



**KENYA PLANT HEALTH INSPECTORATE
SERVICE
(KEPHIS)**

Records Management Policy

Revised August, 2016

FOREWORD

The records of Kenya Plant Health Inspection Service (KEPHIS) are part and parcel of its corporate memory and a vital asset in supporting its daily functions and operations. As such, records are vital in providing evidence of actions and decisions made for purposes of policy formulation, protecting the interests of KEPHIS, rights of clients, staff and members of the public.

The Corporation is thus committed to improving the management of its records. To this end, the Corporation has developed Records management policy to set the standards; assign responsibilities and authorities; establish and promulgate procedures and guidelines; for managing records and integrating records management into Corporate systems and processes.

The Corporation envisions that the Records Management Policy will facilitate records identification and storage; documentation of corporate transactions; control of the quantity and quality of records including simplification of the activities, systems and processes of records creation , maintenance, use, preservation and disposal. This will ensure economic use of records and improvement in service delivery in the Corporation.

The systems and procedures in this policy shall cover mail management, records use and maintenance, security of records, statement of responsibilities and procedure for review of the policy. It is expected that all members of staff will adhere to the KEPHIS Records Management Policy alongside other existing laws and regulations governing records management. This will facilitate effectiveness, efficiency and improved service delivery in the day to day management of records in the Corporation.

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MANAGING DIRECTOR

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Employee	An individual employed by the Corporation other than a casual employee as defined in Employment Act Cap 226.
File/Document Movement Register	A record used to describe the details of a record, destination and actioning officer.
Policy	A guide that establishes the parameters for decision making and action.
Records Management	Efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposal of records including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of information about business activities and transactions in the form of records (ISO 15489-1:2001).
Records Officer	Employee responsible for records management in the Corporation (ISO 15489-1:2001).
Records Retention Schedule	Document that describes the records of the Corporation; establishes the retention periods and provides procedure for records disposal.
Records Retrieval	Refers to Locating and delivering records for use.
Records storage	Preservation measure for keeping documents under defined conditions and permitting their retrieval or the information contained in them.
Records Survey	An exercise conducted to identify the size, scope, and complexity of an organization`s records and evaluate the records management system.
Records Value	The usefulness of records in supporting daily functions and

operational needs of the Corporation.

Registry	Section within the Corporation that is responsible for the management of records.
Retention Period	Period of time that records should be maintained in the registry before they are transferred to the Archives for preservation or otherwise destroyed.
Semi-Current Records	Records occasionally required in the conduct of current business.
Tracking of Records	Capturing and maintaining information about the movement of records in the process of business transaction.
Vital Records	Records containing essential information, necessary for the continuity or resumption of operations in the event of a disaster.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Records Management policy has been formulated as a guide to the required standards of practice in the management of records within Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). This policy is based on existing legal requirements and international best practices. The specific activities in the records management cycle will be stipulated in the Corporation's relevant standard operating procedures under the Quality Management System.

1.1 Policy Statement

KEPHIS shall develop systems and procedures to ensure that accurate and reliable records are created and maintained. All KEPHIS staff shall be made aware of their responsibilities for record-keeping and record management through generic and specific training programmes and guidance. The Corporation will endeavour to sustain systems that are user friendly and premised on the principles of integrity and good governance as expected of a public institution.

1.2 Policy Objectives

- a) To facilitate improvement of records management functions;
- b) Time saving while storing and retrieving records;
- c) Improve control of valuable information resources;
- d) Easing accessibility and sharing of information;
- e) Maintenance of relevant records to support the decision-making process;
- f) Ensuring that record storage is cost-effective through removal of redundant records from filing and server space;
- g) Ensuring that records are created and managed in compliance with existing legal and regulatory frameworks.

1.3 Scope

This policy sets out a framework within which the standard operating procedures for Managing KEPHIS' records will be implemented. It provides guidelines on how records will be managed and controlled effectively at best value, within the legal, operational and information needs framework. The policy sets out the general principles that apply to the management of records, both physical (paper) and electronic across KEPHIS. The policy also provides a framework for

incorporating the principles of electronic record management into the day-to-day operations of KEPHIS.

