

Personnel files scattered?

From now on, one file.

The employment contract in the cabinet, the payslips in the mailbox, the medical certificate with the team leader. This guide shows how PaperOffice recognizes every document, bundles it into one file and shows it only to those who are allowed to see it.



TRY IT YOURSELF IN 30 MINUTES

Five documents in, one protected file out, every document found in seconds. With a test package to try it yourself.

WHY THIS GUIDE

Personnel records are the most confidential documents in the company.

Salaries, health data, and performance reviews: Few files demand such meticulous care. Yet, few are as dispersed across multiple locations.



In many HR departments, the personnel file looks much the same: a physical folder in a cabinet, payslips as PDFs from the payroll provider, certificates stored in email inboxes, and supporting documents held by various departments. This approach works—until an employee requests access to their data or an audit comes knocking.

This guide outlines the solution we have built into PaperOffice: a secure Workspace for HR, featuring one dedicated file per employee. Documents are identified by content and redacted before any external sharing. Every step is illustrated with real screenshots from the app. Use our test package to experience this workflow yourself in just 30 minutes.

Daniel Schönland

Founder and CEO, PaperOffice

WHO THIS IS FOR

HR Department

You manage the files, respond to access requests, and distribute documents to payroll and management.

Data Protection Officer

You monitor who sees what and oversee data access and deletion requests.

Management and IT

You assign permissions, define security levels, and determine storage locations.

WHAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE AFTERWARD

Establish a secure personnel Workspace, manage rights via User Groups, consolidate all records per person into a single file, locate everything related to an individual in seconds, redact documents prior to sharing, and store records in a compliant, audit-proof manner.

OVERVIEW

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AT A GLANCE

- Personnel records belong in their own protected Workspace. User Groups decide who gets in.
- Every document is recognized by its content and uniformly named, whether it is a scan, PDF, or email attachment.
- A document folder bundles everything about one person. Search finds it across all Workspaces.
- Before anything is shared, the Redact Agent blacks out what the recipient does not need to see. The original stays unchanged.
- With the test package, you can see the whole process for yourself in 30 minutes, in your own account.

01 · A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

One email, one month. The file is in five places.

Tuesday, 9 a.m. Tarek Nowak from the warehouse asks for a copy of all data stored about him under Article 15 GDPR.



The employment contract is located in the folder within the cabinet. Payslips are provided as PDFs by the payroll office and reside in the HR department's mailbox. The October medical certificate is on the team leader's desk, and proof of forklift training is maintained by the specialist for occupational safety.

The application from 2024 remains in the folder of the former recruitment team. Whoever compiles the information request must locate everything while ensuring that no data concerning third parties is disclosed.

THE REAL HURDLE

A personnel file must serve two purposes simultaneously: it must be comprehensive for those who work with it, and secure for everyone else.

02 · WHAT A SCATTERED FILE COSTS

Four ways to keep personnel files. One of them works.

Most HR departments use one of the first three ways and know their weaknesses from everyday work.

Folder in the cabinet

Securely locked, but accessible only on-site. What happens after filing remains out of sight.

Folder on the server

Quick to file, but every permission grant depends on IT. Whoever views the folder sees everything.

Department mailbox

Payslips and certificates stay as attachments. A search by subject often finds only part of them.

A protected file

All documents consolidated in a personnel Workspace, bundled per person, identified by content, and visible only to the HR group.

CALCULATE FOR YOURSELF

Information requests per year × Hours per request + Searches per week × minutes = Time spent on the file

'Hours per request' means searching through all storage locations, copying documents, redacting third-party information, reviewing, and sending. Example: 6 requests × 5 hours plus 20 searches per week × 6 minutes over 46 weeks amounts to approximately 120 hours per year.

THREE TYPICAL ERROR PATTERNS**Too many people see too much**

The medical certificate sits in the team folder. The diagnosis concerns no one but HR.

Document missing

The proof of forklift training is missing from the review. It is stored in a different folder within the specialist department.

