



Ministry
of Justice



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

County Court, Family Court, Court of Protection, and the District Registries of the High Court Records Retention and Disposition Schedule

1. This schedule covers the court/tribunal records and associated administrative records held in the County Court, the Family Court, the Court of Protection and the District Registries of the High Court. It covers the records that are created and managed in line with Section 8 and Schedule 1, paragraph 4 of the Public Records Act 1958. HMCTS manages these public records on behalf of the Lord Chancellor.
2. It covers the records for the different jurisdictions and courts that sit in county court buildings (County court (civil), Family court, Court of Protection and District Registries of the High Court). The retention periods for the Family Court and Court of Protection also apply to records held by the Court of Appeal and High Court at the Royal Courts of Justice (RCJ).
3. The schedule sets out how long these records should be kept (retention) and what should happen to the records when the retention period ends (disposition). It applies to records in all formats including, but not limited to, digital (for example case management systems or emails), paper and audio.

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4. Some of the Court of Protection's records listed below are selected for permanent preservation and are transferred to The National Archives (TNA).
5. Any records in this schedule that are subject to an existing (or a future) moratorium imposed by a Public Inquiry should be kept until the moratorium has been lifted.
6. As part of our commitment to transparency, this schedule will be published on GOV.uk website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/record-retention-and-disposition-schedules>.

The Schedule

Table 1: County Court (civil) and civil cases heard in the District Registry of the High Court

No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
1.	King's Bench cases	Keep for three years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
2.	Chancery cases	Unless directed otherwise by a judge, keep for seven years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
3.	Admiralty cases	Keep for five years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
4.	a) Companies (winding-up) cases b) Companies act registers (petitions and winding-up)	Keep for 15 years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
5.	Judicial Review a) Administrative Court b) Upper Chamber Immigration and Asylum	a) Keep for three years from date of last action and then delete or destroy. b) Keep for five years from date of last action and then delete or destroy.
6.	a) Bankruptcy cases b) Partnership cases	Keep for 20 years from the date of the adjudication and then delete or destroy.

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
7.	a) Insolvency (formerly Bankruptcy) petitions and Companies (winding-up) cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissed • Withdrawn b) Statutory demands, applications to set aside	Keep for two years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
8.	Registers of petitions and receiving orders in bankruptcy	Keep for 20 years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy
9.	Taxing officer's books (bankruptcy)	Keep for two years from date of last entry and then delete or destroy.
10.	Voluntary arrangement cases	Keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy.
11.	Administration order cases	Keep for three years from date paid or revoked and then destroy. Note: The judgment is only registered for six years in line with the Register of Judgments orders and fines held by Registry Trust Ltd: https://www.trustonline.org.uk/ .
12.	Attachment of earnings files	Cases that lead to an order: Keep for three years from date paid or date dismissed and then destroy. All other cases: Keep for three years from last action and then destroy.
13.	a) Third Party Debt Order files b) Charging order files	Keep for three years from date of last entry and then destroy.

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
14.	Claims case files (including Certificates of judgment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where hearing stands adjourned generally • Judgment claims files other than where the hearing stands adjourned generally • Claim files that are not under a specific Act that go to trial or arbitration. • Personal injury cases following an award of provisional damages • All other claim files 	Digital records: Keep for six years from the date of the last meaningful transaction. Paper records: Keep for three years from date of last meaningful transaction and then destroy. Note: Records are kept for the same period as for the Register of Judgments, Orders and Fines held by Registry Trust Ltd: https://www.trustonline.org.uk/ .
15.	Summary of Claims cases held on CaseMan	Keep for 75 months and then delete.
16.	Small claims held on Mediation Management tool (MMT) system	Keep for 30 days from uploading to digital system and move to archive platform. Keep on archive platform for 18 months and then delete.
17.	Files relating to trusts and other equity proceedings	Keep for six years from date of last entry and then destroy.
18.	Possession action cases	Unless directed otherwise by a judge: Digital records: keep for six years from date of last meaningful transaction and then destroy. Paper records: keep for three years from date of last meaningful transaction and then destroy.
19.	Court Funds cases	Keep until the youngest named child identified in the order reaches the age of 18 years and the money has been paid out, and then close the case. Keep for a further two years and then delete or destroy. (In case of any query about the status of the fund, contact the Court Funds Office (CFO) before closing the case.)

