



PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The Parkes Shire Council recognises that Records are a vital asset to:

- support its program delivery, management and administration
- deliver customer services in an efficient, fair and equitable manner
- provide evidence of actions and decisions and precedents for future decision making, and
- protect the rights and interests of Government, Parkes Shire Council and its clients and citizens.

The Parkes Shire Council's seeks to ensure that:

- it has the records it needs to support ongoing business activity and customer service, meet accountability requirements and community expectations
- these records are managed efficiently and effectively
- these records can be easily retrieved and used
- the Parkes Shire Council complies with all requirements concerning records and records management practices
- records of longer term value are identified and protected for historical and other research.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of the Parkes Shire Council are created, managed and disposed of appropriately to meet the Parkes Shire Council's organisational needs and accountability requirements.

POLICY

A Record Management Program has been established by the Parkes Shire Council in accordance with s.12(2) of the *State Records Act 1998*. This program provides a framework and outlines responsibilities for the operation of the Parkes Shire Council Document Management Program.

Definitions

Appraisal

The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.

Archives

Those records that are appraised as having continuing value.

Disaster plan

A plan for measures to be taken for disaster prevention, disaster response and recovery and vital records protection.

Disposal

A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.

Records

Information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

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.

Records Management

Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records

Retention and Disposal Authority

Documents authorised by the Board of State Records NSW that set out appropriate retention periods for classes of records. There are two main types:

- Functional retention and disposal authorities authorise the retention and disposal of records unique to a specific organisation.
- General retention and disposal authorities authorise the retention and disposal of records common to more than one organisation.

State Archive

A State record that the State Records Authority of New South Wales has control of under the State Records Act, 1998 (NSW).

Vital Record

Those records that are essential for the ongoing business of an agency, and without which Parkes Shire Council could not continue to function effectively. The identification and protection of such records is a primary object of records management and counter disaster planning.

RESPONSIBILITY

This policy is issued under the authority of the General Manager and will be reviewed and amended as required in consultation with the Directors and staff of the Parkes Shire Council.

The Director responsible for this policy is the Director of Corporate Services. The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Records Officer who reports to the Administration Manager.

General Manager

- Ensures that the Parkes Shire Council complies with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the standards and requirements issued under the Act
- Ensures that the Parkes Shire Council complies with other legislation relating to records management and recordkeeping.

Director of Corporate Services

- Ensures that the Records Management Program is adequately resourced
- Represents records management interests on the Executive
- Has ownership of the *Records Management Policy*
- Reports to the State Records Authority on the Records Management Program eg. responds to records management surveys.

Records Officer

- Compiles *Records Management Policy* and *Procedures* and standards in relation to all aspects of records management
- Monitors compliance with the *Records Management Policy* and *Procedures* and standards across the Parkes Shire Council and makes recommendations for improvement or modification of practices
- Advises on recordkeeping systems
- Manages Dataworks
- Authorise the disposal of records, in liaison with Administration Manager
- Ensures that all staff are aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities
- Coordinates a records management training program
- Develops strategic and operational plans for the Records Management Program
- Formulates and maintains retention and disposal authorities
- Formulates and maintains vital records lists and counter disaster plans
- Responsible for the conduct of records management operations.

Information Systems Manager

- Provides support and infrastructure to ensure that records kept in electronic form are managed so that they are accessible, readable, inviolate, complete, comprehensive, and authentic for as long as required
- Ensures that information management policies and projects take into account the special nature of records
- Liaises with Records Clerk regarding counter disaster planning for electronic records.

Section Managers

- Ensure that records are created and managed in a way that complies with the Parkes Shire Council Records Management Policy
- Consult with records when introducing new activities or systems to ensure legislative compliance
- Authorise destruction of records along with records officer
- Create full and accurate records of the business activities

All Staff

- Comply with Records Management Policy & Procedures
- Create full and accurate records of the business activities

Contractors

- Manage records that they create on behalf of the Parkes Shire Council according to the terms of their contract.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Parkes Shire Council - Email Policy

PROCEDURE

Creation

Council staff should ensure that they create official records of all decisions and transactions made in the course of their official business. This can include making file notes of telephone conversations and minutes of meetings etc.

Activities and business transacted electronically, including email, also need to be captured into the Councils Document Management System.

Whenever new databases and automated systems are being designed, the records clerk should be consulted to determine whether and what records should be created.

For existing electronic systems and databases it is important to ensure that information is kept and readable for as long as required. This may entail the migration of data when new systems are introduced.

Maintenance

The location of each record needs to be recorded and updated. This ensures that records, as assets, can be accounted for in the same way that the other assets of the Parkes Shire Council are.

Staff are to handle records sensibly and with care and respect so as to avoid damage to the records and prolong their existence

Storage

Parkes Shire Council will adopt procedures to protect its records against unauthorised access or use and against loss or damage.

Vital records are to be held in a fireproof safe with access restrictions.

Closed files will be held in archive areas until authorised for destruction.

Records which are no longer in use for official purposes and that are required as State archives should be forwarded to State Records or other official state records holding authority.

Disposal

The Parkes Shire Council disposes of its records associated with its core functions and activities and its administrative records in accordance with General Retention and Disposal Authorities created by the State Records Authority of NSW.

Records cannot be disposed of without the concurrence of the relevant manager and the records clerk

Contractors and outsourced functions

All records created by contractors performing work on behalf of the Parkes Shire Council belong to the Parkes Shire Council, and are State records under the State Records Act 1998. This includes the records of contract staff working on the premises as well as external service providers.

Contracts should clearly state that ownership of records resides with Parkes Shire Council, and instructions regarding creation, management, and access to the records created.

Training

Records and document handling procedures to be outlined to all new staff and all Councillors during induction process.

Appropriate training to be provided for relevant staff on implementation of new systems.

REFERENCES

State Records Act 1998 (NSW)

Freedom of Information Act 1989 (NSW)

Evidence Act 1995 (NSW)

State Records (NSW) Policy on Record Keeping

State Records (NSW) Policy on Electronic Messages as Records

State Records (NSW) Policy in Records Appraisal and the Identification of State Archives

State Records (NSW) Disposal Authority for Public Offices (GDA10)