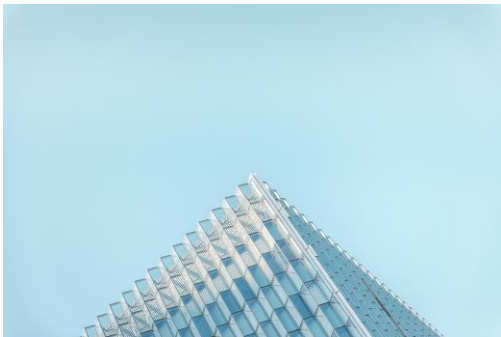


ELECTRONIC ARCHIVING OF PAPER ORIGINALS

Legal Framework for Electronic Archiving

Although some countries require certain types of documents to be kept and archived in their original paper form, for most categories of documents, including HR-related records, there is no such requirement, and it is generally acceptable to use electronic versions of paper records (i.e., scanned copies of paper originals) during most government agencies' inspections and audits or in court proceedings.



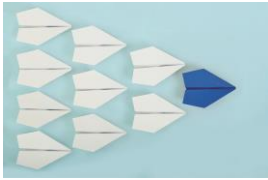
The evidential or probative value of electronic versions of paper records may be more easily challenged before a court than it would be for the originals. This is mainly because the original records could be tampered with or changed before being scanned, and, unless proper technology has been used (e.g., encryption and timestamping), it may not be easy to detect such changes from a scanned copy. In specific situations, it may be good practice for employers to retain archives of paper originals in the event such originals would be requested by a specific investigator, auditor, judge or authority.

Are electronic scanned copies of paper originals legally valid?

Documents which require an employee's signature should be retained in the form in which they were originally signed. For employers who would like to retain an electronic copy, the original version should also be retained in case it is necessary for inspections, etc.

Copies of employees' personal documents (IDs, passports, etc.) which don't require signature can be stored electronically regardless of how the record was originally provided to the employer. Other records which don't require the employee's signature (i.e. promotion, training and compensation review letters) can also be stored in either electronic or paper form.





HR Best Practices: In Greece, employers should retain the original version of a signed employee record. The full electronic archiving era is approaching, but for now it is not possible to guarantee that all paper documents can be destroyed. Indeed, the acceptance of digital copies remains subject to the discretion of the judge.

Similar to the electronic signature, electronic archiving will probably also develop to a three-level structure: simple, advanced and certified archiving. Over time, this means that certified electronic archiving will make the burden of proof fall under the responsibility of the challenging party.

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www.hrcomplianceassist.com - hrcomplianceassist@people-doc.com