

## State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales

### **Functional Retention and Disposal Authority: FA369**

This authority covers records documenting the function of mental health advocacy, education, policy and planning

This functional retention and disposal authority is approved under section 21(2)c of the *State Records Act 1998* following prior approval by the Board of the State Records Authority of New South Wales in accordance with section 21(3) of the Act.



# State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales

## Functional Retention and Disposal Authority

**Authority no** FA369

**SR file no** 13/0177

**Scope**

This functional retention and disposal authority covers records documenting the function of mental health advocacy, education, policy and planning.

**Public office**

Mental Health Commission of NSW

**Approval date**

2 March 2016

**Reissued**

15 November 2021  
(No changes made)

## **About the Functional Retention and Disposal Authority**

### **Purpose of the authority**

The purpose of this functional retention and disposal authority is to identify those records created and maintained by NSW public offices which are required as State archives and to provide approval for the destruction of certain other records created and maintained by NSW public offices, after minimum retention periods have been met.

The approval for disposal given by this authority is given under the provisions of the *State Records Act 1998* only and does not override any other obligations of an organisation to retain records.

### **The retention and disposal of State records**

The records retention and disposal practices outlined in this authority are approved under section 21(2)(c) of the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*. Part 3 (Protection of State Records) of the Act provides that records are not to be disposed of without the consent of NSW State Archives and Records with certain defined exceptions. These exceptions include an action of disposal which is positively required by law, or which takes place in accordance with a normal administrative practice (NAP) of which NSW State Archives and Records does not disapprove. Advice on the State Records Act can be obtained from NSW State Archives and Records.

The authority sets out how long the different classes of records generated by an organisation must be kept to meet its legal, operational and other requirements, and whether the records are to be kept as State archives. The State Archives and Records Authority ('NSW State Archives and Records') reviews and approves organisations' retention and disposal authorities under the *State Records Act*. It is the duty of a public office, in submitting a draft retention and disposal authority for approval, to disclose to NSW State Archives and Records any information which affects the retention of the records covered by the authority.

NSW State Archives and Records' decisions take into account both the administrative requirements of public offices in discharging their functional responsibilities and the potential research use of the records by the NSW Government and the public. One of NSW State Archives and Records' functions is to identify and preserve records as State archives. These are records which document the authority and functions of Government, its decision-making processes and the implementation and outcomes of those decisions, including the nature of their influence and effect on communities and individual lives. Criteria for the identification of State archives are listed in *Building the Archives: Policy on records appraisal and the identification of State archives*. The Policy also explains the roles and responsibilities of State Records and of public offices in undertaking appraisal processes and disposal activities.

## **Implementing the authority**

This functional retention and disposal authority covers records controlled by the public office and applies only to the records or classes of records described in the authority. The authority should be implemented as part of the records management program of the organisation. Two primary objectives of this program are to ensure that records are kept for as long as they are of value to the organisation and its stakeholders and to enable the destruction or other disposal of records once they are no longer required for business or operational purposes.

The implementation process entails use of the authority to sentence records. Sentencing is the examination of records in order to identify the disposal class in the authority to which they belong. This process enables the organisation to determine the appropriate retention period and disposal action for the records. Advice on sentencing can be obtained from State Records. See *Implementing a retention and disposal authority*.

Where the format of records has changed (for example, from paper-based to electronic) this does not prevent the disposal decisions in the authority from being applied to records which perform the same function. The information contained in non paper-based or technology dependant records must be accessible for the periods prescribed in the classes. Where a record is copied, either onto microform or digitally imaged, the original should not be disposed of without authorisation (see also the *General Retention and Disposal Authority – Original or source records that have been copied*). Public offices will need to ensure that any software, hardware or documentation required to gain continuing access to technology dependent records is available for the periods prescribed.

## **Disposal action**

### ***Records required as State archives***

Records which are to be retained as State archives are identified with the disposal action 'Required as State archives'. Records that are identified as being required as State archives should be stored in controlled environmental conditions and control of these records should be transferred to NSW State Archives and Records when they are no longer in use for official purposes.

The transfer of control of records as State archives may, or may not, involve a change in custodial arrangements. Records can continue to be managed by the public office under a distributed management agreement. Public offices are encouraged to make arrangements with NSW State Archives and Records regarding the management of State archives.

Transferring records identified as State archives and no longer in use for official purposes to NSW State Archives and Records' control should be a routine and systematic part of a public office's records management program. If the records are more than 25 years old and are still in use for official purposes, then a 'still in use determination' should be made.

### ***Records approved for destruction***

Records that have been identified as being approved for destruction may only be destroyed once a public office has ensured that all other requirements for retaining the records are met. Retention periods set down in this authority are *minimum* periods only and a public office should keep records for a longer period if necessary. Reasons for longer retention can include legal requirements, administrative need, and government directives. A public office *must not* dispose of any records where the public office is aware of possible legal action (including legal discovery, court cases, formal applications for access) where the records may be required as evidence.