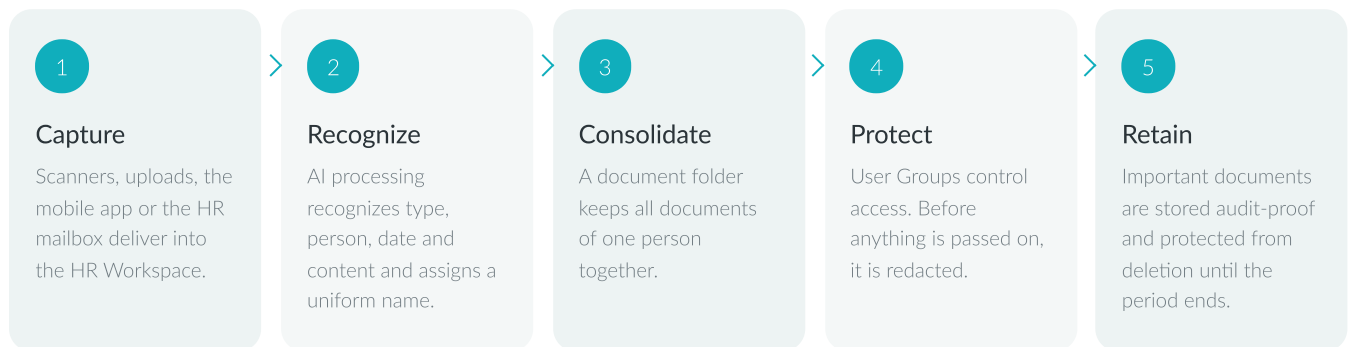
Incomplete information

The 2024 application is missing from the overview because it is still located in the Recruiting folder.

03 · THE PROCESS AT A GLANCE

Five stages. One file.

Every document takes the same path, whether it is scanned, uploaded or sent by email.



STAGE	WHAT PAPEROFFICE DOES	WHAT YOUR TEAM DECIDES
Capture	collects new items from the mailbox and the scanner itself	which mailboxes and devices are included
Recognize	document type, person, date, amounts and summary	your own document types if the existing ones are not enough
Protect	applies rights, protection level and redaction	who belongs to the HR group
Retain	calculates the end of the period and locks the document	which documents become audit-proof



04 · A WORKSPACE FOR HR

A dedicated space for your most confidential files.

Personnel records receive their own Workspace. You select its protection level during creation under **Workspace type**.

WORKSPACE TYPE
Choose Workspace type
Select the Workspace type. The type determines available protection, access-control and compliance features. An upgrade is possible at any time; a downgrade is technically not possible.

FEATURE	Standard Start: store and find.	Selected Business Daily work: share, protect, restore.	Compliance Highest tier: evidence and audit readiness.
Workspace features			
Details & additional information ⓘ	—	✓	✓
Default document type ⓘ	—	✓	✓
Access protection ⓘ	—	✓	✓
External sharing ⓘ	—	✓	Protected
Trash ⓘ	Permanent	✓	✓
Encryption			
Access Control			
Audit & Compliance			
Document Protection & Evidence			

1 Workspace type. Standard for filing and finding, Business for everyday work with sharing, protection and restore, Compliance for evidence and audit-proof retention.

FEATURE	BUSINESS	COMPLIANCE
Opening	Optional with password or SMS code	Always with SMS code or approval by two persons
Downloads	As usual	With watermark: name, ID, and timestamp
External sharing	possible by email or link	blocked
Trash	yes, with restore	yes, with restore

