



Recordkeeping Responsibilities and You

The *State Records Act 2000* (the Act) governs recordkeeping within State and local government organizations in Western Australia. Under the Act, every employee of a government organization (including temporary staff and contractors) will have some responsibility for creating and keeping records relating to their work.

What is a record?

A **record** can be defined as any record of information, in any medium, including letters, files, emails, word processed documents, databases, photographs, text messages, and social media posts relevant to the business of the organization. **Government records** are those records created or received by a government organization, or by an employee or contractor in the course of their work for that organization.

Why do I need to keep records?

Records provide evidence of what an organization has done, and why. Keeping records of business activity enables an organization to account for its actions, meet legislative requirements, and make informed and consistent decisions.

What are my responsibilities as a government employee?

Every employee of a government organization (including temporary staff, contractors and consultants) has a responsibility to create records of their work for the government organization. While specific responsibilities will differ depending on the work role, employees should ensure that records of their activities, transactions and decisions are captured onto the official record.

When should I create a record?

A record should be created when an activity or transaction takes place, or a decision is made, which relates to the organization's business activity. If you are not sure whether to create a record, **ask yourself:**

- Does the matter relate to my work?
- Did I write, receive or send this in the course of my work?
- Is action required?
- Is this something I have used to do my work or to reach a decision?
- Will I need this information again?
- Will someone else need this information at some stage?

If the answer is "yes" to any one of these questions, a record should be created.

What do I do with records once they are created?

Records of business activity should be entered into the organization's official recordkeeping system. By doing this, records relating to particular work matters are kept together and are available for all relevant staff to refer to.

How long do I need to keep records?

Records can only be disposed of in accordance with a disposal authority that has been approved by the State Records Commission. It is illegal to dispose of records unless authorized to do so.

Further information: For assistance with recordkeeping responsibilities specific to your work, please contact the Records Manager within your organization **or** the State Records Office on (08) 9427 3661 or via email at sro@sro.wa.gov.au.