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
20.	The Damages (Variation of Periodical Payments) Order 2005 cases (which can be read at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/841/made)	Ensure that record is carefully marked to show: Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep until the claimant's 100th birthday (if known to the court). Or: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep for the length of time specified in the court order. Or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep until the death of the claimant (if the court is notified of this). Otherwise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep for 100 years from the date that the case was opened.
21.	Landlord and tenant cases	Return the 'original' lease to the parties either at the end of the final hearing or with the final order. Keep for three years after date of last entry and then destroy.
22.	Order to Attend for Questioning files	Keep for two years from date of last entry and then destroy.
23.	a) Certificated Bailiff files b) Bond certificates	a) Keep for three years after date of last entry and then destroy b) Bond certificates that have run out and 'expired' can be destroyed with the file as per the retention policy. Note: Bond certificates that are still current and 'live' at the point of file deletion/destruction, must be returned to the enforcement agents company. The bond should be returned with a letter explaining the file is being destroyed as per the court records retention policy and that the bond is therefore being returned for their safe keeping.
24.	a) Bailiff and office receipt books b) Bailiff mileage records c) Bailiff daily record sheets	a) and b) Keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy c) Keep for two years from date of last entry and then destroy
25.	Warrants a) Warrants of execution, possession and delivery b) Outstanding warrant lists c) Warrant requests	a) Keep for two years from the date of the warrant and then destroy. b) Keep for one year from the date of last entry and then destroy. c) Keep for two years from the date of the request and then destroy.

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
30.	Obsolete records which continue to be retained: Foreign summons books	Keep for two years from date of last entry and then destroy

Table 2: Family Court records including High Court and the Court of Appeal

No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
31.	Central index of decrees absolute See Rule 7.35(1) of the Family Procedure Rules 2010: https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/parts/part_07 . (The index holds the following information: Parties Names, Case number, Marriage Date, Decree Absolute Date and Court where the Decree Absolute was made.)	Held permanently in the Principal Registry (at the Central Family Court).
32.	a) Divorce and judicial separation b) Nullity cases c) Termination of Civil Partnership cases d) Divorce index cards e) Decree of presumption of death / dissolution (obsolete after 2014)	Keep the following for 100 years from date of final order or resolution of any subsequent complaint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • petition (and any amended petition), • decree nisi or conditional order, • decree absolute or dissolution order • judicial separation orders • certificates of presumption of death / dissolution (For paper records created before 20 December 2010 that are being sent to offsite storage, remove the documents listed above before sending offsite.) Keep all other papers for 18 years from date of final order or resolution and then destroy.

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
33.	Financial remedy cases (Applications and Orders)	Keep for 18 years from date of final order and then review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the final order concerns ongoing maintenance (e.g. for the life of the child or ex-spouse), keep the order for 100 years from date of final order • If there is no ongoing maintenance, destroy immediately • All other case papers should be destroyed
34.	Children Act cases including, but not limited to, Wardship and Guardianship of minors	Keep for 18 years from date of final order or resolution of any subsequent complaint and then destroy. (Please note that these files can be sent to offsite storage after seven years.)
35.	Parental orders under s.30 of the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Act	Keep for 100 years from the date of the last action and then destroy.
36.	Presumption of Death applications (High Court only)	Keep for three years from date of final order and then destroy.
37.	Adoption cases	Keep for 100 years from the date of the last paper and then destroy.
38.	Declaration of Parentage Orders	Keep until the child is 25 years old and then destroy.
39.	Placement (where kept separately from the adoption record)	Keep for 18 years from date of final order or resolution of any subsequent complaint and then destroy.
40.	Family law act cases	Keep for three years from the expiry date of the final order and then destroy.
41.	Domestic Abuse Protection Orders	Keep for three years from the expiry date of the final order and then destroy.

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
42.	Files of proceedings under specified Acts, unless specifically referred to elsewhere in this schedule including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inheritance [Provision for Family & Dependents] Act • Matrimonial Causes Act • Married Woman's Property Act 	Keep for three years from date of final order or resolution of any subsequent complaint and then destroy.
43.	a) Forced Marriage Protection Orders b) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Protection Orders	Keep for 18 years from date of final order or resolution of any subsequent complaint and then destroy.
44.	Maintenance case records including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (REMO) • UK Maintenance Enforcement (UKME) • Child Support Agency cases 	Keep for seven years after cessation of the final order. NB. If the cessation date of a REMO order is unclear then ask the Official Solicitor and Public Trustee REMO unit to contact the relevant national authority.
45.	Maintenance payments	Keep for seven years and then destroy.
46.	Draft/incomplete applications (made via GOV.uk): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Adoption b) Family Public Law (FPL) c) Private Law 	a) Keep for 90 days and then delete b) Keep for 180 days and then delete c) Keep for 28 days and then delete
47.	Obsolete records which continue to be retained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) District Registry cause books b) District Registry index cards c) District Registry cash book 	Keep for seven years from the date of the last entry and then destroy.
48.	Obsolete records which continue to be retained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divorce cause books Divorce cause cards 	Keep for seven years from date of the last entry and then review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where required for operational purposes keep for a further seven years and then review again. Repeat until no longer needed • Where no longer required, destroy immediately.

