



# Records Management Policy

Policy Reference Number	34CP
Responsible Department	Corporate & Community Services
Related Policies	Code of Conduct for Elected Members, Code of Conduct for Employees, Electronic Communications, Risk Management
Related Procedures	Nil
Date of Initial Adoption	06 February 2007
Last Reviewed by Council	15 March 2011

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a guideline for ongoing best practice in Records Management in accordance with the State Records Act 1997.

## 2. Introduction

Under the State Records Act 1997, ~~the City of Campbelltown~~ has an obligation to maintain the official records in its custody in good order and condition. Not only does this include obligations in relation to the capture, storage, maintenance and disposal of physical records but also records in electronic ~~format~~.

The establishment of an effective and efficient record keeping environment ensures ~~ongoing readability~~, protection, retrieval ~~and disposal~~ of information ~~as per State Records requirements~~.

~~An official record is a record made or received by the Council in the conduct of its business. This Policy specifies how Staff and Elected Members will deal with the official records that they receive and generate as a consequence of their activities.~~

This Policy applies to all Council staff and Elected Members.

## 3. Power to Make the Policy

This Policy is made in accordance with Council's obligations and statutory requirements under the State Records Act 1997, and in accordance with Section 99(1)(h) of the Local Government Act 1999.

Council has certain legal obligations in relation to records management and records are themselves subject to legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act 1991, and legal processes, such as discovery and subpoenas. The records may also be required by Royal Commissions, the Ombudsman, the Courts, auditors and other people or bodies to whom or which they may be subject.

## 4. Strategic Plan Link

This Policy has the following link to Council's Strategic Plan 2010-2020:

[Goal 2 – Leadership](#)  
[A Council providing strong leadership and excellent service delivery](#)

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**Deleted:** This means that, because Council staff and Council members act as representatives of the Council, any record created, sent, received, forwarded or transmitted by Council staff and/or Council members in the performance and discharge of their functions and duties may be classified as official records.

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**Deleted:** This Policy applies to all Council business, including activities undertaken using electronic files or communications. It concerns records which are created, collected, processed, used, sentenced, stored and disposed of in the conduct of Council's official business. Electronic communications which are relevant to the information gathering, policy formulation or decision-making processes of Council are part of the scope of this Policy. ¶

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5. Principles

Good records management is of key importance to good governance as records are vital ingredients in the support of the Council's ongoing business activities. Council is committed to managing its permanent (never to be destroyed) and temporary (set lifecycle before destruction) records and where required their timely transfer to the State Records Office.

Council operates in an accountable and community orientated environment and is committed to maintaining a records management system that meets its business needs and accountability requirements.

**Deleted:** Goal 5 - Governance and Organisation - A Council providing strong leadership and clear directions in partnership with the community and its stakeholders and supported by good governance and management practice.¶

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6. Definitions

Definitions for the purpose of this Policy are:

- Continuing Value** Records of continuing value are those that contain information that is of administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential or historical value to the Council.
- Council Business** May include the provision of services, delivery of programs, development of policies, making of decisions, performance of Council functions and other similar types of transactions.
- Council staff** Includes persons employed by the Council, volunteers, trainees, work experience placements, independent consultants and contractors and other authorised personnel offered access to the Council's resources.
- Dispose of** To dispose of an official record means to:
  - destroy or abandon the record;
  - carry out an act or process as a result of which it is no longer possible or reasonably practicable to reproduce the whole or a part of the information contained in the record; or
  - transfer or deliver ownership or possession of or sell the record, or purport to do so,
 but does not include to transfer or deliver the record to the State Records Office or another agency.
- Email** Is a service that enables people to exchange documents or messages in electronic form. It is a system in which people can send and receive messages through their computers. Each person has a designated mailbox that stores messages sent by other users. Messages may be retrieved, read and forwarded or re-transmitted from the mailbox.
 

Email messages are "records". Email messages are "official records" when they are made or received in the conduct of Council business.
- Ephemeral/Transitory Record** A record is transitory or ephemeral in nature if it is of little or no continuing value to the Council and only needs to be kept for a limited or short period of time, such as a few hours or a few days.

The document on Council's Records Management System is considered to be the current and controlled version. Before using a printed copy, verify that it is the current version.

**Normal Administrative Practice**

Normal Administrative Practice provides for the routine destruction of drafts, duplicates and publications, with the test that it is obvious that no information of more than transitory or ephemeral value to the Council will be destroyed. Material that can be disposed of under Normal Administrative Practice comprises items of an ephemeral or transitory nature created, acquired or collected by Council staff or Elected Members in the course of their official duties. Such material has no ongoing value and is not usually incorporated into the Council's record keeping system.

