

**STANDARD FORMAT FOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b> <u>I-2.1</u> <b>PAGE:</b> <u>1</u> <b>OF</b> <u>2</u> <b>SUPERSEDES:</b> _____
<b>CHAPTER:</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> <u>10-3-95</u> <b>DISTRIBUTION DATE:</b> <u>10-12-95</u> <b>SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE:</b> <u>10-3-96</u> <b>REVISED DATE:</b> _____
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Data Retention/Management	<b>RELATED MANDATES, STATUTES, STANDARDS, OR EXECUTIVE ORDERS:</b>
<b>APPROVED BY:</b> <i>Barbara McDonnell</i> <b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	<u>10-3-95</u> <b>DATE</b>

**BACKGROUND/PURPOSE**

This procedure is intended to provide staff with guidelines for the appropriate retention of data. Data refers to all books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials regardless of physical form. Data may be in hard copy form, microfiche, electronic or any other form. The procedure applies equally to all forms of data.

Recent research has shown that proper data retention and management can result in substantial savings. Surveys done by the Office of Operations and ITS have indicated that there is considerable redundancy of data that is presently being retained and that there is a large amount of data being retained which can be destroyed or eliminated with no adverse effects. It is believed that this is a result of a lack of clear guidelines. This policy is intended to provide the needed guidelines for effective and prudent management and retention of data.

**POLICY**

This policy applies to the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). It also applies to county Departments of Social Services with regard to data retained for the purposes of administering programs under the auspices of the CDHS.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for more effective and prudent data retention and management. Data storage can be a hidden cost that can grow significantly if not managed properly. Reducing and/or eliminating storage requirements can result in dollar savings. Furthermore data that has been stored, but not required, has the potential to be discovered during audit, and may then be used in a manner detrimental to the functioning of the department.

In order to reduce costs and to avoid other associated problems we are requiring that all data which is not required to be saved be destroyed.

Data of any form should not be retained longer than three (3) years, plus current year, unless 1) there is a written statutory requirement or regulation available from a state or federal agency requiring a longer retention period, 2) it is under audit, or 3) it is known that it is needed for litigation purposes.

In cases where there is a written statute or regulation, or as otherwise noted above, or there is a belief that for some other reason(s) the data needs to be retained for more than three years, it will be necessary to bring these requests and exceptions to the Records Management Officer in the Office of Operations. If the Records Management Officer and the program/agency staff cannot reach an agreement on retaining the data there may be an appeal to the Manager of the Office of Operations.

Different agencies or programs may have special requirements on methods and procedures for the destruction of data. These requirements must be followed. Otherwise the details of how to destroy or eliminate old data need to be worked out on a case by case basis by the manager of the program/agency involved. Questions should be directed to the Records Management Officer.

#### ACTION

Each division needs to designate a manager to work with the Records Management Officer. This individual will be responsible for seeing that data is purged or exceptions are requested for all areas under their division's sphere of responsibility. The name of this individual needs to be given to Linda Martinez no later than December 1, 1995.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

In order to come into compliance within the given time frames managers should begin to destroy or eliminate old data as soon as possible. All data that is to be destroyed should be destroyed no later than July 1, 1996. Exceptions to this time frame will only be considered in cases of extreme hardship and requests for exceptions must be directed to the Records Management Officer.