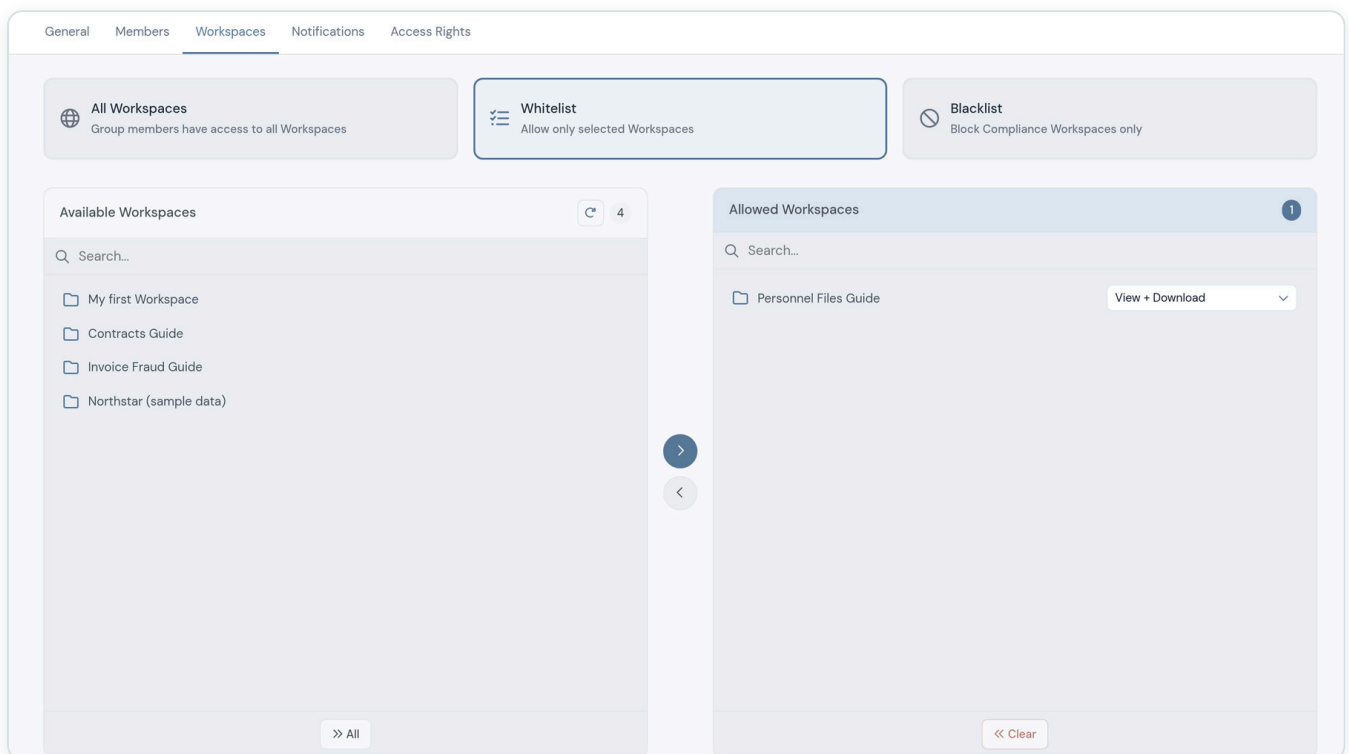
OUR RECOMMENDATION

For personnel files, we recommend a Compliance Workspace. Anyone who opens it confirms with an SMS code every time, and every download carries the name of the person who downloaded it.

05 · WHO SEES WHAT

The HR group can view the files. No one else can.

You assign permissions once per user group, not per file. You can find your groups under [Account](#) > [User Groups](#) .



- Workspaces.** Select "Whitelist" and allow only the HR Workspace, here "Personnel Files Guide". Next to it, set the document right: View + Download, optionally Upload or Full access.

Two-factor authentication

For every member of the HR group, enable "2FA required" in the user dialog under "Security".

Check default group

New users are assigned to the default group. Define which Workspaces they can see there before inviting colleagues.