Table 3: Court of Protection records

No	Record type	TNA classification	Retention and disposition
49.	<p>All Court of Protection orders including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original EPAs • Copies of orders on Court of Protection files Copies of orders on Deputy Files 	OPG 3	<p>Keep for 100 years from date of order and then destroy.</p> <p>Where original orders have been bound together (White Books), keep for 100 years from date of last order and then destroy.</p>
50.	<p>Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) cases, records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications to register an EPA (EP2PG) • Copy of the EPA document • Correspondence • Certificates of judgement <p>Cases where an objection is made may also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court orders and directions • Objection correspondence • Summary of hearing 		<p>Where a record is marked 'Do not destroy', keep until the Senior Judge directs that the record should be transferred to the DRO's team who will arrange for it to be sent to TNA. Where the Senior Judge decides that a record will not be sent to TNA, then the record will be permanently held by the Court.</p> <p>Original EPAs – see item 49 above</p> <p>All other records: Keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy.</p>

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No	Record type	TNA classification	Retention and disposition
51.	<p>Court of Protection records (formerly known as Grey files) which can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of orders • Application documentation • Minute sheet • Section 49 Reports • Visit Reports • Correspondence • COP20A and COP 20B • Relate to applications made under the Mental Capacity Act only from 1 October 2007 		<p>Where a record is marked 'Do not destroy', keep until the Senior Judge directs that the record should be transferred to the DRO's team who will arrange for it to be sent to TNA. Where the Senior Judge decides that a record will not be sent to TNA, then the record will be permanently held by the Court.</p> <p>Copies of orders – see item 49 above</p> <p>All other records: Keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy.</p>
52.	<p>Deputy Files (legacy files in Nottingham on loan to the Public Guardian), records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual receivership accounts • Requests for funds enquiries • Copies of Court Orders • Application forms • Minute sheets • Medical Reports • Visitor reports • Investment information • Correspondence 		<p>Copies of orders – see item 49 above</p> <p>All other records: Keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy.</p>

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No	Record type	TNA classification	Retention and disposition
53.	<p>Obsolete records which continue to be retained: Receivership Files - cases where the Public Trustee or Chief Executive of the Office of the Public Guardian acted as Receiver of the Last Resort</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual accounts • Requests for funds • Enquiries/correspondence • Copies of Court Orders • Application documents • Minute sheets • Medical Reports • Visitor reports • Investment information • Taxes / Bill payments 		Keep for seven years from the date of last entry and then destroy

Table 4: Administrative records

No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
54.	Paper copies of records that have been digitised	Keep paper copy until date of first hearing (Court of Protection) or for 30 days from date scanned. All scanned documents must be checked for accuracy before they are destroyed. More detailed guidance for the Court of Protection can be found in the following guidance: Court of Protection: Disposal of hard copy documents after scanning to create the electronic file (E-File).
55.	Financial information held on Help with Fees database	Destroy in line with the Help with Fees RRDS published at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/record-retention-and-disposition-schedules .

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
56.	Financial and accounting records of the court including, but not limited to, District Registry Fees, Divorce fees, cash books, etc	Keep for seven years after closure and then destroy
57.	<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fee books in bankruptcy and companies (winding up) proceedings b) All fee books and fee sheets c) Payable orders schedules d) Carbon-receipt sheets e) Copy bank paying-in slips f) Monthly statements of balance and related vouchers g) Copies of bills of sale and deeds of arrangement h) Deeds of arrangement index i) Bank reconciliation records j) Fee exemption/remission register k) Refund documentation (Refund Authorisation forms) l) Government Procurement Card (GPC) statements m) List of maintenance transactions n) Variations list and amendments list o) Maintenance write-off list p) Fee exemption/remission applications (approved) 	<p>For items a) - o), keep for seven years from date of last entry and then destroy</p> <p>p) Keep for the remainder of the financial year, then for a further two years, and then destroy</p>

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No	Record type	Retention and Disposition
58.	a. BMS returns (statistics) b. Non-financial statistical information (reports, returns and statements) c. State of work returns d. Performance DATA quality checks and quality returns	Keep for one year and then destroy
59.	Records created as part of governance and assurance processes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Control Check Sheets (KCCS) • Standard Operating Controls (SOC) • Previous equivalents 	Destroy in line with the HMCTS Governance and Assurance RRDS published at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/record-retention-and-disposition-schedules .
60.	Judges' itinerary	Keep for one year from date of last entry and then destroy.
61.	All cause/hearing lists including the District Registrar's Cause List	Keep for one year and then destroy
62.	Logs for signing keys in and out	Keep for one year from date of last entry and then destroy
63.	Bundles	Court staff are required to retain and dispose those bundles that have been lodged at court for the specific use of the judge / court in accordance with HMCTS guidance issued on April 2019. (The court bundle). (Barristers/solicitors are responsible for removing their own bundles, (including witness bundles), as they are the Data Controllers of that information.)
64.	Recordings of hearings	Keep for six years from date of recording and then destroy
65.	Other correspondence (other than case related correspondence)	Keep for one year and then destroy

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Signed: 14 March 2022 (with minor amendments December 2022 and further minor amendments 9 May 2025)