Records Management Policy - Disposal

1. Purpose

The *Records Management Policy – Disposal* outlines requirements related to the disposal of public records. This Policy supports transparency, accountability, and the effective management of public records, and support the community's rights and entitlements. The Policy promotes good practice and compliance with relevant legislation and organisational requirements.

2. Authority

This Policy was made by the State Archivist under section 46(1)(b) of the *Public Records Act 2023* (the Act) on 16 November 2026.

This Policy commences 1 April 2027.

This Policy may be amended and is subject to review.

3. Application

This Policy applies to all public authorities under section 8 of the Act.

Public authorities must have regard to this Policy under section 12(b) of the Act.

Section 11(2) of the Act requires the chief executive of a public authority[1] to ensure that the public authority complies with the requirements of the Act.

The Policy covers all public records, regardless of format (physical or digital).

4. Permanent value and temporary value public records

Permanent value public records

Permanent value[2], in relation to a public record, means that having regard to any archives appraisal statement –

(a) the record has been identified for retention under a disposal authorisation; or

(b) the record otherwise has enduring value and is appropriate for retention in the custody of the archives.

While disposal authorisations are issued by the State Archivist under section 20 of the Act, Queensland State Archive's (QSA) *Appraisal Statement* outlines criteria for identifying public records appropriate for retention in the custody of the archives.

The State Archivist sets the risk tolerance for permanent value public records. **The risk tolerance for permanent value public records is low**. For public authorities, this means prioritising the management of these records above others.

Commences 1 April 2027

[1] Where the public authority is not an individual such as a Minister or Assistant Minister (see section 11(1)).
[2] Permanent value as defined in Schedule 3 of the *Public Records Act 2023*.

Temporary value public records

QSA recommends the adoption of a risk-based approach to records management. Implementation of this approach should follow your public authority's existing risk management processes.

When implementing this Policy, public authorities must consider value and risk[3]. In conjunction with advice provided by QSA and the State Archivist, your public authority sets the risk tolerance for temporary value public records. This includes identifying:

- your public authority's high-value public records, which are records that your business could not function without
- your public authority's high-risk public records, which may include, but are not limited to:
    - those likely to be required in legal proceedings
    - highly confidential or highly classified material
    - those of potential value for sharing across government in response to high-priority activities
    - commercially sensitive information
    - personal or sensitive information
    - culturally sensitive information that is information relating to Aboriginal law, Aboriginal tradition, Ailan Kastom or Torres Strait Islander law
    - those required to be kept long-term (more than 25 years) by your public authority, noting active management of digital public records is required from the point of creation
- your public authority's high-risk legacy digital records where regular digital preservation processes have not been undertaken.

Some public records may be both high-value and high-risk records.

Identifying your public authority's high-value and high-risk public records means effort and resources can be prioritised towards managing these records over low-value or low-risk records.

Commences 1 April 2027

[3] *Records Management Policy - Make and Keep* refer to Requirement MK2.3 - A decision about a public record and records management appraises value and considers risk.

5. Policy requirements

Disposal Requirement 1 (D1): Disposal is underpinned by appraisal.

This requirement is met when:

D1.1 Public records are assessed to identify value of these records to the community, to the public authority that makes and keeps these records and, to the government of Queensland.

D1.2 Public records are assessed to identify risk to records in relation to unlawful disposal, loss or damage, unauthorised use or over retention.

D1.3 Public records are assessed to determine if any changes in value, circumstances or risk have occurred, and a decision is made and documented to demonstrate whether disposal should occur.

Disposal Requirement 2 (D2): Public records are retained for as long as they are required.

This requirement is met when:

D2.1 Disposal of public records is undertaken in a manner consistent with sections 22 and 23 of the *Public Records Act 2023*.

D2.2 All employees, contractors and volunteers, are aware of their obligations regarding the retention of public records for as long as they are required to meet business, legislative, accountability and community purposes.

D2.3 When a permanent value record is converted into a different format or migrated to a different system, the source record can only be disposed of in accordance with an applicable disposal authorisation.

Disposal Requirement 3 (D3): Disposal is managed and documented.

This requirement is met when:

D3.1 Disposal of public records is documented and includes information about appraisal justifications for the disposal action.

D3.2 When systems are decommissioned, appraisal of public records within the decommissioned system is considered and documented.

D3.3 Disposal actions for public records are authorised by the Chief Executive of the public authority, or their authorised delegate and the decision is documented.

D3.4 Disposal requirements are identified and included (or defined) in all outsourced, cloud, contracted and similar service arrangements.

D3.5 Risk is assessed and reported internally via governance mechanisms, where any public record has exceeded its minimum retention period by five years.

Commences 1 April 2027

Disposal Requirement 4 (D4): Disposal is complete and secure.

This requirement is met when:

D4.1 Methods for destruction of public records are secure and appropriate to the format/medium. As far as practicable, methods of destruction are irreversible.

D4.2 Complete disposal of a public record includes disposal of any copies of that record whenever practicable. Disposal of copies is undertaken in accordance with the appropriate disposal authorisation.

D4.3 Disposal of public records does not compromise information security or information privacy.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Accessible	Refer to section 19 of the *Public Records Act 2023*.
Appraise	Evaluate the merit, significance or value of public records and information.
Availability	The degree to which public records are accessible to authorised users when needed.
Defensible	The requirements can be supported by logical argument or sufficient evidence. A decision or process that can be justified through documented evidence or reasoning.
Digitally by default	A principle that prioritises the creation and management of public records in digital form as the primary and official version.
Disposal authorisation	An authorisation given by the State Archivist under section 20 the Act to dispose of a public record, or class of public records, for a public authority or multiple public authorities.
Dispose	Dispose of a public record means: a. destroy or delete the record; or b. alter or damage the record in a way that: i. changes how accurately an action or decision is shown in the record; or ii. otherwise affects the integrity of the record; or c. abandon the record; or d. give away the record, whether by sale, donation or other transfer.

Commences 1 April 2027

Term	Definition
Governance framework	A structured set of guidelines, policies and processes designed to ensure activities are conducted in a compliant manner and uphold the principles of accountability, transparency and integrity.
Information privacy	Refer section 12 of the *Information Privacy Act 2009*
Information security	The preservation of confidentiality, integrity and availability of information.
Metadata	Structured or semi-structured descriptive information about a public record that enables the management, use and preservation of public records through time. It provides context such as creator, date, activity, and relationships.
Permanent value public records	Refer to Schedule 3 of the Act (also referred to on page 1 of this Policy).
Public records	Refer to section 9 of the Act.
Source record	Documents or public records that have been copied, converted or migrated from one format or system to another. The source records are those that remain following the successful conversion or migration. Source records may be an original public record or a reproduction generated by an earlier copying, conversion or migration process.

7. Related Policies and Legislation

- *Public Records Act 2023*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *Records Management Policy – Make and Keep*

Commences 1 April 2027

8. Approval and Version Control

Document History and Contact Details

Number: 1
Version: 1.1
Implementation Date: 1 April 2027
Review Date: Commencing April 2028

Contact Details

Owner: Queensland State Archives, Policy and Assurance, Government Records
Phone: 3037 6630
Email: rkqueries@archives.qld.gov.au

Commences 1 April 2027