to a computer file and kept electronically. Electronic files should be backed up regularly and stored off-site. The retention period depends upon the subject matter as covered elsewhere in this policy.

### **2. Minimum Period for Certain Categories of Records.**

(See Exhibit A attached hereto.)

### **3. Special Circumstances.**

Certain events (such as the receipt of a subpoena or the commencement of a government investigation or claims made by or against AALA) may require the retention of records and the suspension of any destruction of certain categories of documents. In those circumstances, the executive director, the president, or the board of directors will notify the appropriate individuals of a DOCUMENT RETENTION HOLD, identifying the specific categories of documents to be retained until further notice. Those documents must be retained at least until the DOCUMENT RETENTION HOLD is lifted, regardless of the time periods set forth in Section 2 above.

## **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION**

I have read and understand the above and agree to abide by this Document Retention and Destruction Policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

## **EXHIBIT A: BUSINESS RECORD RETENTION**

### **Documents to Keep for One (1) Year**

- Correspondence with Customers and Vendors
- Duplicate Deposit Slips
- Purchase Orders (other than Purchasing Department copy)
- Receiving Sheets
- Requisitions
- Stenographer's Notebooks
- Stockroom Withdrawal Forms

### **Documents to Keep for Three (3) Years**

- Employee Personnel Records (after termination)
- Employment Applications
- Expired Insurance Policies
- General Correspondence
- Internal Audit Reports
- Internal Reports
- Petty Cash Vouchers
- Physical Inventory Tags
- Savings Bond Registration Records of Employees
- Time Cards for Hourly Employees

### **Documents to Keep for Six (6) Years**

- Accident Reports, Claims
- Accounts Payable Ledgers and Schedules
- Accounts Receivable Ledgers and Schedules
- Bank Statements and Reconciliations
- Cancelled Checks
- Cancelled Stock and Bond Certificates
- Employment Tax Records
- Expense Analysis and Expense Distribution Schedules
- Expired Contracts, Leases
- Expired Option Records
- Inventories of Products, Materials, Supplies
- Invoices to Customers
- Notes Receivable Ledgers, Schedules
- Payroll Records and Summaries, including payment to pensioners
- Plant Cost Ledgers
- Purchasing Department Copies of Purchase Orders
- Sales Records
- Subsidiary Ledgers
- Time Books
- Travel and Entertainment Records
- Vouchers for Payments to Vendors, Employees, etc.
- Voucher Register, Schedules

### **Records to Keep Forever**

- Audit Reports from CPAs/Accountants
- Cancelled Checks for Important Payments (especially tax payments)
- Cash Books, Charts of Accounts
- Contracts, Leases Currently in Effect
- Corporate Documents (incorporation, charter, bylaws, etc.)
- Documents Substantiating Fixed Asset Additions
- Deeds
- Depreciation Schedules
- Financial Statements (year end)
- General and Private Ledgers, Year End Trial Balances
- Insurance Records, Current Accident Reports, Claims, Policies
- Investment Trade Confirmations
- IRS Revenue Agents' Reports
- Journals
- Legal Records, Correspondence and Other Important Matters
- Minute Books of Directors and Stockholders
- Mortgages, Bills of Sale
- Property Appraisals by Outside Appraisers
- Property Records
- Retirement and Pension Records
- Tax Returns and Worksheets
- Trademark and Patent Registrations