

Fact-sheet – Document Management



What is the objective?

**Understanding the importance of a document management system and how to implement an effective one.**

**Document management:** the policies and systems in place to organize files, records, policies and any other documents in a consistent manner which allows access to those with permission.

The main objective is to understand risks associated with poor document management and how to implement an effective document management system.



How to achieve the objective?

**How should documents be managed?**

- 1- **Catalog of all existing documents** – the facility should be aware of and have recorded all documents in existence at the facility through one department/division (generally the quality department).
- 2- **Classification of documents** – if the facility does not already provide a “type” or “classification” for each document (for example, “policy”, “procedure”, “instruction”, or “record”), this should be done to easily understand the types of documents and the different policies or procedures each may need. For example, a Human Resources record may require confidentiality rules, while a leave application does not.
- 3- **Creation or revision of documents** –the facility should implement a creation/revision procedure, including the management of the versioning\*, the person allowed to write, validate and approve documents depending on their type and scope.



\*The document management procedure should include the process to update documents. Each document should have a codification, a version number, a date of creation/validation, the name of owner/person who validates/person who approves the document. Each update should be identified thanks to a new version number and a date of update/validation.

- 4- **Confidentiality and storage** – the facility should imagine a storage procedure and create all necessary storage structure for each document. This storage procedure should be considered with the necessary permission (to edit / read) to ensure the appropriate confidentiality and make the documents available for anyone who should need them. This procedure should also include the time that any document (current/old version) should remain available for as per internal policy or legal requirements.
- 5- **Regular audit of the document management system** – the facility should, at least once per year, verify that the rules they have put in place are functioning. For example, if non-Human Resources (HR) staff should not have access to HR files, a non-operations management staff (and non-HR) should test to see if the documents can be accessed.



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**Common non-compliances**

- Access to confidential documents is not restricted to the appropriate persons;
- There is a lack of policies or procedures related to use, editing and storing of documents.



**Good practices**

- Document management system shared with stakeholders (customers, suppliers, subcontractors, etc.).