



# Personnel File Procedures

## What is a personnel file?

A personnel file is a historical body of an employee's information from the date of hire to the present. Anything that can be reasonably retrieved regarding a person's employment may be considered a part of the employee's record. This may include calendar notations, e-mail and other on-line documents, work logs, or journals. Appropriate and reasonable safeguards should be established to ensure security and confidentiality of personnel documents.

## Designation of Responsibility and Access

1. Access to and handling of confidential personnel materials is limited to designated managers, supervisor and career employees. The term designees will be used to refer to the above throughout this document. Access to and handling of these materials (even for purposes of filing or photocopying) can only be delegated to other designees. The only exception to this is the filing of materials within the Payroll Unit and the Human Resources Unit.
2. Designees are notified of and trained on the standards for maintaining confidentiality. This responsibility is documented in each designee's job description and performance standards.
3. Compliance with performance standards is evaluated during the annual performance evaluation.
4. Breaches of confidentiality must be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. For minor breaches the first action might be coaching. If coaching is unsuccessful, disciplinary or other corrective action must be taken. In the event of a severe or deliberate breach, management may proceed directly to disciplinary or other corrective action.

## Securing of Materials

For purposes of this document, the term confidential personnel materials refers to information on an employee from date of hire to present, maintained by the person's name or by some identifying number or symbol. These materials can be forms, documents, records, communications, emails, files, etc. Personnel information is retained in several types of files including: official personnel files, working files, medical files, payroll files, benefits files, etc.

1. All unit files for an individual should be kept together. Not all employees will have all types of files. Working files may be immediate supervisor's desk or the desk of the person who handles human resources matters for the unit. However, the same rules regarding security and confidentiality apply.
2. Confidential personnel materials and files must be kept in locked cabinets and drawers. Only designees can have keys to the cabinets, desks, and storage facilities that contain these materials and files. Units are expected to take reasonable measures and efforts to secure sensitive materials. Procedures are likely to vary from unit to unit based on operational differences.
3. All sensitive documents are to be mailed/delivered in sealed envelopes marked confidential.
4. All working documents and documents in process must be stored in locked cabinets when not in use (leaving for the day, long meetings, not used for long stretches of time). For those without offices, papers should be covered up if leaving one's desk for a short period.

- 5. During the day, fax machines are to be monitored regularly to maintain confidentiality. Sender is required to call ahead before faxing confidential materials so recipient can check for materials ASAP.
- 6. Long term storage areas should be accessed only by designees and must remain locked at all times. Senior Building Maintenance Workers and others with master key access to these areas must be identified as designees.

**Files Retained by Managers and Supervisors**

The unit manager or immediate supervisor is responsible for keeping and securing employee personnel files. If an employee works in two RSSP locations, files must be kept in the unit where the employee works the most time. If the employee works in another campus department, you should keep your own personnel files. You will not share these files with the other department.

Official Personnel File

Job related materials including information on employment, such as the employee’s application, resume, offer letter, and welcome letter; the job description and performance standards, Payroll Processing Forms (PPFs); development records such as training, education, and degrees; performance records such as appraisals, counseling memos, disciplinary letters, special awards, or commendation letters; notices of schedule or location change; most recent emergency data; separation records including resignation letters, medical separation letters, separation checklist, and exit interviews. See “How long should you keep discipline letters, counseling memoranda and/or written records of discussion?” at the end of this document.

Working File- optional

Things in progress, things for recollection, for the current evaluation year, notes of conversation; performance records i.e., counseling memos, disciplinary letters, awards, commendation letters, thank you’s, status reports. These items should be transferred to the Official Personnel File once they have been documented in the performance evaluation.

Upon separation, forward the *Official Personnel File* to the Payroll Unit.

Upon transfer to another campus department, consult with Human Resources Analyst Dee Palacios (642-2311 or [deepals@berkeley.edu](mailto:deepals@berkeley.edu)) or Shannon Lee (642-2310 or [shannlee@berkeley.edu](mailto:shannlee@berkeley.edu)) first before forwarding any files to the new department.

