

**§482.24(b)(1) - Medical records must be retained in their original or legally reproduced form for a period of at least 5 years.**

**Interpretive Guidelines §482.24(b)(1)**

Medical records are retained in their original or legally reproduced form in hard copy, microfilm, computer memory, or other electronic storage media. The hospital must be able to promptly retrieve the complete medical record of every individual evaluated or treated in any part or location of the hospital within the last 5 years.

In accordance with Federal and State law and regulations, certain medical records may have retention requirements that exceed 5 years (for example: FDA, OSHA, EPA).

**Survey Procedures §482.24(b)(1)**

- Determine that records are retained for at least 5 years, or more if required by State or local laws.
- Select a sample of patients, both inpatient and outpatient who were patients of the hospital between the previous 48-60 months. Request their medical record. Is it promptly retrieved? Is it complete? Is it in original or in a legally reproduced form?