Once all requirements for retention have been met, destruction of records should be carried out in a secure and environmentally sound way. Relevant details of the destruction should be recorded. See *Destruction of records: a practical guide*.

Organisations should review functional retention and disposal authorities regularly to ensure that they remain relevant as the organisation's functions and activities, operating environment and requirements for records change. Retention requirements may change over time. This can occur when:

- business needs or practices change
- new laws, regulations or standards are introduced
- new technology is implemented
- government administration is restructured and functions are moved between entities, or
- unforeseen or new community expectations become apparent.

NSW State Archives and Records recommends that organisations check any functional retention and disposal authorities more than 5 years old to ensure that the retention periods and disposal actions remain relevant.

Regardless of whether a record has been approved for destruction or is required as a State archive, a public office or an officer of a public office must not permanently transfer possession or ownership of a State record to any person or organisation without the explicit approval of NSW State Archives and Records.

### ***Administrative change***

This functional retention and disposal authority has been designed to link records to the functions they document rather than to organisational structure. This provides for a stable retention and disposal authority that is less affected by administrative change. The movement of specified functions between branches or units within the public office does not require the authority to be resubmitted to NSW State Archives and Records for approval. However, when functions move from one public office to another the public office that inherits the new function should contact State Records to discuss use of any existing retention and disposal authority approved for use by a predecessor organisation.

## **Amendment and review of this authority**

NSW State Archives and Records must approve any amendment to this authority. Public offices that use the authority should advise NSW State Archives and Records of any proposed changes or amendments to the authority.

NSW State Archives and Records recommends a review of this authority after five years to establish whether its provisions are still appropriate. Either the public office or NSW State Archives and Records may propose a review of the authority at any other time, particularly in the case of change of administrative arrangements or procedures which are likely to affect the value of the records covered by this authority.

In all cases the process of review will involve consultation between State Records and the public office. If the process of review reveals that this authority requires amendment, the necessary amendments should be made and approved.

### Contact Information

State Records  
PO Box 516  
Kingswood NSW 2747  
Telephone: (02) 9673 1788  
E-mail: [govrec@records.nsw.gov.au](mailto:govrec@records.nsw.gov.au)

**Functional Retention and Disposal Authority**  
**Mental health advocacy, education, policy and planning**

**Authority number: FA369**

**Dates of coverage: Open**

<b>List of Functions and Activities covered</b>			
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## Functional Retention and Disposal Authority Mental health advocacy, education, policy and planning

Authority number: FA369

Dates of coverage: Open

No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
1.0.0	<b>COMMUNITY AWARENESS</b>	The process of raising community awareness about mental health issues through education and information provision.	
1.1.0	<b>Campaigns and publications</b>	<p>The activities involved in conducting campaigns and publishing information to raise awareness of mental health issues.</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS - Addresses</b> for records relating to presentations given by the Minister or the organisation.</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS - Conferences</b> for records relating to conferences.</p>	
1.1.1		Records relating to the development of campaigns, publications and information resources to promote community awareness around mental health issues. Includes briefs, strategy and planning records, market research, proof of concept briefs, etc.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy
1.1.2		Administrative records relating to mental health awareness and promotion campaigns, e.g. correspondence to support the co-ordination of activities or implementation of plans or required actions.	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then destroy
1.1.3		Final versions of publications, information resources or campaign materials aimed at promoting community awareness of mental health issues.	Required as State archives
2.0.0	<b>GRANTS AND AWARDS</b>	The processes related to the development and administration of grants and awards programs.	
2.1.0	<b>Applications</b>	The process of assessing applications for grants and awards.	

## Mental health advocacy, education, policy and planning

Authority number: FA369

Dates of coverage: Open

No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
<i>GRANTS AND AWARDS - Applications</i>			
		See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>COMMITTEES</b> for records of committees or panels involved in the assessment of grant or funding applications.	
2.1.1		Records documenting awards and grants issued to successful applicants. Records include applications/nominations, decisions and recommendations, letters of offer, establishment of and variations to funding agreements.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy
2.1.2		Records relating to unsuccessful applications for grants and awards.	Retain minimum of 2 years after action completed, then destroy
2.2.0	<b>Program and policy development</b>	The activities associated with the development of grants and award programs and policies and guidelines for their administration.	
2.2.1		Records relating to the development of awards and grants programs to support or promote better practices and service improvement in mental health. Records include: program objectives, project briefs, consultation with stakeholders, significant drafts of the program, designs of the award, final award/grant program.	Required as State archives
2.2.2		Records relating to the development, update and review of policies, procedures and guidelines for grants and award programs. Includes final versions.	Retain minimum of 10 years after superseded, then destroy
3.0.0	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	The function of developing and monitoring the implementation of a strategic plan for the mental health system in NSW.	

