



Northern Arizona University (NAU) Sponsored Projects Records Retention Policy

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Authored by: Jerry Fife
Associate Vice President for Sponsored Projects

Purpose

To determine a sufficient time to retain university sponsored project records to remain in compliance with sponsor regulations and Comptroller Policy (CMP) 103.

What is Records Retention?

Records retention is the term applied to safeguarding of important records that document decisions, policies, financial transactions, and internal controls. NAU's Sponsored Projects Records Retention Policy ensures that NAU maintains the integrity of the records for an appropriate and/or required period of time.

Historically records with paper but today they also include other forms including electronic records.

Background

Departments should retain financial records in order to comply with sponsor restrictions and Arizona State law. Under the terms of awards to NAU, sponsors and auditors have the right to access all official University records associated with a project. NAU is obligated to make such records available for examination. Maintaining source documents is a means to substantiating charges to grants and contracts. Interdepartmental billing computations and receipt acknowledgements for services or materials are particularly important source documents for this purpose.

Departmental Record Retention

All NAU departments for the periods listed below shall retain financial records for Sponsored Projects.

Retention Periods for Financial Records

Types of Records	Retention Period	Comments
Interdepartmental billing computations, receipt acknowledgements, and other documents of servicing departments substantiating interdepartmental charges	5 years after the fiscal year prepared or 3 years after submission of the grant/contract final financial report, whichever is longer.	Failure to adhere to this policy could result in cost disallowances to NAU and possible charge-backs of previous billings to departments.
Documentation of purchases made with an NAU Purchasing Card. Documentation includes itemized cash register receipts and other point of sale documents that specify what was purchased.	5 years after the fiscal year prepared or 3 years after submission of the grant/contract final financial report, whichever is longer.	All documentation for Purchasing Card transactions is maintained in the department making the purchase. The documentation must be available for review/audit as indicated for the required retention period.
Cash receipts and cash register tapes	5 years after the fiscal year prepared or 3 years after submission of the grant/contract final financial report, whichever is longer.	
All other financial records including PeopleSoft Financial accounting system computer printouts	3 years after the fiscal year prepared or 3 years after submission of the grant/contract final financial report, whichever is longer.	