



# **Records Management Policy**

## POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy is to ensure the creation, capture, and management of business records to support good business practices and meet recordkeeping requirements. This policy applies across the Goulburn Mulwaree Council (Council) regardless of a record's physical location, its format or business unit control.

## LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

*State Records Act 1998*

*State Records Regulation 2015*

*Local Government Act 1993*

*Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*

*Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*

*Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*

*Evidence Act 1995*

*Electronic Transactions Act 2000*

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

Council's Code of Conduct

Australian Standard AS ISO 15489-1:2017 Information and Documentation – Records Management Part 1: Concepts and Principles (adopted Code of Best Practice by NSW State Archives and Records)

Disposal Authorities as approved by NSW State Archives and Records

## POLICY STATEMENT

Definition of a record – *information created, received and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organization or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business*

AS ISO 15489-1:2017 Information and documentation – Records management Part 1: Concepts and principles Clause 3.14

Records are a vital asset of Council that:

- support the delivery of services in an efficient, fair and equitable manner;
- provide evidence of Council actions and decisions and precedents for future decision making;
- meet administrative, legal, financial and historical requirements;
- support accountability and meets community expectations of Council operations.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### *Councillors*

- Councillors are required to create and maintain records that show the decision making processes of all meetings where they represent Council on Committees or external bodies or any other occasion when on Council business.
- Records are to be forwarded periodically to Council for capture.
- A Councillor in possession of Council records must not dispose of, transfer ownership, damage, alter or neglect the records in their possession.
- Electioneering (or party political information) and personal records of a Councillor are not defined as a State record and are exempt.

### *Chief Executive Officer:*

- Ensure that Council complies with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*, and any other act or regulation relating to records management;
- Authorise the disposal of records unless delegated to another Council officer under s.378 of *Local Government Act 1993*.

*Directors:*

- Promote and ensure compliance with records management policies and procedures within their directorates;
- Determine recordkeeping requirements relating to their directorate and consult with the Records Team Leader.

*Managers/Team Leaders:*

- Promote and ensure compliance with records management policies and procedures within their business unit;
- Ensure physical records within their area are kept in accordance with recordkeeping storage standards;
- Ensure all work processes and systems within their area are integrated with records management;
- Determine recordkeeping requirements relating to their specific business activities and consult with the Records Team Leader to meet standards.

*Senior Responsible Officer:*

- Ensure electronic records remain accessible, complete, authentic and useable through the migration of data to new systems and/or by maintaining the necessary software and hardware;
- Ensure the Records Unit is adequately staffed and resourced;
- Ensure business continuity and counter disaster planning of records;
- Ensure records are protected from unauthorised or unlawful access, destruction, loss deletion or alteration.

*Records Team Leader:*

- Ownership of Council's Records Management Program and all associated policies, standards and standard operating procedures;
- Monitors records storage areas to ensure security access and suitable environmental conditions are maintained;
- Management of Council's records throughout their life cycle including disposal;
- Monitor/audit for compliance with records management standards;
- Provide recordkeeping training as required.

*Records Staff:*

- Process all incoming mail and register into Council's recordkeeping system;
- Process Council outgoing mail;
- Carry out record duties following Council approved policies and procedures;
- Assist Council employees with their recordkeeping responsibilities.

*All Staff and Volunteers including trainees and persons on Work Experience:*

- Are "responsible and accountable for creating and keeping accurate and complete records of their business activity." AS ISO 15489.1:2017
- Must not dispose of, transfer ownership, damage, alter or neglect records in their possession;
- Must register all records they create or receive first-hand into Council's recordkeeping system.

*Contractors, Consultants and External Service Providers*

All records created whilst performing work on behalf of Council belong to Council and are defined as State Records under that Act. They are to be captured in Council's recordkeeping system by the relevant Council staff member overseeing the work or forwarded to Council's Records Unit for capture.

**Business Continuity and Counter Disaster Planning**

As part of Council's disaster planning, the electronic records in the recordkeeping system are to be backed up in accordance with the relevant policy/procedures.

