



POLICY NO.	MPIMT1
POLICY TITLE	Records Management Policy and Program
STATUS	Council
SERVICE	Access to Information
DOCUMENT ID	522461

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Council:

- complies with the *State Records Act 1998* (the Act) and meets other legislative requirements concerning records and business or information systems
- records are managed efficiently, can be easily accessed and are maintained in an authentic and accessible form for as long as they are required
- has the records it needs to support and enhance Council and community requirements
- staff are educated in recordkeeping responsibilities.

2. SCOPE

This Records Management Policy and Program (this policy) applies to the creation, collection, processing, usage, storage and disposal of all physical and electronic records.

Under section 12(2) of the Act Council is required to establish and maintain a records management program. Information and records are Council's organisational history, providing evidence of decision making and contributing to the establishment of trust with our community.

Implementation of this policy assists Council to:

- create accurate, useful and accountable records and information
- ensure that meaningful, accurate, reliable and useable records and information are available
- sustain and secure the records and information needed to support short and long term business outcomes
- proactively protect and manage the records and information that provide ongoing value to Council and the community.

In accordance with the Act, all Council representatives are responsible for:

- creating records routinely
- capturing records in official systems
- understanding this policy
- preventing unauthorised access to information
- never destroying a record without approval
- treating records and information with care.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Council representative	Councillors, contractors, consultants, volunteers, delegates of the Council and members of Council committees who represent or act on behalf of Hunters Hill Council.
Business Systems	Council's approved software systems which store, process and provide access to the organisation's business information. All approved systems are supported by policies, procedures and delegated authorities for accessing and processing information.
Cloud Computing	Cloud computing is internet-based computing whereby shared resources, software and information are provided to computers and other devices on demand. Cloud computing is a general term for anything that involves delivering hosted services over the Internet.
Disposal	Range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments. <i>AS ISO 15489.1 2017 Part 1, Clause 3.8</i>
Disposal action	Specific process or step taken regarding a record after its retention period has ended. This could include destruction, transfer to State archives, or other actions as authorised by disposal authorities. Each disposal class is assigned an approved disposal action, which determines what should happen to that record at the end of its retention period.
Disposal class	Provides a description of a type of record and provides a unique entry number for reference. For each disposal class there is an approved disposal action.
Electronic Document and Records management System (EDRMS)	An automated software application designed to facilitate the creation, management, use, storage and disposal of a range of both physical and digital documents and records. Essentially it manages unstructured records and information. The EDRMS automates business processes such as workflows and approvals and be integrated with other business systems.
Ephemeral	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.
Full and accurate records	Full and accurate records are sources of detailed information and evidence that can be relied on and used to support current activities. Records regardless of form or structure, should possess the characteristics of authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability to be considered authoritative evidence of business events or transactions and to fully meet the requirements of the business.
Records	Record means any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means. <i>State Records Act 1998, section 3</i> 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. <i>AS ISO 15489.1 2017 Part 1, Clause 3.15</i>

Records Management Program	A records management program encompasses the management framework, the people and the systems required within an organisation to manage full and accurate records over time. This includes the identification and protection of records with longer-term value that may be required as State archives.
State archive	A State record that has been identified to be kept in perpetuity and may not be disposed of. Once a State archive is no longer being used for business purposes, it should be transferred to Museums of History NSW.
State record	A State record is any record made or received by any person: • in the course of exercising official functions in a public office, or • for the purpose of a public office, or • for the use of a public office.

4. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

4.1 What is a record?

A record is defined in the Act as any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means.

4.2 What is a state record?

A State record is any record made or received by any person:

- in the course of exercising official functions in a public office, or
- for the purpose of a public office, or
- for the use of a public office.

4.3 Electronic Records Management

Council has a legal obligation to manage its information and must be able to account for its actions and expenditure of resources. Information is an asset and needs to be managed well to realise its value.

Electronic management of records enables Council to make the best use of new technologies and creates efficient and effective ways of doing business. All information and records must be created or captured electronically in approved business systems.

Council implemented an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) in 2012. Council no longer supports the creation of hardcopy records. Any records that are made or received in physical format must be digitised and captured in Councils approved business systems.

4.4 Create and Capture

Records are created every time someone in Council writes an email, drafts a brief, writes a report or records minutes, adds data to a spread sheet or takes a photo. This information is created as part of a specific business process, and needs to be managed so that it can be searched, shared, reused and repurposed, and increasing its value to Council.

All Council Representatives are required to make and keep full and accurate records of their business activities. Council Representatives are responsible for creating and capturing records including emails to the business systems that document:

- What happened, the order of events
- What was decided or recommended
- What advice or instruction was given
- When it happened and who was involved.

4.5 Personnel Records

Personnel records document the management of employees and are important records. These records may need to be maintained longer after an employee has left Council, in order to protect ongoing rights and interests of the employee and the Council.

Personnel records contain personal and health information about individuals. Personnel records are categorised, handled as sensitive information and protected accordingly.

Only the General Manager and the Manager People and Culture have access to personnel records. Respective Manager's may also access some personnel records in order to appropriately manage staff.

4.6 Access to Information

Council requires open access to information and records unless the record itself requires protection. Many Council records are public documents and must be managed to provide easy access by our community. Access and protection of our information and records are governed by:

- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act)
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PPIP Act)
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (HRIP Act)

Council Representatives are not permitted to access information that is not directly related to their specific duties, unless requested to do so by the General Manager for a specific purpose.

Under the Code of Conduct it is considered inappropriate for a Council Representative to access any record that relates to a private or personal matter. Access to such information must be applied for in the same manner as a member of the public, under the GIPA Act.

Unauthorised access to information or records by a Council stakeholder can be considered a data breach in accordance with part 6A of the PPIP Act. For example, if a staff member accesses records relating to a family member or celebrity without a legitimate purpose.

5. RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Records Management Program is conducted across all of Council for the management of records, recordkeeping activities and recordkeeping systems. It is a planned, coordinated set of standards, codes of best practice, policies, procedures, and systems required to manage records. It also incorporates the people required to undertake recordkeeping.

Council's Records Management Program is established in accordance with part 2 section 12(2) of the Act. This policy provides the framework and outlines the responsibilities for the operation of Hunters Hill Council's Records Management Program.

An effective Records Management Program entrenches formalised standards, codes, policies, procedures, recordkeeping systems and controls for future expansion and requirements.

There are several components and associated documents that are mandatory and are used to ensure that the Records Management Program is operating effectively.

Type	Component
Standards	• Standard on records management (Standard No. 15) • Standard on the physical storage of State records (Standard No. 14) • Information Management Standard for Australian Government • Australian Government Recordkeeping Metadata Standard

Codes	• Code of Best Practice ISO 15489.1:2017 • Council's Code of Conduct
Disposal Authorities	• Local Government Records (FA450) – (primary authority) • Original or source records that have been copied (GA51) – (primary authority) • Taking or sending records out of NSW (GA50) • Personnel (GA28) • Source Records that have been Migrated (GA48) • Administrative records (GA28) • Cultural, recreation and sporting institutions (FA402) • Normal Administrative Practice Guidelines (NAP).
Legislation	• <i>State Records Act 1998</i> • <i>State Records Regulation 2015</i> • <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> • <i>Copyright Act 1968</i> • <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i> • <i>Government Information (Public) Access Act 2009</i> • <i>Workplace Surveillance Act 2005</i> • <i>Evidence Act 1995</i> • Any other State or Local legislation that affects recordkeeping
Policies	• Building the archives: policy of records appraisal and the identification of State archives • Digital records preservation policy • Council's State records retention and disposal policy • Council's State archives management policy.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

All Council Representatives have accountability requirements for Councils records management program. The table below outlines responsibilities in accordance with the Act (Part 2 section 10) and the Standard on records management.

Position	Responsibilities
General Manager	Ensure Council complies with the regulations and requirements of the Act.
Director Community and Customer Service	Provide executive direction and support for records and information management.
Manager Digital and Customer Information (MDCI)	MDCI is the designated Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and is responsible for ensuring that records and information management is in place and operating effectively to support business operations. These responsibilities include: • working with the General Manager and senior staff to ensure compliance with the Act • overseeing the records management program • leads records, information and data management initiatives • collaborating with business stakeholders to ensure good recordkeeping practices are embedded across the organisation.
Digital and Customer Information Team	Support and delivery of the requirements of the Records Management Program through:

	• development of formal documentation • classification and capture of records • maintenance of access and security • retention, disposal, storage and transfer • providing support, training, guidance and advice to all Council representatives.
All Council Representatives	Must comply with the Records Management Policy and Program. Council representatives must: • keep full and accurate records in approved business systems (this includes saving emails in the EDRMS) emails • ensure personal and confidential information is kept securely • undertake mandatory training • keep up-to-date with policies, procedures and guidelines. Council representatives must not: • permanently save State records permanently on network or personal drives, USB's or cloud locations • abandon or dispose of a State record • transfer or offer to transfer, or be a party to arrangements for the transfer of, the possession or ownership of a State record • take or send a State record out of New South Wales • damage or alter a State record • neglect a State record in a way that causes or is likely to cause damage to the State record.

7. RETENTION AND DISPOSAL

Council records must be protected, maintained and accessible for their total retention period and must be disposed of in accordance with the Act. Disposal Authorities are applicable to any record in Council irrespective of record format or type.

Hardcopy and digital records of short-term value will be disposed of at suitable intervals, records of long term or archival value will be retained electronically and will be managed in accordance with retention, disposal and / or transfer rules.

General staff cannot destroy or dispose of Council records. Only authorised staff may destroy or dispose of Council records. The General Manager and Manager Digital and Customer Information have delegated authority to approve disposal authorities in accordance with the requirements of FA45 Functional retention and disposal authority: local government which is prescribed under provisions of the Act.

Records can only be destroyed in accordance with:

- The General Disposal Authorities
- Council specific Disposal Authorities
- Transferred to State Archives for permanent retention.

Information and records, which staff deem as ephemeral, may be destroyed using a procedure called 'Normal administrative practice (NAP)'. This practice usually occurs because the records are duplicated, unimportant or for short-term use only.

As a general guideline, all Council Representatives can securely dispose of the following information and records:

- Ephemeral records or duplicates
- print out of records saved in Councils EDRMS
- solicited and unsolicited advertising material
- drafts and working papers of a routine nature.

Drafts or working papers must not be disposed of if they document significant decisions, discussions, reasons and actions or contain significant information that is not contained in the final version of the record.

All disposal processes must be undertaken in accordance with Council's State Records Retention and Disposal Policy and State Archives Management Policy.

8. BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

8.1 Approved Business Systems

Records should be stored within approved recordkeeping systems to prevent unauthorised destruction, alteration or removal. Council's approved recordkeeping systems have a full audit log, appropriate security settings, access restrictions and are managed and monitored.

Council records must be stored only in Council's official recordkeeping systems for example EDRMS, Finance System and Customer Relationship Management System.

Documented recordkeeping assessments are performed on existing business systems, and include recordkeeping activities, system functionality and processes. Assessments are undertaken using the minimum compliance requirements of the principles contained in Standard 15: Standard on Records Management.

The Standard is used in conjunction with the Code of Best Practice 15489.1:2017 to ensure that the application and objectives of the Records Management Program are achieved and where necessary any corrective actions are undertaken to address issues encountered in existing business systems.

8.2 Implementing or Decommissioning Systems

Acquisition of all new business systems must include preparation of a business case, which documents project implementation and ongoing maintenance costs. Business system risk assessments (which may include network penetration testing) needs to be also undertaken. Business cases that are recommended to the Executive, need to be reviewed and endorsed by Manager Digital and Customer Information (or their delegate).

Records and information management requirements should be addressed in specifications for system acquisitions including integration requirements or information management issues addressed in any the contractual arrangements.

When decommissioning systems or transitioning a process is required to support business and accountability requirements. This should include:

- a documented migration strategy
- the retention and disposal of records and information contained in the system
- the migration of records and metadata from one system to another is a managed process which results in trustworthy and accessible records
- the portability of records and information
- adequate system documentation is maintained.

9. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

9.1 Internal Monitoring

The Digital and Customer Information team oversees the coordination of recordkeeping and can conduct audits on individuals or departments to ensure that good recordkeeping is occurring and is meeting business and legislative requirements.

9.2 Records Management Assessment Tool

In accordance with sections 12(5) and 12(6) State Records NSW can issue a notice ordering Council to assess recordkeeping processes and the records management program. These findings must be reported to State Records NSW and if they are not satisfied with these findings they may include this information in their annual report.

9.3 Non-Compliance

Council is required to meet compliance in line with State Records legislation, stringent governance standards expected by Auditors and to be able to respond effectively to requests under Subpoena, the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA), or any internal or external investigative inquiry.

Council is obligated to adhere to State Records legislation, meet the governance criteria expected by Auditors, and promptly respond to requests made under a Subpoena, the GIPA Act, or any internal or external investigative inquiry.

Non-compliance in recordkeeping can result in:

- problems for or with customers
- monetary losses
- litigation
- formal investigations and inquiries
- unwarranted adverse publicity
- loss in reputation and embarrassment to Council.

Recordkeeping performance is measured and monitored across Council for effectiveness, planning and improvement purposes, and conformity with the Act.

9.4 Offences and Penalties

In accordance with section 21(1) and section 78, individual penalties of up to \$11,000 can be issued if a Council representative:

- abandons or disposes of a State record
- transfers or offers to transfer, or is involved in arrangements to transfer the possession or ownership of a State record
- takes or sends a State record out of New South Wales
- damages or alters a State record
- neglects a State record in a way that causes or is likely to cause damage to the State record.

10. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

- State records retention and disposal policy
- State archives management policy.
- Privacy Management Plan
- Cyber Security Policy
- IT Usage and Surveillance Policy
- Code of Conduct

11. POLICY AUTHORITY

Council.

12. GETTING HELP

For further information regarding this policy please contact Manager Digital and Customer Information.

13. REVIEW

This policy to be reviewed once per term of Council or in accordance with legislative changes.

14. ADOPTED BY COUNCIL/EXECUTIVE:

DATE: 27 October 2025

RESOLUTION NO: 204/25

15. VERSION CONTROL TABLE

DATE	VERSION	RES. NO.	KEY CHANGES	AUTHOR
12 February 2007	1.0	25/07	New Policy	
07 April 2021	2.0	9.2 (Executive)	Major review	Jade Reed, Manager Digital and Customer Information
29 November 2022	3.0	9.2 (Executive)	Minor review	Jade Reed, Manager Digital and Customer Information
23 October 2023	3.1	216/23	Incorporate of changes to the <i>State Records Act 1998</i> and addition of reference to other policies and changes to the PPIP Act.	Jade Reed, Manager Digital and Customer Information
20 October 2025	3.2	204/25	Minor review	Jade Reed, Manager Digital and Customer Information