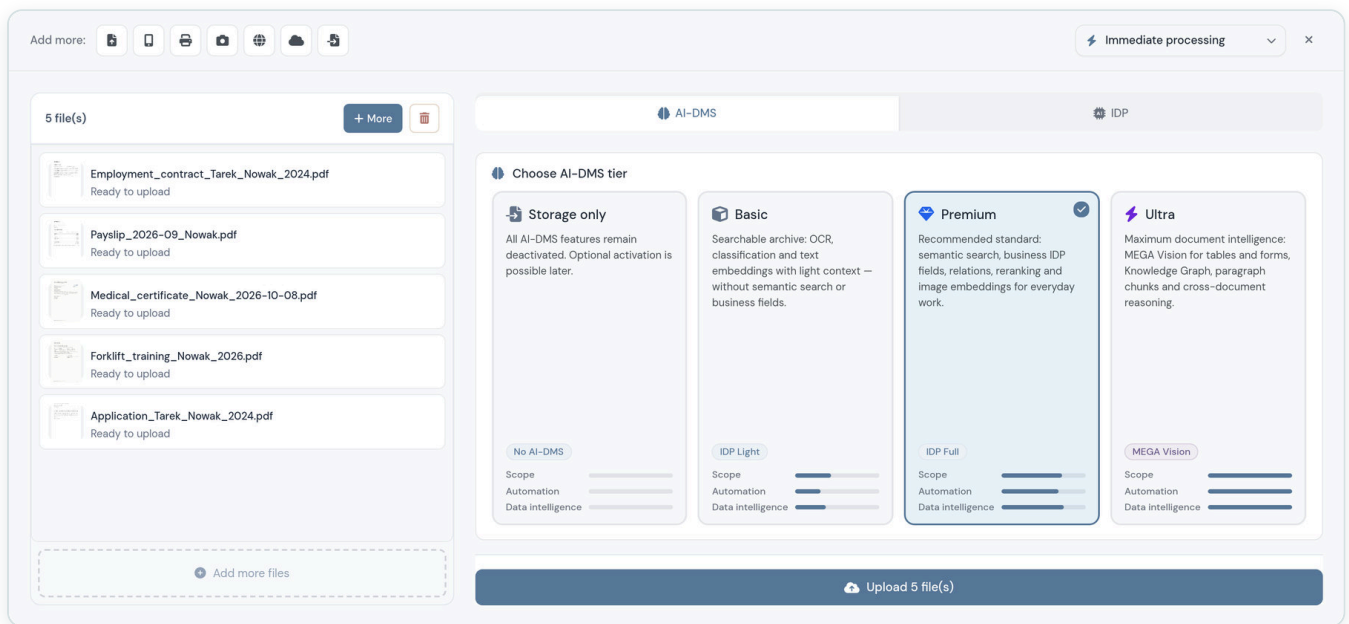
Module permissions

Under "Access Rights", you additionally control who is allowed to create Workspaces, document types, and agents.

06 · IN THE APP: UPLOAD DOCUMENTS

Upload everything at once. Sorting happens afterward.

In the HR Workspace, click **Add document** , choose the files and set the tier. That is all there is to do.



- 1 **Files and tier.** The five documents from the test package, tier "Premium": it reads content, people, dates and amounts and suggests a name.

Paper

The network scanner sends directly to the Workspace. The mobile app captures documents on the go.

Mailbox

A Connector collects emails from the payroll office or the applications mailbox. Attachments become documents of their own.

Legacy files

The bulk import takes whole folders; the Split Agent separates scanned legacy files into individual documents.

07 · RECOGNIZED BY CONTENT

Every document recognized. Every name uniform.

AI processing reads every document, recognizes type and person and writes a short summary.

Personnel Files Guide							
Options Current versions Add document							
☐	DOCUMENT	DOCUMENT TYPE	KEYWORDS	DOCUMENT STATUS	ADDED	AUTOMATION	
	Application_Warehouse_Logistics_Specialist_L... Application as a warehouse logistics specialist (reference LG-2024-02) Tarek Nowak applies for the position of warehouse logistics specialist at Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH, highlighting six years of experience in goods receiving and warehouse management systems. The...	Job Application	Tarek Nowak Northstar Industrial Syste... warehouse logistics speci... LG-2024-02 +4		7 minutes ago 10/17/2026, 09:36 AM	AI-DMS Premium AI-DMS Premium	
	Safety Instruction Record - Tarek Nowak - 2026... Record of the Annual Safety Instruction This document is a safety instruction record issued by Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH to employee Tarek Nowak regarding industrial trucks (forklifts). It confirms the instruction on March 12, 2026, and outlines topics...	Protocol	Northstar Industrial Syste... Safety Instruction Forklift DGUV Regulation... +4		7 minutes ago 10/17/2026, 09:36 AM	AI-DMS Premium AI-DMS Premium	
	Medical Certificate - Tarek Nowak - 2026-10-0... Medical Certificate A medical certificate issued by Dr. S. Albrecht for Mr. Tarek Nowak regarding a herniated disc in the lumbar spine, specifying work restrictions until November 30, 2026.	Medical Report	Medical Certificate Received Dr. S. Albrecht Tarek Nowak herniated disc +4		7 minutes ago 10/17/2026, 09:36 AM	AI-DMS Premium AI-DMS Premium	
	Payslip September 2026 - Tarek Nowak.pdf Payslip September 2026 This document is a payslip issued by Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH to employee Tarek Nowak for the pay period of September 2026. It details a total gross pay of EUR 3,636.00 and lists various deductions...	Payslip	Northstar Industrial Syste... Payslip Tarek Nowak Salary +4		7 minutes ago 10/17/2026, 09:36 AM	AI-DMS Premium AI-DMS Premium	
	Employment_Contract_Northstar_Tarek_Nowa... Employment Contract between Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH and Tarek Nowak This bilateral employment contract outlines the terms for Mr. Tarek Nowak joining Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH as a warehouse logistics specialist starting March 1, 2024, with a monthly gross salary of EUR...	Employment Contract	Northstar Industrial Syste... Tarek Nowak Employment Contract Warehouse Logis... +3		7 minutes ago 10/17/2026, 09:36 AM	AI-DMS Premium AI-DMS Premium	

✓ The result in the Workspace. Five documents, each with type, name, summary and keywords. Ready within minutes.