1.3 Rationale

The rationale for this Records Management Policy is to ensure that:

- a) **Records are available when needed** - from which KEPHIS is able to form a reconstruction of activities or events that have taken place;
- b) **Records can be accessed** - records and the information within them can be located and displayed in a way consistent with its initial use;
- c) **Records can be interpreted** - the context of the record can be interpreted: who created or added to the record and when, during which business process, and how the record is related to other records;
- d) **Records can be trusted** – the record reliably represents the information that was actually used in, or created by, the business process, and its integrity and authenticity can be demonstrated;
- e) **Records can be maintained through time** – the qualities of availability, accessibility, interpretation and trustworthiness can be maintained for as long as the record is needed, perhaps permanently, despite changes of format;
- f) **Records are secure** - from unauthorized or inadvertent alteration or erasure, that access and disclosure are properly controlled and audit trails shall track all use and changes. To ensure that records are held in a robust format which remains readable for as long as records are required;
- g) **Records are retained and disposed of appropriately** - using consistent and documented retention and disposal procedures, which include provision for appraisal and the permanent preservation of records with archival value; and
- h) **Staff is trained** - so that all staff are made aware of their responsibilities for record-keeping and record management.

1.4 Legal and Regulatory Framework

1.4.1 Compliance with Legal, Regulatory and Professional Guidelines

KEPHIS records are Public Records and as such, the Corporation shall take necessary actions to comply with the legal, regulatory and professional guidelines. In particular, the Corporation will seek to adhere to the following statutes which provide for various aspects of records management including accessibility, creation of records, disclosure and production of records, confidentiality, retention, recognition of electronic records, and requirements for set-up of information management systems:

- a) Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, Cap. 19, 1965 (Revised 2003);
- b) Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2005;
- c) Public Audit Act, 2003;
- d) Financial Management Act, 2004;
- e) Kenya Information and Communication Act, 2009;
- f) Government Financial Regulations and Procedures, Chapter 23, Section 3 – 5 (1989).

1.4.2 Compliance with other Guidelines

In addition, the provisions of the following documents will be adhered to in the course of implementation of the records management procedures in the Corporation:

- a) Ministry of State for Public Service - Personnel letter No. 1/2008 (DPM.12/6A Vol.1 (71) which addresses the issue of disposal of personnel records - the various categories of personnel records, their retention periods and the disposal procedures and the Records Procedures Manual for the public Service (2010).
- b) The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Circular (EACC and formerly KACC) Ref. KACC/ADM/1/31/VOL. III (225) on enhancing corruption prevention through mainstreaming records management system. Structured systems will be maintained so as to permit the necessary links between various functions and systems within the Corporation; and to facilitate efficient retrieval of information for effective management.
- c) The ISO requirements with regard to information and documentation will also be adhered to.

2.0 MAIL MANAGEMENT

For records to support KEPHIS' business transactions, management of mail shall be

streamlined. Receipt, registration, distribution, storage and dispatch of all incoming and Outgoing mail shall be coordinated from the Registry. Such mail shall be filed, arranged and indexed in an appropriate way for ease of retrieval and in accordance with the relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Specifically the various categories of mail will be handled as follows:

2.1 Internal Mail

- a) All officers shall not receive mail in their offices. Mail delivered in offices shall be sent to the office of the Managing Director for recording and processing.
- b) All incoming mail shall be date stamped at the top right corner of the mail without interfering with any writings; and
- c) Hand delivered mail shall be recorded in a delivery book GP54.

2.2 Mail Containing Valuables

Mail received with valuables such as cheques, bank drafts, money orders, certificates and other valuable documents shall be registered in the remittance register.

2.3 Transfer of Folioed Correspondence

A folio transfer slip shall be filled and filed to replace the transferred correspondence folio. The slip shall indicate: the old file reference (from); the new file reference (to), the Folio reference number, date and signature of the officer effecting the transfer.

2.4 Hand Delivered Mail

The mail should be recorded in a delivery book GP54.

2.5 Fax Mail

Fax shall be photocopied and the copy placed in the appropriate file. The original fax should then be placed in a fax file. All incoming faxes on a fax file shall be destroyed after six months.

2.6 E-Mail

2.6.1 Use of email

- a) The use of email has increased and in some cases has surpassed the use of paper based systems.
- b) Email may document decisions, policies and business activities. The email records have thus become legally admissible documents and need to be managed under the KEPHIS records management system like any other record.
- c) The lifecycle of these records is determined by retention schedules irrespective of the media on which they are held.
- d) Management of electronic records will include emails and their attachments.

