Physical Recordkeeping Fundamentals

What is Recordkeeping?

A record is any kind of writing, received or produced 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.

Common Record Groups

- **Correspondence**: Records that document communications between council employees and council members or community members. E.g. emails and letters.
- **Core Business Docs**: Records that document core business 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.

Your Responsibilities

- The NSW Ombudsman’s Good Conduct and Administrative Practice (2017) publication establishes detailed guidelines for proper recordkeeping practices.

Useful Extras

- Our Future Proof blog has more information on digital recordkeeping.
- Keep your finger on the pulse, follow us on social media.
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Your Responsibilities

- **Create Records Routinely**: Use official systems and approval for destruction.
- **Treat With Care**: Prevent unauthorised access. Know your policy. Approved destruction only. Treat with care. Prevent loss and damage of records by storing physical records away from hazards and dampness. Store digital records with secure backups.
- **Know Your Policy**: Approved destruction only. Treat with care.

Useful Extras

- **Your Responsibilities**: Know your council’s recordkeeping policy. Every council in NSW is required to have one. Records can contain personal and confidential information. Ensure records are kept secure and shared according to your council’s policies.
- **Never destroy a record without approval.** The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) can authorise disposal of records. Be sure to know who your SRO is.
- **Prevent Loss and Damage of Records**
- **Use Official Systems**
- **Treat With Care**
- **Approved Destruction Only**

**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 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.

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CONTACT US

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Records are an indispensable ingredient for accountable Local Government.

Poor recordkeeping results in inefficiencies and poor decision-making.

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