



# Recordkeeping

## Fundamentals

### for Councillors



## What is Recordkeeping?

### WHAT IS A STATE RECORD?

A State record is any record created, received and kept by any person in the course of exercising official functions of a public office.

### WHY ARE RECORDS IMPORTANT?

Records tell us **what**, **where** and **when** something was done or **why** a decision was made. They also tell us **who** was involved and under what authority. In other words, records provide evidence of government and individual activity.

Records are an indispensable ingredient for accountable Local Government. Poor recordkeeping results in inefficiencies and poor decision-making. **Councillors** are subject to the *State Records Act 1998* when they are undertaking business on behalf of the Council.

### A RECORD CAN BE ANY FORMAT



Digital



Physical





# Common Record Groups



## Correspondence

Records that document communications between council employees, and between council employees and community members. E.g. emails and letters.



## Core Business Docs

Records that document core businesses processes such as reports, briefing notes, plans, agendas, minutes, working papers, and more.



## Financial Records

Documentation of financial activity, such as financial reports, budgets, estimates, receipts, contracts, tenders, invoices, statements, and more.



## Events and Resources

Records of events your council hosts or attends may be required as a record. All content that your council produces, publishes, and/or circulates are State records.



## Social Media

If your council (or you in a official capacity) has a presence on social media, all content and communication (including reactions to posts, comments, tweets, etc.), published/transmitted via these platforms are State records.



# Your Responsibilities

The *State Records Act 1998* establishes a number of responsibilities for every council. While the Council's General Manager, Senior Responsible Officer, and records unit are responsible for meeting requirements of the Act, Councillors also have responsibilities as a public official.

They can be summarised into 6 key points.

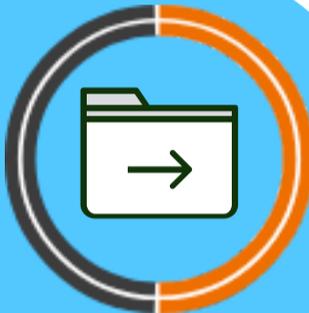
## Create Records Routinely



Records should be created as part of your daily routine. If the activity doesn't automatically create a record, then you must do so (e.g. minutes of meetings)

## Use Official Systems

Use the council's official recordkeeping system. Do not hoard records in your own private store/drive.



## Know Your Policy



Know your council's recordkeeping policy. Every Council is required to have one.

## Prevent Unauthorised Access

Records can contain personal and confidential information. Ensure records are kept secure and shared according to your council's policies.



## Approved Destruction Only



Never destroy a record without approval. The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) can authorise disposal of records. Be sure to know who your SRO is.

## Treat With Care

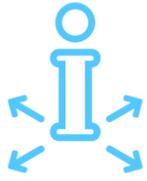
Prevent loss and damage of records by storing physical records away from hazards and dampness. Store digital records with secure backups.



The **Councillor Handbook** contains further information on recordkeeping responsibilities.



## Useful Extras



### INFORMATION & RESOURCES

See our website for recordkeeping advice, guidance, and recordkeeping information.



### TRAINING & EDUCATION

We run regular recordkeeping courses, but in the mean time see our online training modules.



### NSW OMBUDSMAN

The *Good Conduct and Administrative Practice* (2017) publication, establishes detailed guidelines for proper recordkeeping practices.



### FAQ

A fantastic resource for those new to recordkeeping. It provides answers on many subjects.

## CONTACT US



Visit our website for additional advice and resources



Our Future Proof blog has more information on digital recordkeeping



For more advice get in touch via email  
E: govrec@records.nsw.gov.au



Keep your finger on the pulse, follow us on social media

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# State Archives & Records