**Official Record**

Is a record made or received by the Council in the conduct of its business [and includes any record created, sent, received, forwarded or transmitted by Council staff and/or Elected Members in the performance and discharge of their functions and duties](#), but does not include:

- a record made or received by an agency for delivery or transmission to another person or body (other than an agency) and so delivered or transmitted; or
- a record made by an agency as a draft only and not for further use or reference; or
- [a record that is merely transitory, ephemeral, personal or private in nature](#)
- a record received into or made for the collection of a library, museum or art gallery and not otherwise associated with the business of the agency; or
- a Commonwealth record as defined by the Archives Act 1983 of the Commonwealth, as amended from time to time, or an Act of the Commonwealth enacted in substitution for that Act; or
- a record that has been transferred to the Commonwealth.

**Record**

A record means:

- written, verbal or graphical material OR
- a disk, tape, film or other object that contains information or from which information may be reproduced (with or without the aid of another object or device).

**Vital Record**

[Records which the Council could not operate without in the event of a disaster](#)

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7. Policy

Council has selected TRIM records management software as the corporate records management system. The objectives of this records management system are to ensure:

- that the management of Council's information resources and records provide timely and comprehensive information to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements and community expectations; and
- the preservation of the Council's "corporate memory" through sound record keeping practices and the accurate capture of information to meet legal, evidential and accountability requirements.

7.1 Obligations of Records Users

Council staff and Elected Members:

- will not intentionally damage, alter, dispose of or remove official records (including electronic) of the Council unless authorised to do so by a [Records Officer with sentencing qualifications](#);
- will handle Council records with care and respect and in a sensible manner to avoid damaging records and with a view to prolonging their life span;
- will ensure that Council records in any format, including electronic documents and electronic messages, which they personally receive or send are directly put into Council's records keeping system. [Emails sent by Elected Members using the Council provided email system will be automatically registered. Refer to Records Management guidelines for further information.](#)
- Records will be readily accessible to meet business and accountability requirements. Staff members of the Records Unit will follow authorised procedures in carrying out records management functions.

Electronic records will be captured and maintained as functioning records by preserving their structure, context and content. In order to maintain their value as evidence, electronic records are inviolate. That is, they cannot be altered or manipulated for as long as they are retained.

Council staff or Elected Members who do not comply with this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the relevant Code of Conduct, and/or be subject to criminal or civil proceedings. Council staff and Elected Members are required to report breaches of this Policy to the Chief Executive Officer.

7.2 Confidential Records

If an [Elected Member](#) or [Council staff member](#) believes that a record forwarded to the Records Unit for incorporation into the record keeping system is of a highly sensitive or confidential nature, he or she will advise the [Executive Assistant or TRIM Administrator / Projects Officer](#) of the matter.

**Deleted:** An official record is a record made or received by the Council in the conduct of its business. This means that, because Council staff and Elected Members act as representatives of the Council, any record created, sent, received, forwarded or transmitted by Council staff and/or Elected Members in the performance and discharge of their functions and duties may be classified as an official record. However, records that are merely transitory, ephemeral, personal or private in nature will fall outside the definition of "official records". ¶  
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**Deleted:** <#>If Elected Members elect to utilise their personal email accounts to respond to Council related emails then they must forward a copy of the email to to emrecords@campbelltown.sa.gov.au to allow registration into the EDRMS. Records showing incoming correspondence without a response will not be sufficient for Council's Record keeping practices and could potentially affect the Council's reputation in the event that a records audit or Freedom of Information request occurred) .¶

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**7.3 Destruction Methods**

Official records must be disposed of in accordance with the General Disposal Schedule No.20 for Local Government Authorities in South Australia. Transitory or ephemeral records, or records that are personal or private in nature, may be destroyed in accordance with Normal Administrative Practice (NAP).

**7.4 Records Security**

The security of all Council records is crucial, as records provide evidence of business transactions, support management decisions and ensure public accountability requirements are met. Records in all formats will be stored securely to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal in one of Council's storage locations including Records Compactus (1 hour fire rating), fireproof safe or offsite storage.

Council staff are responsible for the safe custody of all files and documents that are distributed to them. Sensitive or confidential information must not be left in an area which is accessible by others and should be returned to Records as soon as possible. All Council records storage areas are locked overnight and access controlled by Council's security system to prevent unauthorised access.

Council's official records should not be stored at home or left in cars unattended as they could be lost, damaged or stolen. Vital records are stored in a fire resistant safe within the Council office and access to these physical records is restricted to the Manager Information Services, the TRIM Administrator/Projects Officer and the Executive Assistant. Confidential records are stored in a locked bay within the Records compactus. Keys to the locked bay have been provided to the Manager Information Services, TRIM Administrator/Projects Officer, Executive Assistant to the CEO. Access to this bay is restricted to these staff only or their nominee.

**8. Review & Evaluation**

This Policy will be reviewed annually. The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council on the outcome of the review and make recommendations for amendment, alteration or a substitution of a new Policy if considered necessary.

**9. Availability of the Policy**

This Policy will be available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours and at Council's website [www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au](http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au). Copies will also be provided to interested members of the community upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.

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