

Office of Human Resources  
***603 Official Personnel Files***

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**Georgia Department of Human Services  
Human Resources Policy #603**

Official Personnel Files

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**Next Review Date:**

**References:** O.C.G.A. §50-18-70 et seq. - Georgia Open Records Act  
O.C.G.A. §45-1-5 - Purging of Personnel Records  
DHS Human Resources Policy #601 - Employment Information  
DHS Human Resources Policy #602 - Access to Personnel- Related Public Records Based on the Georgia Open Records Act  
Retention Schedules for State Government

Official personnel files for Department of Human Services (DHS) employees are maintained by OHR.

## Section A: Filing Guidelines

1. Documents that should be placed and retained in official personnel files include, but are not limited to appointment packet material, performance-related documents and requests for personnel/payroll actions. A more inclusive list is provided in Attachment #1. Questions regarding documents to be placed in official personnel files should be directed to OHR.
2. Documents that should be maintained SEPARATELY from official personnel files include, but are not limited to supervisory files, medical information, criminal history records investigations, garnishments, I-9 Form, and employee grievances. A more inclusive list is provided in Attachment #2.
3. Supervisory files are to be maintained by each employee's work unit for the duration of employment in the unit. When employment in the work unit ends, supervisory files should be maintained until the end of the calendar year plus one additional calendar year. They should then be destroyed, unless there is an ongoing issue involving the individual employee's employment with the Department.

## Section B: Custodians

1. The custodian of official personnel files is the Director of the Office of Human Resources or designee.

# Section C: Access to Information

1. The Georgia Open Records Act provides that all DHS records are public and accessible unless specifically exempted for reasons such as an order by a Georgia Court or by law.
2. Certain personal information about employees is not subject to disclosure and will only be released to authorized officials. (See paragraphs C.3. and C.4.), home address and phone number. This information includes: an employee's social security number, mother's birth name, debit and credit card information, other banking/financial information, insurance and medical information, birthday/month and confidential reference information obtained in connection with an appointment. All other information maintained in official personnel files is generally accessible under the Georgia Open Records Act.
3. Information about current or former DHS employees is also accessible under the following circumstances:
  - a. The records custodians have access to the information for maintenance purposes.
  - b. Employees may have access to their own personal information and may grant access in writing to other individuals or organizations.
  - c. Division/Office Directors and their designees and employees' supervisors may have access to the information when necessary for employment-related purposes or on a "need-to-know" basis.
  - d. For purposes of investigating employment-related misconduct or for other legal, administrative, or regulatory reasons, information is available to authorized officials with organizations including, but not limited to, the following:
    - DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG),
    - DHS Division of Child Support Services (DCSS),
    - DOAS Workers' Compensation,
    - Georgia Department of Labor,
    - Federal Department of Labor,
    - Social Security Administration,
    - Georgia Bureau of Investigation,
    - Federal Bureau of Investigation,
    - Other federal, state and local law enforcement or investigative agencies with a "need to know."
  - e. Information may also be released in response to a subpoena or other appropriate inquiry issued in the course of litigation.
4. Subpoenas and other legal requests for information maintained in official personnel files are to be immediately forwarded to OHR.
5. Custodians are to ensure that confidential information is removed prior to allowing access to official personnel files, unless one or more of the conditions in section C exists.
6. Access to official personnel files is permitted during regular business hours (i.e., Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays and other nonwork days).

7. Individuals requesting access to official personnel files should give advance notice. Identification is required prior to authorizing access to confidential employee information.

## Section D: Transfer of Official Personnel

1. Official personnel files of DHS employees who transfer to other State agencies must be forwarded to the appropriate agency's Human Resources Office within ten (10) business days of the transfer effective date.

## Section E: Purged Files

1. Official personnel files may be purged as a result of settlement agreements made with employees who have been terminated from employment.
  - a. In such cases, the official personnel files and any associated work history must be clearly designated with a notation that records have been partially purged as a condition of a settlement agreement. (See Attachment #3)

### NOTE

Termination settlement agreements and requests for data change are to be forwarded to OHR where notations regarding purged records are to be entered into terminated employees' computer-based work histories.

- b. Notations regarding purged records will be disclosed to any governmental entity requesting information on former employees' work histories for the sole purpose of making hiring decisions.

## Section F: Closed Files

Custodians are responsible for properly transmitting closed (inactive) personnel files of former employees to the State Records Center.

1. When State employment ends, employees' official personnel files are to be withdrawn from the active files area. The inactive files are then to be transmitted to the State Records Center in accordance with the Retention Schedules for State Government Records. These Schedules may be found at the Secretary of State's website: [sos.ga.gov/](https://sos.ga.gov/)

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local Human Resource Office, or email [DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:DHS-Policies@dhs.ga.gov).

## 603 A1 Documents to be Retained in Official Personnel Files



**Georgia Department of Human Services  
Human Resources Policy #603 A1**

Documents to be Retained in Official Personnel Files

*This list is not all inclusive but provides guidance regarding the types of documents to be placed and retained in official personnel files.*

**Requests for Personnel/Payroll Action and supporting documentation, including:**

- Documents confirming appointments, promotions, transfers, demotions, etc. (Documents must include at a minimum the effective date, salary, and classified/unclassified status)
- Family and Medical Leave requests and approvals
- Documents requesting and approving leaves of absence without pay
- Correspondence regarding military leave, kidney donation leave, disaster volunteer leave, etc.
- Suspensions
- Notice of resignation or retirement

**Appointment Packet material, including:**

- Applications for Employment
- Security Questionnaire / Loyalty Oath forms
- Tax forms
- Designations for Outstanding Wage Payments
- Acknowledgements of Workers' Compensation Treatment
- Retirement forms
- Understanding Concerning the Use of FLSA Compensatory Time
- Drug-Free Workplace Notices
- Proof of Selective Service Registration (if applicable)
- Acknowledgements of Unclassified Position (if applicable)
- Employee Handbook Acknowledgement forms

**Performance-related documents**

- Letters of commendation
- Written reprimands
- Adverse actions
- Separation letters and Separation Notices (Form DOL-800)

## Other Documents

- Licenses/Certificates/Registrations and proof of renewal
- Special Requests for Other Employment and approvals/denials

# 603 A2 Documents to be Maintained Separately from Official Personnel Files



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #603 A2

Documents to be Maintained Separately from Official Personnel Files

*This list is not all inclusive but provides guidance regarding the types of documents to be maintained separately from official personnel files.*

**DHS Employee Grievances (unless employees specifically request in writing that grievance materials be placed in their official personnel files)**

**Unlawful Discrimination Complaints filed through any of the following:**

- DHS Unlawful Discrimination Complaint Procedure
- Georgia Commission on Equal Opportunity
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

## Medical Information

- ADA related information
- Alcohol/Drug testing laboratory results
- Specific medical information which supports absence due to Family and Medical Leave
- Medical and Physical Examination Program forms

**Investigative reports from the Office of Inspector General**

**Garnishments, bankruptcies, levies**

**Information received as a result of criminal history records investigations**

**Leave donation records**

**Employment Eligibility Verification (INS Form I-9)**

# 603 A3 Purged Records Notification