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DEPARTMENT OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER
KA 'OIHANA O KE KAUKA KILO KUPAPA'U
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

MASAHIKO KOBAYASHI, M.D., Ph.D.
MEDICAL EXAMINER
KAUKA KILO KUPAPA'U

SASHA BRELAND, M.D.
DEPUTY MEDICAL EXAMINER
HOPE KAUKA KILO KUPAPA'U

IN REPLY REFER TO:
25-05

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Draft Resolution to Adopt the Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule for the Department of the Medical Examiner

We respectfully request the adoption of an updated Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule of the Department of the Medical Examiner (MED). Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Section 46-43(c), with the approval of the county legislative body and the county's legal advisor, the disposal of vouchers, documents and other records is permissible after such records have been retained for a period of time, exclusive of records designated for permanent retention, to be determined by the legislative body of the county by resolution.

We ask for your favorable consideration of this resolution.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 768-3064.

Sincerely,

Digitally signed by
Kobayashi, Masahiko
Date: 2025.02.28 08:46:36
-10'00'

Masahiko Kobayashi, M.D., Ph.D.
Medical Examiner

Attachments

APPROVED:

Michael D. Formby, Managing Director
Office of the Managing Director

DEPT. COM. 148

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. _____

RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE AGENCY-SPECIFIC RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

WHEREAS, Section 46-43 (c), Hawaii Revised Statutes, authorizes the Council of the City and County of Honolulu to permit the disposal of documents and other records after they have been retained for a period of time to be established through resolution by the Council; and

WHEREAS, the disposal of obsolete records is an essential part of the efficient management of records; and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Medical Examiner wishes to dispose of its obsolete records in accordance with the proposed Department of the Medical Examiner Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule attached hereto as Exhibit A; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of the Medical Examiner's Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule is hereby adopted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of the Medical Examiner's Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule becomes effective upon adoption; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the Department of the Medical Examiner be authorized to destroy the records identified on the attached Department of the Medical Examiner Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule at the end of the stated retention periods; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution supersedes all other resolutions pertaining to the records identified on the Department of the Medical Examiner's Agency-Specific Records Retention schedule attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if a record retention period in the 2016 General Retention Schedule ("GRS") conflicts with the period stated in the Department of the Medical Examiner Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule, the retention period in the GRS shall control unless otherwise provided by law; and

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. _____

RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, and the Medical Examiner.

INTRODUCED BY:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE OF INTRODUCTION: _____

_____

_____ _____

Honolulu, Hawai'i Councilmember

Exhibit A

DEPARTMENT OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER

2025 Agency-Specific Records Retention Schedule

DEPARTMENT OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
AGENCY-SPECIFIC RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

REV 2025

This agency-specific records retention schedule incorporates best practices recommendations of the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the College of American Pathologists (CAP). In cases where those recommendations diverge, the department seeks to adopt the more conservative of the two recommendations.

Table 1: Medical Examiner Final Reports

Item Number	Record Series Title	Retention Period	Storage Requirement
MED-1-01	Final Investigative Reports	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-1-02	Final Autopsy Reports	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature

Table 2: Medical Examiner-generated Case Records

Item Number	Record Series Title	Retention Period	Storage Requirement
MED-2-01	Case documentation	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature Digital Storage
MED-2-02	Case Log Books	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-2-03	MED-generated Photographs	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-2-04	MED-generated X-rays	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature

Table 3: Third-party Case Records

Item Number	Record Series Title	Retention Period	Storage Requirement
MED-3-01	Non-digital photographs	65 Years	Room Temperature
MED-3-02	Digital photographs (CD/DVD)	10 Years	Room Temperature
MED-3-03	X-rays (CD/DVD)	65 Years	Room Temperature
MED-3-04	Documents, photographs, or X-rays uploaded into case management system	Permanent Retention	Digital Storage

Table 4: Biological Specimen Retention

Item Number	Record Series Title	Retention Period	Storage Requirement
MED-4-01	Formalin-Fixed Tissue*	1 Year	Room Temperature
MED-4-02	Tissue (Unpreserved)*	1 Year	Frozen
MED-4-03	Toxicology Samples* (blood, urine, vitreous fluid, bile, gastric contents)	1 Year	Refrigerated
MED-4-04	Toxicology Samples Sent out to a toxicology laboratory	2 Years	Refrigerated
MED-4-05	Paraffin Blocks	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-4-06	Microscopic Slides	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-4-07	DNA Spot Cards	Permanent Retention	Room Temperature
MED-4-08	DNA Tissue Samples	Permanent Retention	Frozen

**Subject to certain exceptions, as described in Table 5*

Table 5: Exceptions for Retention of Specimen Samples Defined in Table 4

Item Number	Record Series Title	Retention Period	Storage Requirement
MED-5-01	Case Pending	No disposal until the cause/manner of death is determined	See Table 4
MED-5-02	Homicides	2 Years	See Table 4
MED-5-03	Undetermined cause or manner of death	2 Years	See Table 4
MED-5-04	Unidentified	No disposal until 2 years after a positive identification is made	See Table 4
MED-5-05	Infant and Young Children Homicide (<15 years)	5 Years	Blood sample to be frozen For other specimens, see Table 4
MED-5-06	Special Request: A record may be retained for a defined period of duration longer than the specified retention interval for the applicable record series upon request by forensic pathologist, next-of-kin, attorney, or interested agency.	Subject to justification to, and approval by, Medical Examiner or Deputy Medical Examiner	To Be Determined

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