Medical File

Doctor notes, FMLA documents, correspondence related to medical leaves and absences. Records and correspondence related to accommodations, restrictions, return to work dates, leave periods. Transitional Work Agreements, documentation of the interactive process. Workers’ Compensation records including Workers’ Compensation correspondence, Employer’s Report of Occupational Injury or Illness, and employee claim forms.

Upon transfer or separation, forward Medical File to Human Resources Analyst Elysse Paige-Moore (643-6701 or [epaige@berkeley.edu](mailto:epaige@berkeley.edu)).

**Items that do not belong in Personnel Files**

Anything not directly related to job such as pre-employment references, grievances, outside complaints, sexual harassment complaints, affirmative action/EEOC data, background check documents, garnishments, timesheets or time summaries do not belong in Personnel Files. These items must be forwarded to the Payroll Unit and Human Resources.

**Files Retained by the Payroll Unit and Human Resources**

Payroll Files

Upon transfer or separation, the employee’s Official File is forwarded to the Payroll Unit. The Payroll Unit retains for 5 years. The Payroll Unit also maintains a Payroll file for each employee which includes Personnel Action Forms (PAF’s), garnishments, and other payroll related forms such as timesheets or time summaries.

Medical Files (Elysse Paige-Moore)

Upon transfer or separation, the medical file is forwarded to Elysse. The file is retained for 3 years.

Outside and Sexual Harassment Complaints, Disciplinary Actions and Grievance Files (Brenda Greenwood)

Complaints, disciplinary actions and grievances are retained within Human Resources. Grievances must not be kept in personnel files; shred or forward these documents to Brenda in a sealed confidential envelope. At time of transfer or separation, if the employee has not requested discipline be removed from their file, forward the discipline with their official file to the Payroll unit. See “How long should you keep discipline letters?” at the end of this document.

Background Check Files (Dee Palacios)

Background check documents must not be kept in personnel files; send them to Dee in a sealed confidential envelope. Background check paperwork and notice of clearance or ineligibility are retained by HR according to campus guidelines.

Employment Applications, Pre-employment References, Interview Data, Affirmative Action/EEOC data (Judy Ross)

For unsuccessful candidates, forward these items to Judy; Judy retains for 5 years.

**Maintenance and Disposition of Personnel Files**

We recommend that you go through personnel files once annually (evaluation time works well for many people) and remove any materials that are no longer valid. Be sure to follow the retention and disposition guidelines prescribed in this document.

**Requests for Confidential Information**

All requests to review files from other campus departments or external agencies must be in writing. Requests should be directed/forwarded to Dee Palacios or Shannon Lee in Human Resources. HR will coordinate the release of information.

**Who can review files?**

The employee or the employee’s designated union representative with letter of request; supervisor or department head; a prospective campus hiring department; Employee Relations, Labor Relations; and other UC offices with a specific job-related need can review files. There is more restricted access to Medical Files, Disability Files, and Workers’ Compensation Files.

For Personnel Files, contact Dee Palacios or Shannon Lee as soon as request is received to coordinate the review. For Medical Files, contact Elysse Paige-Moore.

**When can employees review their files?**

Upon request or no later than following day of request. All such reviews should occur in the presence of the supervisor or another department manager or supervisor.

**How long should you keep discipline letters, counseling memoranda and/or written records of discussion?**

Upon the written request of the employee, remove disciplinary letters, counseling memoranda and/or written records of discussion if there have been no other disciplinary actions, letters or memoranda relating to the same or similar issues for a period of two years. The employee shall receive the written request and documents back.

**What should you do with letters to be removed from file?**

Give to employee upon request or shred.

**What do you do with the manager's copies?**

Manager's copies are just for information and can be shredded. These copies should not be filed in the personnel file.

**Where To Find More Information**

**Management Guide. Chapter 8: Around the Office, Personnel Files**

**Personnel Policies for Staff Members**  
**CUE Contract**  
**AFSCME Agreement**  
**UPTE Technical Unit Agreement**  
**Building and Construction Trades Council Alameda County AFL-CIO**  
**University of California Records Disposition Schedules Manual**



# Recognizing Employees with Non-Cash Awards

We want to remind you of the importance of employee recognition. One of the most effective methods for recognizing employees is to present timely awards. We encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to give on-the-spot rewards.