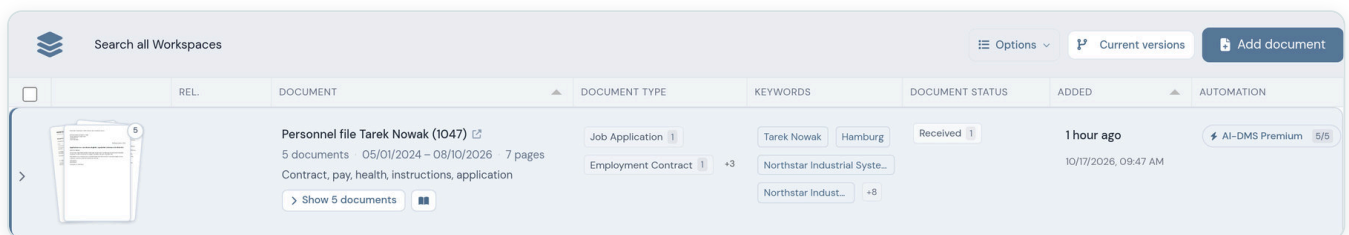
DOCUMENT	RECOGNIZED AS	NAME ASSIGNED BY PAPEROFFICE
Employment contract (2 pages)	Employment Contract	Employment_Contract_Northstar_Tarek_Nowak
Payslip September	Payslip	Payslip September 2026 - Tarek Nowak
Medical certificate (scan)	Medical Report	Medical Certificate - Tarek Nowak - 2026-10-08
Forklift safety instruction (scan)	Protocol	Safety Instruction Record - Tarek Nowak - 2026-03-12
Application with CV	Job Application	Application_Warehouse_Logistics_Specialist_LG-2024-02

Genuine result of our test run on October 17, 2026, with AI-DMS Premium. For kinds of your own such as "Safety instruction", create a type of your own under Document AI › Document types.

08 · ONE FILE PER PERSON

Five documents. One folder.

A document folder bundles all documents of one person, without copies. Each document stays searchable on its own.



- ✓ **The file in the list.** "Personnel file Tarek Nowak (1047)": five documents from January 2024 to October 2026, seven pages, with document types visible at a glance.
- 1 **Select:** Check the boxes next to the documents belonging to a person in the list.
- 2 **Create folder:** Actions > Document folder > New Folder , name it something like "Personnel file Tarek Nowak (1047)".
- 3 **Add:** New documents can be added via Add to folder .



GOOD TO KNOW

A folder is a view of the documents, not a copy. If you dissolve the folder ("Dissolve folder"), all original documents remain intact.

09 · FIND AND HAND OVER

Everything about a person, across all Workspaces.

For an information request under Article 15 GDPR, every document counts, including those stored in a different Workspace.

The screenshot shows the Paperoffice search interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'Tarek Nowak' entered. Below it, a dropdown menu shows 'Current Workspace' and 'All Workspaces'. The search results are displayed in a table-like format with columns for document title, relevance score, workspace, and date. The results include:

- Personnel file Tarek Nowak (1047)**: 5 documents, 05/01/2024 – 08/10/2026, 7 pages. Relevance: A 76%. Workspace: Northstar Industrial Syste... (10/17/2026, 09:47 AM).
- Application_Warehouse_Logistics_Specialist_...**: Application as a warehouse logistics specialist (reference LG-2024-02). Relevance: A 76%. Workspace: Northstar Industrial Syste... (10/17/2026, 09:36 AM).
- Employment_Contract_Northstar_Tarek_Nowa...**: Employment Contract between Northstar Industrial Systems GmbH and Tarek Nowak. Relevance: A 78%. Workspace: Northstar Industrial Syste... (10/17/2026, 09:36 AM).
- Safety Instruction Record - Tarek Nowak - 202...**: Record of the Annual Safety Instruction. Relevance: A 75%. Workspace: Northstar Industrial Syste... (10/17/2026, 09:36 AM).

1 Search. At the top, click **Search**, enter the name, then choose "Search in all Workspaces". Each result shows its relevance and its Workspace.

2 · Hand over

Select the results, then click **Actions** > **Share & export**. "Redact and create download link" redacts third-party information and generates a short link; "Send by email" sends it via email with a password if desired.

3 · Prove

"Delivery status" logs every email sent. This lets you prove when the information went out.

