

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: RETENTION OF MEDICAL RECORDS AND RADIOLOGY FILMS

POLICY NO. 618

PURPOSE:

To outline the appropriate procedures for the retention and disposition of medical records.

POLICY:

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center shall retain and dispose of Medical Records, Base Hospital Forms and Radiology films in accordance with standardized Maximum Retention Period.

DEFINITION:

- **Retention Period:** The total time a record is kept.
- **Disposition:** The action that accomplishes the preservation, storage, and disposal of records.
- **Disposal:** Elimination of records by destruction.

PROCEDURE:

Medical Records, Base Hospital Forms and Radiology films shall be retained until and destroyed in accordance with the following standardized Maximum Retention Periods:

- Adult patients: Seven (7) years following discharge/treatment.
- Minor patients: At least one (1) year after such minor has attained the age of 18, but in no event less than seven (7) years following discharge/treatment.
- Medical records involved in civil litigation or regulatory activities: Until legal counsel feels that they may be destroyed.
- Fetal heart monitoring strips: Until the minor has reached the age of 19, or seven (7) years after the last date of treatment, whichever is later.
- All inactive medical records assigned to a Special Study or Research Study will be considered active until the studies are completed. After the study has been completed, the medical records may be destroyed according to the established criteria.
- Base Hospital Forms shall be stored in file keeper boxes labeled by Prehospital staff and kept in protected storage bins for 19 years, and protected under established confidentiality policies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/92


REVISED: 1/96, 2/99, 2/05, 1/15

REVIEWED: 1/86, 2/99, 2/02, 1/15, 12/19

REVIEWED COMMITTEE:

SUPERSEDES:

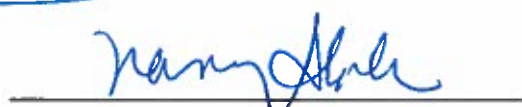
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AUTHORITY:

1. Title 22, California Administrative Code Sections 70751 and 71551 establish the following minimum standards:
 - Patient's records, including Radiology films or reproductions thereof must be preserved for a minimum of seven (7) years following discharge of patient, except that the records of unemancipated minors who have reached the age of 18 years and, in any case, not less than seven (7) years.
 - If a facility ceases operation, arrangements must be made within 48 hours for the transfer and safe preservation of medical records for the time period required by the regulations.
2. Hospital Manual, HIM-10 Section 480 and 410.1; Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 14124.1; and California Administrative Code, Title 22, Section 51476.
 - A retention period of at least five (5) years is recommended to ensure compliance with both State and federal law.
3. A Guide to Hospital Record Retention - 1986
 - Health facilities should retain the medical records of pregnant women for as long as they keep the records of their children, for at least 19 years.
 - Ninety-nine percent of Civil action claims against hospitals are filed within 10 years of the incident.