2.6.2 Ownership of E-mail Records

- a) Any email correspondence that is sent or received by staff of KEPHIS using its email system is regarded as KEPHIS property and as such is subject to its records management policies and procedures.
- b) Personal emails sent and received by staff are excluded from this policy. Staff should, however, adhere to the corporate *Email Acceptable Use Policy* when using the service for personal correspondence.

2.6.3 Responsibilities of Staff in Managing E-Mail

Individual staff has the same responsibilities for managing email records as they have, when managing the KEPHIS records on any other media. Every member of staff is responsible, in the course of their activities, for:

- a) Identifying and capturing emails and their attachments which are appropriate for retention as electronic records, because of their business function or content.
- b) An electronic copy shall be retained for at least one month after sending the messages.
- c) Initiating the categorization and filing of appropriate email records to the *archive* by the relevant method.
- d) Managing email records in a manner that ensures their integrity and guards against their inappropriate loss or destruction, and co-operating where necessary with an audit trail mechanism.
- e) Accessing and retrieving relevant emails when requested.

- f) Mail received electronically shall be printed, registered in the incoming register and a copy filed in the appropriate file for record purposes.

3.0 RECORDS USE AND MAINTENANCE

- a) Users of KEPHIS records shall include staff, authorized state agents and interested members of the public in line with laid down regulations.
- b) Records shall be maintained and controlled to ensure adequate storage and protection in order to enhance efficiency. This shall entail:-
 - i. Designing and enforcing control procedures for tracking the movement of records.
 - ii. Providing adequate and appropriate space and equipment for the storage of records.

4.0 SECURITY OF RECORDS

- a) KEPHIS shall protect its records in all formats against:
 - i. Unauthorized access;
 - ii. Unauthorized removal from their place of custody;
 - iii. Leakage of information;
 - iv. Mishandling;
 - v. Malicious damage;
 - vi. Exposure to physical, biological and chemical damage;
 - vii. Technological obsolescence and
 - viii. Alteration, manipulation and loss.
- b) A Disaster Management Plan shall be developed for the protection of all records. The plan shall identify and give special attention to vital records that could be used for continuity of a business in the event of a disaster.

4.1 Access to Records

- a) Access to KEPHIS records and information shall be provided within the existing regulatory framework. The process of accessing information shall be flexible enough to respect freedom of information requirements provided that the guidelines in the government security manual are not contravened.

- b) After transfer of records to Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS) the security classification therein identified as top secret, secret, confidential and restricted shall apply.
- c) Records management rules and regulations shall specify appropriate levels of access or restrictions and control mechanisms for handling records.
- d) Security status or restrictions on records shall be reviewed periodically to determine the need for additional control measures or for de-classification of information by the creating agency.

4.2 Protection of Vital Records

The Corporation will identify the vital records and then put in place sufficient protective measures to ensure their preservation. The measures will include off-site storage, duplication and dispersal of the records, storage in fire proof vaults or safes, installation of smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire suppression systems among others.

5.0 RECORDS DISPOSAL

- a) Records disposal procedures work on the premise that all records cannot be retained indefinitely. KEPHIS records shall be disposed in accordance with the existing laws and regulations
- b) KEPHIS shall develop records retention and disposal schedules in consultation with the Director, Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS).
- c) Destruction of valueless records shall be witnessed and certified by a responsible officer of KEPHIS.

6.0 STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) **The Managing Director and Senior Managers** shall ensure that KEPHIS complies with the requirements of legislation affecting management of the records and with supporting regulations and codes.
- b) The **Head of Human Resource & Administration** through the designated officer-in-charge of records management shall be charged with corporate Records Management responsibilities and will work closely with all Departments to ensure that there is

consistency in the management of records and that advice and guidance on good records management practice is provided throughout the Corporation.

- c) **Records Management staff** in Departments shall be responsible for ensuring that records and information systems in their business areas conform to this policy and to the requirements of legislation.
- d) **All members of staff** shall be responsible for documenting their actions and decisions in the records and for maintaining the records in accordance with good records management practice and professional guidelines.

7.0 PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed from time to time as need arises.

REFERENCES

1. Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, Cap. 19, 1965 (Revised 2003).
2. Public Procurement and Disposal Act (2005).
3. Public Audit Act (2003).
4. Financial Management Act (2004).
5. Kenya Information and Communication Act (2009).
6. Government Financial Regulations and Procedures, Chapter 23, Section 3 – 5 (1989).
7. Records Management Manual.