

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Inter-Departmental Correspondence**

DATE: April 2015

TO: All Management Employees

FROM: Nicole McKay, Employee & Labor Relations Manager

SUBJECT: Employee Relations Bulletin 3
Personnel Files

Various types of personnel files are maintained in the County. This bulletin explains what the various files are, where they are maintained, and what types of materials should be placed in each file.

1. The Civil Service Personnel File is the official personnel record for each employee and is maintained in the Human Resources Department. This file contains copies of all personnel actions, Leave of Absence forms, performance evaluations, disciplinary letters, reprimands, and other records of an employee's employment history. An employee must be provided with a copy of any document to be placed in this file.
2. The Department Personnel Files are maintained in many of the larger departments to provide immediate access to records. These files contain the same material as the Civil Service Personnel file. A copy of any document placed in the Department file should be forwarded to Human Resources for filing in the Civil Service Personnel File.
3. Supervisory Files are the informal files maintained by supervisors for each of their employees. These files contain permanent records, and records of a temporary nature. Examples of records that may be maintained on a permanent basis are copies of performance evaluations and documents signed by the employee acknowledging receipt of a policy or procedure (e.g., incompatible activities). Supervisors may also wish to maintain a record of the name and phone number of an individual designated by the employee to contact in case of emergency.

Documents to be maintained on a temporary basis include anecdotal records or notes made by the supervisor regarding the employee's performance or conduct (positive or negative), memos from the supervisor to the employee confirming counseling sessions, memos or notes from third parties regarding the employee, and samples of completed work products. These notes, memos, and work samples form the basis for regular performance discussions, and should be used in preparing evaluations and recommending personnel actions. Any documentation of performance/conduct problems or of superior performance should be shared with the employee as soon as possible. Once an employee

has corrected a problem, anecdotal notes relative to that problem should be purged from the file. For example, documentation of an employee's attendance problem should be purged from the file once that employee's attendance record indicates he/she has corrected the problem.

When an employee transfers within the department, the supervisory file should be forwarded to the new supervisor, after being purged of any extraneous or outdated records. When an employee terminates employment with the County, these files should be maintained for two years and then may be destroyed.