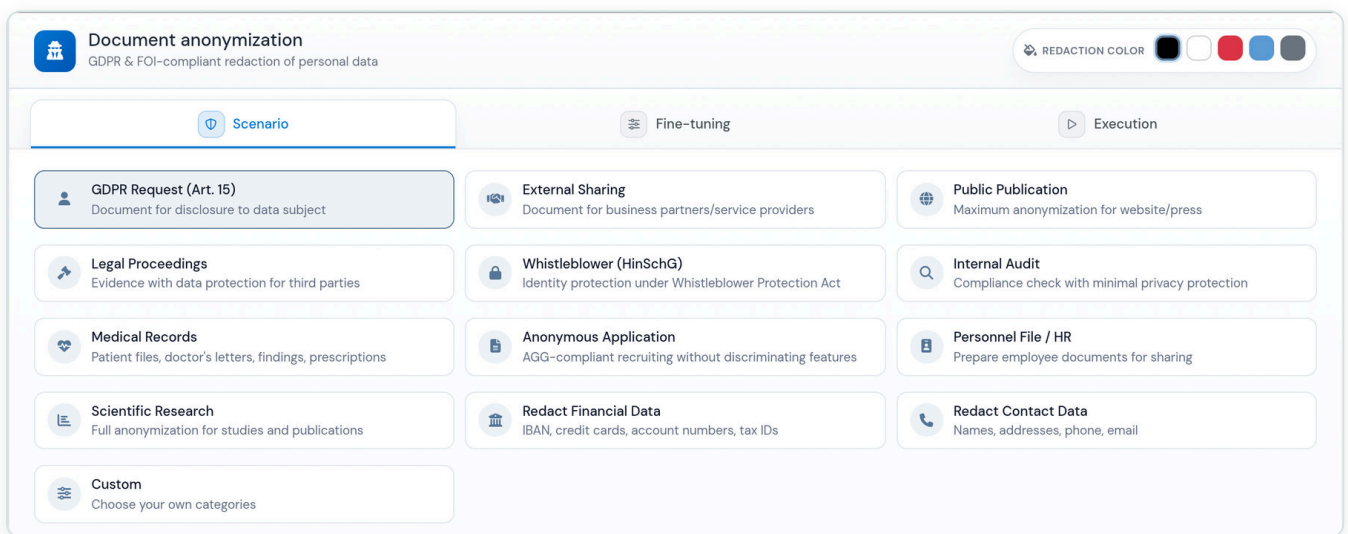
- Share original file**
Share the original file via the system share sheet.
- Send by email**
Send by e-mail, optionally with a password.
- Create public link**
Magic link to this document — anyone with the link, with expiry and retrieval limit.
- Redact and create download link**
Remove personal data and create a short download link.
- Delivery status**
Show e-mail deliveries and the log.
- Download (Original)**
Download unchanged original files.
- Download (POFID)**
Download with POFID in the file name.
- Export data**
Open table and metadata export.

Actions > Share & export

10 · REDACT BEFORE SHARING

The work restriction is shared. The diagnosis is not.

Whoever passes on a document passes on only what the recipient needs. The Redact Agent blacks out the rest, in a copy.



- 1 **Select a scenario.** Highlight the document, then navigate to **Actions** > **Agents & workflows** > **Redact**. For personnel records, dedicated scenarios are available, such as "Personnel File / HR", "GDPR Request (Art. 15)", and "Anonymous Application".

2 · Fine-tuning

Under "Fine-tuning", names that should remain visible are protected via a whitelist. Additional terms are redacted by the blacklist.

3 · Review

In the preview, you can inspect every area before it is finalized. Click to reveal an area or draw a rectangle to redact additional content.

4 · Apply

A redacted copy is generated. The underlying text is removed, while the original remains unchanged in the file.

PREVIEW BEFORE SENDING

Redactions are always reviewed by a human before the copy leaves the organization. The preview feature is designed specifically for this purpose.

11 · RETAIN AND LOCK

Undeletable for as long as necessary. Traceable when it matters.

Store important documents audit-proof: until the period ends, no one can delete, move or rename them, and every change to their data is logged.


Activate WORM retention

After activation, the document is stored immutably (WORM). It cannot be deleted, moved or edited until the retention period expires. Statutory retention duties (e.g. HGB, AO) override GDPR erasure requests.

Jurisdiction

Germany ▼

Document type *

DE HR File [DE_HR_RECORD] [10y] ▼

Period start

☒ Immediately (day-exact from today)
 ☐ End of year (EoY — common for statutorily bound types)

⚠ For statutorily bound types EoY (end of year) is common — please check your local law.

- 1 **Activate WORM retention.** In the document under **Revisions** : choose the jurisdiction, the retention type and the start of the period. PaperOffice calculates the end date and names the legal basis.

Audit-proof

From Workspace type Business, per document, irrevocably. Afterwards, you can obtain a compliance certificate with QR verification.

Deletion lock

In the event of disputes or audits, your IT department can set a Legal Hold via the interface with a justification. This locks deletion and moving for all versions; in the app, this is shown as "Legal hold active".

Trash

Deleted items first land in the trash within Business and Compliance Workspaces. You determine how long they remain there.

