Electronic Media Disposal Policy
COE–EMD–01

1.0 Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for the proper disposal of electronic media containing sensitive data. The disposal procedures used will depend upon the type and intended disposition of the media. A wide variety of information resources contain electronic media including, but not limited to: computer systems, personal desktop assistants, smart phones, removable storage devices such as USB storage devices, diskettes, magnetic tape, copy machines and fax machines.

2.0 Scope
This policy applies to all the College of Engineering employees, contractors, consultants, temporary personnel, and other workers responsible for or utilizing electronic media storing Penn State data.

Note: Contracts subject to Penn State Office of Sponsored Programs technology control plans must also adhere to the media/data disposal requirements of the technology control plan and contract requirements.

3.0 Policy
All electronic media must be properly sanitized before it is transferred from the custody of its current owner. The proper sanitization method depends on the type of media and the intended disposition of the media. There are two acceptable methods for sanitization of electronic media.

1) Overwriting media: Overwriting of data means replacing previously stored data on a drive or disk with a random pattern of meaningless information. This effectively renders the data unrecoverable, but the process must be correctly understood and carefully implemented. Simply reformatting the media in not sufficient. The media must be overwritten. Additionally, overwriting must be a multi-pass procedure no fewer than three passes.

2) Destruction of media: Destruction is the process of physically damaging a medium so that it is not usable by any device that may normally be used to read electronic information on the medium, such as a computer, personal hand held device, audio or video player.

Please see your departmental technical contact for the latest College approved tools and procedures for sanitizing electronic media.

4.0 Enforcement
Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action by their Administrative unit, the College, or the University.

5.0 Revision History
Last updated: 4/2/2010