
Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection — Guidelines on personally identifiable information deletion

*Sécurité de l'information, cybersécurité et protection de la
vie privée — Lignes directrices relatives à la suppression des
informations personnellement identifiables*



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Contents

Page

Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Symbols and abbreviated terms	3
5 Framework for deletion	3
5.1 General	3
5.2 Constraints	4
5.3 Clusters of PII	4
5.4 Retention period and regular deletion period	5
5.4.1 Retention period	5
5.4.2 Regular deletion period	5
5.4.3 Allocation of clusters of PII	6
5.5 Archives and backup copies	6
5.6 Standard deletion periods, starting points, deletion rules and deletion classes	7
5.7 Special situations	7
5.8 Documentation of policies and procedures	8
6 Clusters of PII	8
6.1 General	8
6.2 Identification	9
6.3 Documentation	10
7 Specification of deletion periods	10
7.1 Standard and regular deletion periods	10
7.2 Regular deletion period specifications	11
7.3 Standard deletion period identification	11
7.4 Deletion period specifications for special situations	12
7.4.1 General	12
7.4.2 Modification of data objects	12
7.4.3 Need to extend period of active use	13
7.4.4 Suspension of the deletion	13
7.4.5 Backup copies	13
8 Deletion classes	14
8.1 Abstract starting points — abstract deletion rules	14
8.2 Matrix of deletion classes	15
8.3 Allocation of deletion classes and definition of deletion rules	16
9 Requirements for implementation	16
9.1 General	16
9.2 Conditions for starting points outside IT systems	18
9.3 Requirements for implementation for organization-wide aspects	18
9.3.1 General	18
9.3.2 Backup	18
9.3.3 Logs	19
9.3.4 Transmission systems	19
9.3.5 Repair, dismantling and disposal of systems and components	19
9.3.6 Everyday business life	19
9.4 Requirements for implementation for individual IT systems	20
9.5 Deletion in regular manual processes	21
9.6 Requirements for implementation for PII processor	21
9.7 Control deletion in special cases	21
9.7.1 Exception management	21

	9.7.2	Further sets of PII.....	22
10		Responsibilities.....	22
	10.1	General.....	22
	10.2	Documentation.....	23
	10.3	Implementation.....	24
		Bibliography.....	25

Foreword

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Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

Introduction

Many functional processes and IT applications use personally identifiable information (PII), which is subject to various compliance provisions relating to privacy. Thus, organizations need to ensure that PII is not retained for longer than is necessary and that it is deleted at the appropriate time. This can require organizations to fulfil the rights of PII principals, such as the right to obtain erasure (to be forgotten). ISO/IEC 29100 defines principles of “data minimization” and “use, retention and disclosure limitation” for PII, which can be enforced using deletion as a security control.

PII deletion requires a set of carefully designed, clear and easily understood deletion rules, embodying appropriate retention periods that satisfy the demands of multiple stakeholders. These rules should also conform with requirements originating from codes of practice and other standards. Mechanisms are to be correctly implemented and appropriately operated. In order to ensure the legally compliant deletion of PII, the PII controller needs to develop policies and procedures for deletion that include a set of rules and responsibilities for the processes involved. The chances of success for the development and implementation of these policies and processes can be improved if the PII controller uses a recognized approach to their design and implementation.

This document provides a framework for developing and establishing policies and procedures for PII deletion that can be implemented by an organization. This framework allows for consistent deletion of PII throughout an organization.

Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection — Guidelines on personally identifiable information deletion

1 Scope

This document contains guidelines for developing and establishing policies and procedures for deletion of personally identifiable information (PII) in organizations by specifying:

- a harmonized terminology for PII deletion;
- an approach for defining deletion rules in an efficient way;
- a description of required documentation;
- a broad definition of roles, responsibilities and processes.

This document is intended to be used by organizations where PII is stored or processed.

This document does not address:

- specific legal provision, as given by national law or specified in contracts;
- specific deletion rules for particular clusters of PII that are defined by PII controllers for processing PII;
- deletion mechanisms;
- reliability, security and suitability of deletion mechanisms;
- specific techniques for de-identification of data.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 29100:2011, *Information technology — Security techniques — Privacy framework*