Which period applies to which document depends on your legal requirements and contracts. Clarify it once with your legal or tax adviser and record it in your procedure documentation.

12 · WHAT TEAMS ASK AT THE START

Seven questions before the transition.

**One Workspace per person?**

For most teams, one HR Workspace with one folder per person is enough. Separate Workspaces are worthwhile when different groups should see different files.

What happens upon deletion?

In Business and Compliance Workspaces, deleted items go to the trash first. Documents under WORM retention cannot be deleted at all until the end of the period.

How do payslips get in?

Most easily through the mailbox your payroll office sends to: a Connector collects the PDFs, and AI processing recognizes the employee and the month.

What happens to health data?

It remains securely stored in the protected Workspace. If a document is forwarded, the Redact Agent redacts the diagnosis in the copy.

Can we migrate legacy files?

Yes. Simply scan them, use the Split Agent to separate individual documents, and bundle them into folders for each person.

Where are the data stored?

In PaperOffice's data center in the EU or on your own storage, such as a NAS. You choose this per Workspace.

How do we handle information requests?

Search for the name, select the results, redact using the "GDPR Request (Art. 15)" scenario, and share via link or email.

13 · HANDOVER TO PAYROLL AND SPECIALIST SYSTEMS

The file remains with you. The data goes where it belongs.

Payroll, time tracking, and HR software receive exactly what they need. The documents themselves remain in PaperOffice.



Export

Datasets as tables, originals for download, selected documents bundled together.

REST API

Query or submit documents and fields, for example from time tracking.

Email

Send documents by email, optionally with a password and with a delivery log.

Automate

Workflow Agents and automation tools such as n8n take over recurring steps.

GOOD TO KNOW

An AI assistant like Claude operates with the rights of the user who connected it via MCP. Anything this user is not permitted to see is also invisible to the assistant.

14 · TRY IT YOURSELF IN 30 MINUTES

Download the test package. Watch a file come to life.

Five fictional documents illustrate the entire journey: recognition, consolidation, retrieval, and archiving.

TEST PACKAGE DIGITAL PERSONNEL FILE

Five documents and a readme (README.txt)

Employment_contract_Tarek_Nowak_2024.pdf 2 pages, digital

Payslip_2026-09_Nowak.pdf with tax ID, social insurance number and IBAN (fictional)

Medical_certificate_Nowak_2026-10-08.pdf scan with receipt stamp

Forklift_training_Nowak_2026.pdf scan, next instruction due by March 11, 2027

Application_Tarek_Nowak_2024.pdf cover letter and CV

paperoffice.ai/downloads/paperoffice-ai-test-package-personnel-file.zip



- 1 **Create a Workspace:** on app.paperoffice.ai, for example "HR Test", Workspace type Business or Compliance.
- 2 **Upload:** all five files with tier "Premium".
- 3 **Check the results:** after a few minutes, five recognized documents are there.
- 4 **Create folder:** select all, Actions › Document folder › New Folder.
- 5 **Search:** search for "Tarek Nowak" in all Workspaces.

EXPECTED RESULT	DOCUMENT TYPE	HOW YOU CAN TELL
Employment_Contract_Northstar_Tarek_Nowak	Employment Contract	2 pages, start March 1, 2024
Payslip September 2026 - Tarek Nowak	Payslip	net pay EUR 2,455.40
Medical Certificate - Tarek Nowak - 2026-10-08	Medical Report	restrictions until November 30, 2026
Safety Instruction Record - Tarek Nowak - ...	Protocol	instruction on March 12, 2026
Application_Warehouse_Logistics_Specialist_...	Job Application	2 pages, with CV

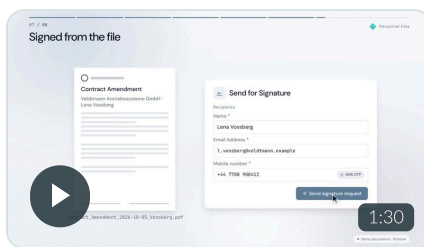
Find out the cost of the test on our pricing page: paperoffice.ai/en/pricing

All names, numbers, bank details, and health information in the test package are fictional.

15 · VIDEOS ON THE TOPIC

Prefer watching? Films about the personnel file.

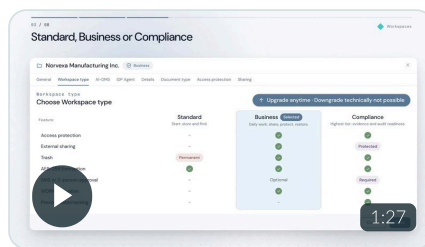
Short films on paperoffice.ai. Scan the QR code with your phone camera or open the link.