Our department has a program for presenting employees with non-cash awards in order to acknowledge work-related events such as recognition, length of service, retirement, and sympathy. Listed below you will find the RSSP guidelines for implementing and using this program. The guidelines are based on University Business and Finance Bulletin G-41 Employee Non-Cash Awards.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for deciding who should be presented with non-cash awards but you are expected to consult with your assistant/associate director before purchasing non-cash awards. Awards are charged to your unit's budget. If you need more information about the program, consult with your assistant director. You can find more information about Recognition and Reward Programs by going to <http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/guide/appendg.htm>.

The four types of non-cash awards are described below. Each has a slightly different criteria and value. Be sure to follow the guidelines that apply to your situation.

## 1. Non-Cash Awards for Recognition

RSSP has established a \$30 per person limit per occasion for non-cash awards. The awards are charged to your unit's budget. Recognition awards are meant to be occasional and should only be presented to an employee on an infrequent basis. Awards should be based on objective criteria. You may want to reward some (or all) of the following:

- Time, work, or money-saving ideas
- Ongoing or one-time customer compliments for service/satisfaction
- Solution to a difficult problem
- Outstanding one-time achievements
- Outstanding attendance (particularly where public hours are important)
- General ongoing contributions that you'd like to acknowledge
- Improvement of any kind in an employee's efforts

Some examples of non-cash awards are:

- Flowers, fruit, a book or similar item
- A ticket for a sporting or cultural event
- A plaque
- A non-negotiable gift certificate (one that can only be used in exchange for tangible personal property, not cash or cash for the difference between the purchase price and the value of the gift certificate)

The following are **not allowable** non-cash awards:

- Cash or *negotiable* gift certificates
- Parking permits
- Recreation memberships
- Season tickets to sporting or cultural events

**2. Events to Celebrate Length of Service**

The unit can sponsor small celebrations such as cake and punch or other refreshments to acknowledge employees who have earned a minimum of five years of service, but no gifts or awards should be purchased using University funds. The celebration is charged to your unit's budget.

**3. Events to Celebrate Retirement**

Retirement parties must be authorized by the director and will be paid for from the unit's budget. The Associate Vice Chancellor's office will purchase a plaque honoring any employee retiring after 20 or more years of service. The maximum University funds to be spent on retirement gifts are not to exceed \$400.

**4. Sympathy Gifts**

Gifts such as flowers may be presented as an expression of sympathy in the event of the death or major illness of an employee or a member of the employee's family or household. The maximum amount paid for sympathy gifts must be no more than \$75 per person per event. The gift is charged to your unit's budget.

# Requests for Information

Reference Sheet  
Residential and Student Service Programs

Subject	Requestor	Information Requested	Direct requestor to the RSSP contact	RSSP contact directs to or confers with:	Notes
<b>Requesting information concerning current and former employees (including students)</b>					
<b>Death, Severe Illness</b>	Family of employee	What needs to be done?	<p>Letrice Waite-Moore (Cal Dining employees) ☎ 2-1179 ☎ 3-9839</p> <p>Dee Palacios (All other RSSP employees) ☎ 2-1179 ☎ 3-9839</p> <p>Della Hill ☎ 2-4030 ☎ 3-8943</p>	Deborah Lloyd OHR - Benefits Unit 17 University Hall MC 3544 ☎ 3-7547	
<b>How to Reach Employee</b>	Family members, personal contacts	Wants to speak with employee or is requesting employee's phone number(s) and address(es)	<p>Employee's unit if known or</p> <p>Shannon Lee ☎ 2-2310</p> <p>Dee Palacios ☎ 2-2311</p>	Employee or employee's supervisor	<b>Do not release home phone numbers or addresses.</b> Requestors must provide their name and a phone number where they can be reached.
<b>Verification of Employment</b>	Bank or similar, potential landlord or employer	Current gross pay, dates of employment, department, title, full-time or part-time employee		<p><u>Written requests:</u> Jeanette Henderson OHR 274 University Hall MC 3544 ☎ 3-5835 ☎ 2-1882</p>	Refer to Campus Payroll for verification of past payrates or net pay. Employee must sign a release. <b>Do not release:</b> employee's social security number, home address or phone number, or overtime information.
<b>Employment Reference</b>	Potential employer	Performance, attendance	<p>Elysse Paige-Moore ☎ 3-6701 ☎ 3-9839</p> <p>Dee Palacios ☎ 2-2311 ☎ 3-9839</p>	Employee's supervisor	Based on performance evaluation. <b>Do not release any</b> files or medical information or discuss/verify medical leaves.
<b>Employment History</b>	Law enforcement	Employment history	Elysse Paige-Moore	<u>Law enforcement agencies:</u>	

