



Frequently Asked Questions

Student Record Retention

August 2026

1. What records or documents do we need to maintain while the students are enrolled?

- Program application or comparable program enrollment documentation
- Program application or comparable program enrollment documentation including records of immunizations and any health assessments.
- Record of attendance
- Summary of cognitive assessments (i.e., grade book)
- Summary of psychomotor evaluation via skill scenario and testing (i.e., report on meeting required minimums)
- Affective evaluations for each phase of the program
- Academic advising or progress report for each phase of the program
- Academic or behavioral counseling documentation (if applicable)
- Student evaluations from clinical preceptors
- Student evaluations from the capstone field internship preceptors
- Summative evaluations in the cognitive, psychomotor (if applicable), and affective domains
- Evidence of completion of all program minimum patient competencies (i.e., graduation report or similar)
- Terminal Competency form
- Transcript or record of academic achievement
- Certificate of completion or diploma

2. Which records do we need to retain after graduation? How long should they be retained?

The program determines the length of long-term storage of records, in compliance with institutional or organizational requirements. Outside of these constraints, programs may wish to keep the entire student record for at least one recertification or licensure period. After that period, they may choose to 'thin' the file and keep only evidence of completion of competencies in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains, and any other pertinent documents which may include counseling or advising, performance improvement, or other relevant documentation. The program determines which documents to keep.

Programs are advised to determine any state regulatory requirements regarding maintenance of student records and should consult the programs legal counsel for definitive guidance.

3. What is the minimum CoAEMSP requirement regarding long-term record retention?

Grades and credits for courses must be recorded on the student transcript and permanently maintained by the program sponsor in an accessible and secure location. For non-academic programs that do not offer a transcript, CoAEMSP provides a sample in the [CoAEMSP Resource Library > Instruments and Forms > Record of Achievement – sample](#).

4. There are a lot of records and documents involved. What are best practices to organize everything?

Organizational methods vary. At a minimum:

- Each student should have a file. Upon graduation, organize the file in a way that demonstrates the progression of learning throughout the program.
- A cohort file includes information such as course schedule, student handbook, syllabi, etc.
- General files include documentation such as Advisory Committee meetings, Resource Assessment Matrices and other survey results, and Annual Reports.

5. Do records have to be paper? Do they have to be electronic? How should records be stored?

There is no preferred method. The program chooses the most efficient and effective method for their operation.

Student and graduate records must always be stored securely. Paper records must be in a locked location.

Electronic records must be stored with access restricted to sponsor approved faculty and personnel.

6. How do we back up our records?

If the program maintains single paper copies of active student records, the files must be kept secure. It is advised that once the student graduates, the paper copies are scanned and stored electronically. When paper versions of skill testing and clinical and field evaluations are used, the program may elect to 'thin' the daily type of evaluations and keep evidence of summative testing.

Electronic files should be stored in a system that provides frequent back-up. Files should never be stored on individual drives or personal cloud storage and must be accessible to all approved program personnel and administration.

7. Where can I find a list of various records/documents we should be keeping?

A *Program Files – sample* document is in the [CoAEMSP Resource Library > Samples > Program Files – sample](#).

The form lists suggestions for inclusion for students, course or cohort, faculty, and general documents. The program can customize the tables to meet their specific needs and retention requirements/decisions.

8. What records do site visit teams need to review?

The Site Visit Team will identify random student records from recent cohorts for review. Regardless of the format (electronic, paper, or combination), the team will review the records for the various documents listed in # 1. It is recommended that programs have 3 years of records available during the site visit.

9. Why should we keep any records other than the student transcripts?

Graduates may request documents for various reasons and often after a considerable period of time following graduation: copies of a certificate of completion, copy of the schedule and syllabi for comparison when seeking academic placement, proof that they graduated from an accredited program, copies of standardized course completion (i.e., ACLS, PALS), and other reasons. Graduates may also request evidence of skills competency to satisfy requirements of a state for reciprocity.