



After I have scanned a document, what do I do with the paper?

Once documents are scanned, original source documents must be stamped/ marked 'scanned', dated and sent to Health Information Management (HIM) for retention and destruction. This is a component of Information Lifecycle Management. Original source documents occasionally must be returned to the patient or originator after scanning, (i.e. personal directives, documents required for court, etc.) If the document scanned is being **returned to the patient or originator**, a paper copy is not required to be retained as long as the scanned image is of good quality. Before accepting the scanned image, review it to ensure it is clear, legible and a true representation of the original, as this will become part of the patient's legal record.

What is an original source document and what documents do I have to keep?

An original source document is the original paper document that was scanned to create an electronic image.

A small subset of documents must be retained for their entire retention period on paper, as per the AHS Records Retention Schedule which reflects legal and regulatory retention requirements. A flag will alert the end user when the document type is chosen, indicating that the original source document must be retained after scanning. The comprehensive list is noted below (*Exclusions from Source Document Destruction*)

How long do I retain scanned paper and/or electronically uploaded documents?

Once quality control activities have been completed, including consideration that image quality is at an acceptable level and deemed to be representative of the original source paper document(s), they must be retained for 45 days. Documents that meet their retention period are then confidentially destroyed in alignment with AHS destruction policy and processes.

Retention also includes uploaded electronic copies of documents. Electronic copies are required to be kept for 45 days to allow quality control and auditing activities to be completed. Once the retention period has been met, all electronic copies can be permanently deleted from all sources.

While there is shared accountability with regard to quality control of scanned documents, HIM holds the responsibility and accountability to ensure that quality control and auditing processes are in place for all scanned documents prior to the destruction of original source documents. HIM will perform regular auditing and reporting activities as per leading practice. HIM will follow up with areas where issues have been identified as part of ongoing learning and education.

What if my area manages its own legacy paper records?

Where HIM is on site: Documents scanned at Point of Touch should be sent to HIM for retention. If required for a clinical or business need, the entire legacy paper record can be sent to HIM to be batch scanned, and retained for the remainder of its lifecycle.

Departments, such as Lab and DI, that manage their own scanning and operationally have the ability, will retain the documents within the department as per HIM standards.

Where HIM is not on site: Your area would be responsible to manage the lifecycle of all scanned documents. Following the above process, for a retention period of 45 days and then confidentially destroying.

*Note: The comprehensive list is noted below (*Exclusions from Source Document Destruction*)*

How will I maintain the documents that I have to keep?

It is recommended that the small subset of documents excluded from source document destruction are set aside from other documents/records and filed by:

- Calendar year, then
- Scanning date of document

This method allows for efficient information retention. If the original source document is required, a quick search within Connect Care will indicate the date the document was scanned for ease of retrieval.

Exclusions from Source Document Destruction

The following original source documents must be legally retained in their original paper format for their entire retention period, according to the AHS Retention Schedule.

Document	AHS legally required to maintain original paper document?	AHS Retention Period
Transplant and Donor Programs		
Notice of Exceptional Distribution Form	Yes	Date of Transplantation, distribution or destruction of expired cells, tissues or organs 30 years – record code 1295
Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) forms		
Request for Medical Assistance in Dying	Yes	Closure from discharge/ last contact/ deceased with exception to blood products 11 years – Adults – record code 1260 30 years – Minors – record code 1262

For additional information on scanning, check out at the Learning Home Dashboard –Scanning Guides or website: <https://insite.albertahealthservices.ca/him/Page23172.aspx>.

[For questions, comments or feedback, contact us at HIM.Scanning@ahs.ca](mailto:HIM.Scanning@ahs.ca)