Subject	Requestor	Information Requested	Direct requestor to the RSSP contact	RSSP contact directs to or confers with:	Notes
	agency (UCPD, FBI, etc.), attorney		☎ 3-6701 ☎ 3-9839	UC Police 1 Sproul Hall MC 1199, ☎2-6760  <u>All others:</u> Jeanette Henderson OHR, 274 University Hall MC 3544 ☎ 3-5835 ☎ 2-1882	
<b>Personnel File Review</b>	Employee, unions, campus department, government agency	Review personnel file	Dee Palacios ☎ 2-2311 ☎ 3-9839  Shannon Lee ☎ 2-2310 ☎ 3-9839	<u>Current employee:</u> supervisor  <u>Former employee:</u> Payroll Unit	Employees have the right to review their personnel files.
<b>Medical Information</b>	Doctor, hospital, physical therapist, insurance carrier, attorney	Any and all medical or health information	Elysse Paige-Moore ☎ 3-6701 ☎ 3-9839  Brenda Greenwood ☎ 2-0582 ☎ 3-9839		
<b>Unemployment Forms</b>	Employment Development Department	Separation information	Recipient is the contact and must <b>forward forms immediately.</b>	OHR - Benefits Unit 17 University Hall MC 3544 ☎ 2-7053	
<b>Separation and Termination Information</b>	Employment Development Department or Campus Benefits Unit	Reason for separation	Letrice Waite-Moore ☎ 2-1179 ☎ 3-9839  Della Hill ☎ 2-4030 ☎ 3-8943		
<b>Labor Relations</b>	Union, attorney, current or former employee	Civil suit, grievance, complaint, request out of the ordinary	Brenda Greenwood ☎ 2-0582 ☎ 3-8943  Shannon Lee ☎ 2-2310 ☎ 3-9839	OHR - Labor Relations 207 University Hall MC 3540 ☎ 2-0429	

Subject	Requestor	Information Requested	Direct requestor to the RSSP contact	RSSP contact directs to or confers with:	Notes
<b>Subpoenas for Witness</b>	Employee, attorney, government agency	How to reach employee	Elysse Paige-Moore ☎ 3-6701 ☎ 3-9839 or Brenda Greenwood ☎ 2-0582 ☎ 3-9839	OHR - Labor Relations If subpoena is served. phone ☎ 2-0429	<b>Do not accept subpoenas on individuals.</b> You are not required to provide contact information. The subpoena should only be accepted by the named party.
<b>Subpoenas for Records</b>	Employee, attorney, government agency	Employee records (personnel and payroll files)	Elysse Paige-Moore ☎ 3-6701 ☎ 3-9839 Brenda Greenwood ☎ 2-0582 ☎ 3-9839	Nelcy Dwight OHR ☎ 2-5470 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM  247 University Hall MC 3544	<b>Do not accept subpoenas.</b> If served or requestor attempts to serve you with subpoena, inform RSSP contact.
<b>Requesting information concerning current and former student residents</b>					
<b>Rental Verification</b>	Potential landlord, lender, mortgage company, bank	Payment history, rent amount, length of occupancy	RSSP Cashier ☎ 2-1524 ☎ 3-3411		Requestor must submit a signed release from the student.
<b>Rental Verification</b>	Current or former student resident	Financial statement for potential landlord	RSSP Cashier ☎ 2-1524 ☎ 3-3411		
<b>Student Conduct</b>	Law enforcement agencies (UCPD, FBI, attorney, etc.)	Student conduct	Stacy Holguin ☎ 3-2600 ☎ 3-4395		Requestor needs signed release from student.

Direct questions about this reference sheet or suggestions for improvement to Elysse Paige at 3-6701 or [epaige@berkeley.edu](mailto:epaige@berkeley.edu).