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
<i>STRATEGIC PLANNING - Development</i>			
		See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT - Planning</b> for records relating to the organisation's own corporate and business planning	
3.1.0	<b>Development</b>	The process of developing a strategic plan for submission to the Minister. Includes preliminary planning, information collection and analysis and consultation activities undertaken to support development of the plan.	
3.1.1		<p>Records relating to the development of a strategic plan for the mental health system. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drafts circulated to service providers, government agencies or the community for feedback</li> <li>• submissions and comments received</li> <li>• progress reports</li> <li>• reports of meetings, forums, etc., undertaken as part of consultation processes</li> <li>• reports and briefings to government and other stakeholders on issues arising or identified from research and information collection and analysis processes undertaken as part of strategic planning</li> <li>• drafts submitted for approval and final versions.</li> </ul>	Required as State archives
3.1.2		Records relating to the collection and analysis of data and research supporting strategic planning for the mental health system. Records include the collection of source documents, quantitative and qualitative analysis of information, and records relating to the development of reports and briefings.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
<i>STRATEGIC PLANNING - Development</i>			
3.1.3		Records relating to the coordination of consultation or data collection processes.	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then destroy
3.2.0	<b>Monitoring</b>	The processes and activities involved in monitoring implementation of strategic planning for mental health.  See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS - Reporting</b> for formal reports to government relating to the organisation's core functions and performance.	
3.2.1		Reports or briefings relating to the implementation of strategic planning for mental health, including reports on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the allocation and use of funding for mental health services</li> <li>• the results of monitoring of agencies</li> <li>• the performance of programs against targets</li> <li>• activities, processes and outcomes.</li> </ul>	Required as State archives
3.2.2		Background information and data collected from services providers, government agencies and the community to monitor the effectiveness of strategic planning for mental health, and to monitor progress in meeting targets or outcomes.	Retain minimum of 20 years after action completed, then destroy
4.0.0	<b>RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT</b>	Processes associated with the commissioning of research into and the development of policy, standards or position statements concerning mental health issues.	

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
<i>RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT - Policy and standards</i>			
		<p>See <b>STRATEGIC PLANNING - Development</b> for research and analysis relating to the development or monitoring of the mental health strategic plan</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS - Advice</b> for records relating to the provision of advice on mental health and related policy issues to the Minister, Premier or other government agencies.</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS - Agreements</b> for records relating to data and information sharing agreements with NSW Government agencies.</p>	
4.1.0	<b>Policy and standards</b>	The processes involved in developing policy, position statements and standards for the mental health sector.	
4.1.1		Records documenting the development of mental health policy, position statements or standards by the organisation. Includes briefings, reports, analysis, recommendations, drafts circulated for consultation, submissions or comments received from stakeholders, and final versions. Also includes the evaluation of mental health policy, standards and legislation developed by other organisations.	Required as State archives
4.2.0	<b>Projects</b>	<p>The management of projects undertaken to meet a particular need or produce a particular outcome. Includes research projects.</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>CONTRACTING-OUT</b> for records setting up joint venture arrangements or outsourcing projects to universities, etc.</p>	
4.2.1		Final reports detailing results, findings or outcomes of mental health related projects commissioned or undertaken by the organisation.	Required as State archives

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No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action
<i>RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT - Projects</i>			
4.2.2		Records relating to the management of projects commissioned or undertaken by the organisation. Includes project briefs, plans, communications and periodic progress reports and records of proposed projects that do not proceed.	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then destroy
5.0.0	<b>REVIEWS</b>	The processes involved in reviewing, evaluating, reporting and advising on mental health or related services and programs.	
5.1.0	<b>Complaints</b>	<p>The activities involved in receiving and responding to complaints/concerns raised by individuals/groups/stakeholders or those advocating on their behalf.</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS - Enquiries</b> for records relating to the handling of enquiries regarding routine information about the organisation and its services</p> <p>See General Retention and Disposal Authority <i>Administrative records</i> <b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS - Public reaction</b> for records relating to complaints about the organisation.</p>	
5.1.1		Records relating to the provision of general advice and referrals in response to complaints received about the mental health system or its services.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy
5.2.0	<b>Performance evaluation and reporting</b>	<p>The process of evaluating and reporting on the performance of systems, institutions and rules governing the mental health system.</p> <p>See <b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b> for records relating to monitoring implementation of the mental health strategic plan</p>	

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### *REVIEWS - Performance evaluation and reporting*

5.2.1		Reports of evaluations conducted into the mental health industry, including service providers, government agencies, and legislative and policy frameworks.	Required as State archives
5.2.2		Records relating to the conduct of review and evaluation processes. Includes notes, reports, liaison and consultation with service providers, the development of evaluation and review criteria etc.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy