



Records Management Policy

Policy Number	C12
Responsible Officer(s)	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Adopted	February 2023
Minutes reference	2023/02-14
Next review date	February 2027
Applicable Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1999; State Records Act 1997; Freedom of Information Act 1991; Privacy Act (Cth) 1988; Electronic Communications Act 2000.</i>
Related Documents	General Disposal Schedule 40 (v1); General Disposal Schedule 21 (v5).

1. POLICY PRINCIPLE

Wakefield Regional Council is committed to managing official records in line with legislation and to promote efficient, open and transparent record keeping.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 To demonstrate compliance and accountability of official record keeping practices by persons employed or engaged by Council.
- 2.2 To enhance customer service delivery and maintain a history of transactions and business processes which are vital for the efficient provision of Council's ongoing business activities.
- 2.3 To enable persons employed or engaged by Council easy access to records.
- 2.4 To ensure legal, evidential and accountability requirements are adhered.

3. POLICY DETAIL

- 3.1 The *State Records Act 1997* governs the obligations of Council to maintain official records in good order and condition. This includes obligations in relation to the capture, storage, maintenance and disposal of physical records and electronic records.
- 3.2 This Policy applies to all official records made or received by Council in the conduct of its business. Official records include any record created, sent, received, forwarded or transmitted by Council Members or employees in the performance and discharge of their functions and duties. Records that are merely transitory, short-lived, personal or private in nature are not official records.
- 3.4 Council is committed to:
 - 3.4.1 Legally creating, capturing, protecting and disposing of official records to ensure a correct history of transactions and business processes of Council;
 - 3.4.2 Ensuring public sector accountability and transparency and treating official records as a business asset to be managed consistently across the business and throughout their statutory lifespan;

- 3.4.3 Ensuring the management of official records is performed in accordance with all compulsory legislative requirements and relevant internal policies and procedures;
- 3.4.4 Utilising security classifications and measures to protect its information assets in all systems from loss, unauthorised access, disclosure, damage or destructions whilst retaining maximum accessibility across the organisation.
- 3.5 Council will demonstrate this commitment by:
 - 3.5.1 Using a disposal schedule approved by the State Records Council;
 - 3.5.2 Capturing all official records in approved Electronic Document Records Management System “EDRMS” which complies with the standards issued by the State Records in order to meet legislative requirements;
 - 3.5.3 Providing the required financial, technical and corporate resources for the proficient management of official records;
 - 3.5.4 Regularly auditing and completing appropriate risk analysis of official records, processes used and systems to ensure Council are aligned with legislative requirements;
 - 3.5.5 Providing Council Members and persons employed or engaged by Council appropriate knowledge and training in records management to ensure legislative requirements are upheld;
 - 3.5.6 Ongoing review and creation of systems and processes to improve information management.
- 3.6 Council employees and Council Members must not intentionally damage, alter, dispose of or remove official records of Council without authorisation to do so. Council staff and Council Members are required to handle official records with care and respect in a sensible manner to avoid damaging records and with a view to prolonging the life span of records.
- 3.7 Council employees and Council Members shall ensure that Council records in any format, including electronic documents and electronic messages they personally receive or send are captured into Council’s record keeping systems as an accurate and complete rendition.
- 3.8 All official records belong to Wakefield Regional Council. Keeping official Council records in personal record keeping systems (e.g. on desktops, in email folders stored on individual computers or on personal storage devices/computers) is strictly prohibited. Records must be readily accessible and fit for purpose to meet business and accountability requirements for the minimum retention periods applicable to the record. Employees managing records are required to follow authorised procedures in carrying out records management functions.
- 3.9 Council employees or Council Members who do not comply with this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the relevant Code of Conduct. Council Members and employees should report breaches of this Policy to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.10 Hard copy source documents will be digitised and the electronic record checked against the original record to ensure it is accurate and complete. All source documents with a temporary retention period and source documents with a permanent retention period from 1 January 2005 will be stored for a minimum of six (6) months before being disposed of.

4. REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed every 48 months, or more frequently if required by legislation or Council.

Document history:

Version	Adopted	Description of Change
1.0	Sept 2006 – Min 66	New Policy.
2.0	Jun 2011 – Min 262	Extensive changes to definitions with other changes to sections on ‘purpose’ and ‘destruction methods’.
3.0	Dec 2012 - Min 149	Minor changes identified by State Records Dept. and removal of unnecessary detail in the Definitions section.
	Feb 2013 – Min 192	Addition of ‘Vital Records’ definition.
	Nov 2014	Policy numbering system changed and inclusion of document history table.
4.0	Dec 2014 – Min 126	Reviewed – no changes.
5.0	Dec 2016 – Min 126	Inclusion of policy objectives heading. Inclusion of file formats and enduring file formats section.
6.0	Dec 2018	New template; major review to simplify language; procedural steps removed (and added to Records Management Procedure).
7.0	Feb 2023	New template; change to policy content to reflect accurate record keeping practices and ensure legislative compliance.