Digital Personnel File

The whole process in 90 seconds.

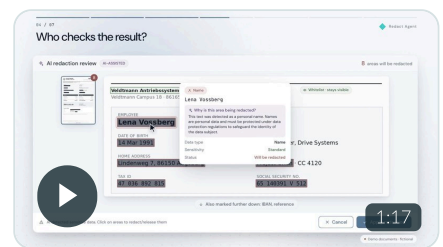
paperoffice.ai/l/loesungen-prozess-personalaktien



Workspaces and Protection Levels

Standard, Business and Compliance compared.

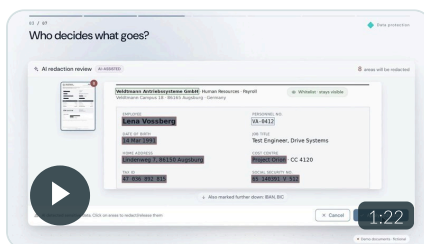
paperoffice.ai/l/workspaces



Redacting sensitive data

The Redact Agent: choose a scenario, check, apply.

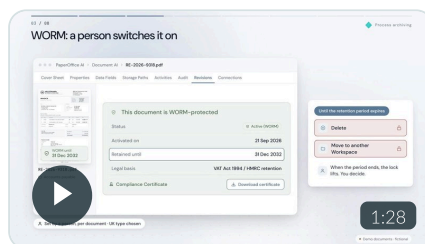
paperoffice.ai/l/pii-redaction



Data Protection and GDPR

Recognize and protect personal data.

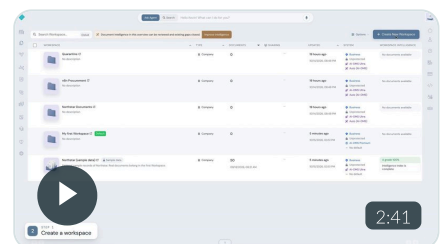
paperoffice.ai/l/loesungen-risiko-daten-schutz



Audit-proof archiving

Retention with period, versions and history.

paperoffice.ai/l/loesungen-prozess-archivierung



Creating a Workspace

First steps: set up your own Workspace.

paperoffice.ai/en/academy/01-erste-schritte/workspaces-erstellen



MORE IN THE ACADEMY

Find all lessons and webinars at paperoffice.ai/l/academy, sorted by topic from your first Workspace to integration.

16 · YOUR DIGITAL PERSONNEL FILE IN FIVE DAYS

Start with one department. Then proceed file by file.

To get started, all you need is an HR Workspace, a group and the files of ten employees.



1

Day 1 · Goal and protection

Set the Workspace type, create the HR group, check the default group.

2

Day 2 · Structure

Define naming schema and folder for each person, create custom document types.

3

Day 3 · Inbox

Connect the payroll office mailbox via a Connector, route the scanner to the Workspace.

4

Day 4 · Legacy files

Scan ten files, separate them, let them be recognized and bundle them into folders.

5

Day 5 · Trial run

Simulate an information request, check the redaction, set retention periods.

MEASURE THESE FOUR VALUES

Completeness

Proportion of files with no mandatory documents missing

Recognition rate

Share of documents recognized correctly without manual correction

Time per request

From the request to dispatch

Access

People with access to personnel files, before and after

Measure the same values manually on one file beforehand; only the comparison reveals the impact.

17 · CHECKLIST AND START

Before you expand.

- ☐ Personnel files are stored in a dedicated, protected Workspace.
- ☐ Only the HR group has access; its members log in using 2FA.
- ☐ The default group cannot see the personnel Workspace.
- ☐ Each person has a folder containing uniformly named documents.
- ☐ The payroll office mailbox delivers directly into the Workspace.
- ☐ All data is redacted and previewed before any sharing occurs.
- ☐ Retention periods are clearly defined and documented.
- ☐ A sample request under Article 15 has been successfully processed.

GET STARTED NOW

Create an account, create a Workspace, upload the test package. Start free with the Free plan, no credit card required.

app.paperoffice.ai**READ MORE****SOLUTION**

Digital Personnel File on
paperoffice.ai

MODULE

Redact Agent: redacting sensitive
data

MODULE

Workspaces: protection levels and
rights

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GUIDE?

Write to us if you have questions about your first file or about rights.

paperoffice.ai/contact

As of October 2026. Images from the app are sourced from a test account. All examples, companies, names, and values in this guide are fictional. PaperOffice, paperoffice.ai.