**Montana Judicial Branch**

**Records Management Bulletin**

**Internal Drug Court Records**

Pursuant to Judicial Branch Policy #1570, certain internal drug court documents and e-mails must be maintained as outlined in policy #1570. Please note records retained under this guidance are not necessarily subject to public disclosure as many drug court documents are confidential in nature. This guidance is specific to certain drug court documents and only supplements the requirements in policy #1570.

Guidance

* Drug Court enabling documents including policies, blank participant contracts, memorandums of understandings, and other guiding documents should be maintained in a central location. When a guiding document is updated, the previous version must be maintained for four (4) years (*11*).
* All information about a client in the case management system should be maintained for a minimum of ten (10) years after the client has been discharged. Maintaining these records within a case management system for longer than 10 years is appropriate as the information may be used for evaluations or as part of a relapse prevention program (*36*).
* Client files in paper form are subject to the same retention schedule. However, to protect client confidentiality, e-mails and paper documents about individual clients should be in a single paper file with access limited to people with the authority to know about individual clients. Client file information may include but is not limited to screening documents, assessments, progress and staffing reports. At the end of the 10-year period, client files must be destroyed.
* Evaluations and peer reviews must be retained centrally by the statewide Drug Court Coordinator for a minimum of eight (8) years (*39*).
* Grant and financial support information (such as incentive and gas card logs, invoices, etc.) must be maintained in a central location for six (6) years. The Judicial Branch Fiscal Services’ Office will provide additional guidance on specific financial records.
* Formal court files prepared and maintained by the Clerk of the Court are not subject to this guidance. The District Court Uniform Case Filing Standards govern retention standards for formal court files.
* Courts serving District Court but administratively attached to local governments will comply with all local government policies in addition to this policy.

*Questions about the records retention guidance should be directed to the statewide Drug Court Coordinator.*