

Records Management Policy

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1. Introduction

The City of Greater Bendigo is committed to ensuring that all staff adhere to correct standards of conduct and established policies and procedures. The purpose of records management is to ensure that records of evidential quality are created, managed, stored and disposed of in accordance with legal requirements. The City of Greater Bendigo corporate records are valuable and often vital assets which facilitate daily functioning and operations. Records of transactions need to satisfy legal, administrative and audit conditions.

2. Policy Statement

The objective of this policy is to promote consistent and coherent records management. The policy establishes processes and practices for records from their creation, through their effective use, to disposal or preservation as archives. Well managed records provide valuable data for policy formulation and decision making. Records protect the interests of the City of Greater Bendigo, the Council, its employees, ratepayers, citizens and clients, by enabling the organisation to make effective use of the organisation's knowledge. Effective records management raises public confidence when dealing with the organisation. Records managed according to the policy ensure the City of Greater Bendigo meets its obligations for recordkeeping.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all organisational records in all formats including hardcopy, digital documents, email and websites). It applies to all staff, contractors and volunteers. The policy forms and overarching framework for an organisation wide records management program. All other policies, systems, practices and procedures must support this policy.

4. Legislation

This policy is to ensure the City of Greater Bendigo meets its legal obligations including the following legislation:

1. Public Records Act 1973
2. Evidence Act 2008
3. Freedom of Information Act 1982
4. Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
5. Crimes Act 1958

5. Definitions

The following table provides a definition of terms used throughout this document.

Term	Definition
Access	Means of finding, using or retrieving information.
Archives	Inactive Records with a permanent retention status relocated to long term storage for preservation beyond their immediate business function.
Corporate Record	Information in any form including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by the City of Greater Bendigo or staff in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.
Disposal	Action which renders the record inaccessible and/or unreadable. May also be called “destruction” or “deletion”.
Document	Information or object which can be treated as a unit.
Evidential	Unaltered copy of original record. Able to be used as evidence.
Permanent Records	Records identified for retention forever.
Record	Information in any form including data in computer systems, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.
Retention	Period of time the record must be held by the organisation before disposal.
Secondary Records	Records identified as having a temporary retention status.
Sentence	The minimum period of time a record must be retained before disposal.
Social Media	Any web based environment that allows users to easily create, publish and share content. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, My Space, Youtube, Blogs and Twitter.
Worker	Staff, contractor, Volunteer.

6. Records Policy

The City of Greater Bendigo will create, manage and preserve corporate records to manage daily operations and comply with relevant legislation. This will ensure consistency and compliance with open and transparent government.

All City of Greater Bendigo corporate records are the property of the City of Greater Bendigo and not the individual member of staff who created or received them.

6.1. Creation

Staff responsible for performing a function will ensure that records documenting business activities are created for that function. Every transaction requires the creation of a record. These records may be letters, data entry, emails, electronic notes or various social media.

6.2. Capture

All corporate records need to be captured into the approved records management system for the respective function they document or relate to.

Records are not to be captured into non-approved systems. Records in non-approved systems will have to be extracted and stored in an approved system.

6.3. Access

Records need to be both secure yet accessible to staff authorised to access such records. Security levels will apply to certain documents restricting access to staff with the corresponding security level. Appropriate access to records includes maintaining records in a format which ensures that they can be read when required. Decisions about who may access records need to include consideration of personal privacy, commercial confidentiality and legal professional privilege issues.

6.4. Reliability

Records should be created at the time of the transaction or incident to which they relate, or soon afterwards. They are created by individuals who have direct knowledge or responsibility for the transaction.

6.5. Integrity

Records need to be complete and unaltered to enable them to provide evidence of transactions. Records will be protected against unauthorised alteration. Authorised annotation, addition or deletion of a record will be explicitly indicated and traceable.

6.6. Retention

Records will be stored as long as required to meet legal and operational requirements. Records will be retained according to the appropriate State Records General Disposal Schedules.

6.7. Disposal

Records which are no longer required by the City of Greater Bendigo and are sentenced under the appropriate Disposal Schedule (secondary records) will be destroyed. Records which may be destroyed in the future will be stored as securely as practicable until they are due for destruction.

6.8. Storage

Records will be stored on media that ensure they are useable, reliable, authentic, and preserved for as long as needed. Systems using electronic records will be designed to ensure records are appropriately migrated if retention is needed beyond the life of the system. Records which need to be retained beyond their administrative use and have Permanent retention status will be managed as archives.

6.9. Archives

Archives will be managed by Information Services. Service Units are responsible for preparing their records for archiving. Information Services will be able to assist service units to understand the archival process.

7. Staff Responsibilities

Staff are responsible and accountable for keeping accurate records of their corporate activities, in accordance with business rules and procedures. Service unit managers and supervisors are responsible for monitoring staff to ensure they are complying with the policy.

Information Services are responsible for quality assurance checking and compliance monitoring of recordkeeping activities. Information Services are responsible for providing advice to service units to assist them meet their records obligations.

Information Services are responsible for approving records management systems. A list of approved records management systems will be published on the Intranet.

8. Procedures

Information Services within the City of Greater Bendigo will develop and publish records management procedures to assist staff in their records handling obligations. These procedures will be published and assistance will be provided by Information Services.