### **Creation and Capture of Records**

- Records are to be captured in Council's recordkeeping system in the course of normal business activity and in a timely manner. Hardcopy records are to be scanned and captured electronically.
- It is the responsibility of the sender of internal and outgoing correspondence to capture the record into the recordkeeping system.
- Incoming emails are to be captured by the first listed Council recipient.
- Mail delivered by Australia Post and items taken over the front counter are to be scanned and registered by Records staff.
- Metadata is to be applied to all records by the person registering it into Council's recordkeeping system.

### **Classification of Records**

Records registered into Council's recordkeeping system will be classified to reflect processes common to Council business functions and activities.

### **Electronic Records**

Records that are born electronic may remain electronic when captured into Council's recordkeeping system.

### **Emails**

- All staff are accountable for registering their emails into Council's recordkeeping system.
- The original email must be captured into Council's recordkeeping system to ensure capture of original attached metadata.
- Emails must never be printed out to be scanned and captured hardcopy.
- Emails are treated as a record.

### **Ephemeral Records**

- Ephemeral records mean "*records of little value that only need to be kept for a limited or short period of time. Records that are ephemeral have no continuing value to the public office and, generally, are only needed for a few hours or a few days.*" State Records Regulation 2015 Schedule 2.
- Ephemeral or facilitative records may be destroyed once reference to them ceases.
- Examples include unofficial drafts, rough notes, unsolicited advertising materials, catalogues, magazines.

### **Maintenance and Monitoring**

- Migration of electronic records from one system to another must be approved by the Senior Responsible Officer so as to maintain a records authenticity, integrity, reliability and useability.

### **Retention and Disposal**

- All records will be appraised by Records Staff in accordance with the relevant General Disposal Authority as approved by NSW State Archives and Records.
- All records that are to be retained for a period of time are to be stored in a Council approved storage facility.
- All records due for destruction are to be destroyed by Council records staff and in accordance with NSW State Archives and Records standards and code of best practice and follow Council's approved procedure.

### **Security and Access**

- Access and use of records will be in accordance with Council procedures and Part 8 of Council's Code of Conduct.
- Registration of records into Council's recordkeeping system will automatically apply access and security controls determined by relevant Records/IT staff in consultation with Business Units.

- Access to physical records that are State Archives will be restricted so as to protect the original record. This may involve providing access to a digital copy only.
- Records are not to be removed from Council unless in the custody of a Council Officer in the performance of official duties. The Council Officer must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the records in their possession are safely returned to Council in due course.

**Storage**

- No unauthorised persons are to be given access to Council’s records storage areas unless escorted at all times by a member of the Records Unit.
- Environmental conditions in each storage area is to be monitored on a regular basis.
- All requests for records to be placed into storage are to be approved by the Records Team Leader.

**State Archives**

- Records appraised as State Archives that are not the subject of a Still in Use Determination (records over 25 years since creation that are still required by Council) are to be transferred to the control of NSW State Archives and Records using the guidance and procedures published on the [www.records.nsw.gov.au](http://www.records.nsw.gov.au) website.

**Council’s Webpage and Social Media**

- Items on Council’s webpage are to be captured in Council’s recordkeeping system before they are displayed on the webpage
- When social media is used by Council for business purposes, that information is a record under the definitions of the *State Records Act 1998*.
- As per advice from NSW State Archives and Records this *“does not mean that all social media information must be captured and managed as an official record but it does mean that some high risk and key business value social media information will need to be managed and kept for appropriate periods of time.”*

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution	Adoption Date	Effective From
1	17 December 2019	2019/537	28 February 2020	2 March 2020
2	4 October 2022	2022/362	4 October 2022	1 November 2022
<b>All policies can be reviewed or revoked by resolution of Council at any time.</b>				

**DIRECTORATE:** Corporate and Community Services

**BUSINESS UNIT:** Innovation and Technology