

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Transfer and Retention of Health Records

**Policy Number:** 507.02.03

**Effective Date:** 1/19/2022

**Page Number:** 1 of 3

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Health Services Division  
(Physical Health)

**Access Listing:**  
Level I: All Access

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

The health record will be transferred with the offender upon relocation to any facility within the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) system, including private correctional facilities. Health records will be retained for all offenders leaving the GDC system according to State Law. This policy is applicable to all facilities that house GDC offenders to include private and county prisons.

**II. Authority:**

A. O.C.G.A. § 31-33-2;

B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 101.04 Records Management, 507.02.01 Health Record Management (Format and Contents), 507.04.10 Consultations and Procedures, 507.04.37 Urgent/Emergent Care Services, 507.04.52 Patient Transport, and 507.04.67 Offender Death and Mortality Reviews;

C. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-A-08; and

D. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-1E-02, 5-ACI-6D-06, 5-ACI-6D-07, 4-ALDF-4D-22-8, 4-ALDF-4D-28, 4-ACRS-4C-23, and 4-ACRS-4C-24.

**III. Definitions: None.**

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

A. Intra-system Transfer of Records:

1. Health records will accompany the offender when the offender is transferred from one GDC facility to another.
2. The health record will be prepared for transfer by placing it in a large, clear plastic envelope which is labeled "Medical Record" with the offender's name and identification (ID) number written in the space provided. Medical Record Plastic bags will be obtained through the Business Manager at the Facility.

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- a. For movement from a contracted vendor with an electronic health record: The Medical Records Clerk or designee will print a one-year time frame of the electronic health record. The printed documents will be filed in the medical record jacket in the proper location as per Organization of GDC Medical Record as outlined in SOP 507.02.01, Health Record Management (Format and Contents).

3. The security officer(s) will be responsible for transporting the sealed health record with the offender.

**B. Outside Services:**

1. The health record will not accompany the offender for outside services.
2. A consultation form will be completed with pertinent information and will accompany the offender to any outside service.
3. If indicated, a copy of other pertinent health information will be sent with the offender in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" and with the offender's name and ID number.

**C. Record Retention:**

1. Records are retained in accordance with Georgia Law.
2. Upon release from the GDC for reasons other than death (e.g., parole, medical reprieve, completion of sentence), the facility must contact GDC Offender Administration and then the health record will be transferred to the State Archive (See SOP 101.04, Records Management).
3. Upon release from the GDC due to death, the facility will mail the health records (physical and mental health) to the Office of Health Services within twenty (20) days of the offender's death to be handled in accordance with SOP 507.04.67, Offender Death and Mortality Reviews.

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4. Health records will normally be retained for ten (10) years. Health records may be retained longer than ten (10) years for specific legal purposes.
5. Primary and secondary health records will be retained according to legal, accrediting, or regulatory agency requirements.
6. Records will be sent to the Central Records Archive Office in Atlanta for destruction. Under no circumstances are records to be destroyed at any facility.

V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.