



POLICY NUMBER	-	3.25
POLICY SUBJECT	-	3.25 – Recordkeeping Policy

1. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encompass the principles of the *State Records Act 2000* and ensure uniformity and consistency within the creation and maintenance of record in the Shire of Merredin's (the Shire's) records management systems. The Policy also defines the roles and responsibilities of the officers who manage and perform record keeping processes for, or on behalf of, the Shire and prescribes a methodical and organised approach in the management of the Shire's records.

2. POLICY SCOPE

Under current records-related legislation such as the State Records Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the accredited standard ISO 9001:2000 the Shire of Merredin is obliged to maintain record keeping systems that are dedicated to the creation and control of Council's records.

3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

State Records Act 2000, Freedom of Information Act 1992, Local Government Act 1995.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Under current records-related legislation such as the State Records Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the accredited standard ISO 9001:2000 the Shire of Merredin is obliged to maintain record keeping systems that are dedicated to the creation and control of Council's records. The systems must ensure that Council's records both correctly and sufficiently record the performance of its functions and are able to contribute towards appropriately informed decision-making at the Shire of Merredin.

The Shire of Merredin considers all its records to be a corporate asset. Complete and accurate records of all business decisions and transactions are to be documented in the Shire's record keeping systems. The records are then to be managed in accordance with the State Records Act 2000 and associated Council policies and procedures.

This policy is applicable to all government records which are created or received by the Shire of Merredin (or on behalf of), regardless of their media, date of creation or storage location.

5. KEY POLICY DEFINITIONS

Record: For the purposes of this policy, a record is defined as per the *State Records Act 2000* meaning any record of information however recorded and includes:

1. Anything on which there is writing or Braille;
2. A map, plan, diagram or graph;
3. A drawing, pictorial or graphic work, or photograph;
4. Anything on which there are figures, marks, perforations or symbols, having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them;
5. Anything from which images, sounds or writings can be reproduced with or without the aid of anything else; and
6. Anything on which information has been stored or recorded, either mechanically, or electronically.

Within the scope of this definition and Council's perspective, a government record is deemed to be a record created or received by the Shire, a Councillor or an employee or contractor in the course of work for the Shire. The record may verify a business decision, a transaction or reflect a current state of knowledge and is generated as part of a business process.

Note 1: Unless otherwise indicated, reference to the term 'record' in the body of this policy refers to a government record.

Vital Records: are defined as records that are fundamental to the continued business of the Shire of Merredin. Vital records include those that protect the rights of individuals and the Shire and are imperative for the Shire's reconstruction in the event of a disaster. Vital records have a continual value to the Shire and need to be incorporated into the Council's record keeping system.

6. GUIDELINES

Creation of Records: All elected members, staff and contractors will create full and accurate records, in the appropriate format, of the Shire of Merredin's business decisions and transactions to meet all legislative, business, administrative, financial, evidential and historical requirements. Files are created and closed by the Records Officer as required.

Capture and Control of Records: All records created and received in the course of Shire of Merredin business are to be captured at the point of creation, regardless of format, with required metadata, into appropriate recordkeeping and business systems, that are managed in accordance with sound recordkeeping principles. The Records Officer is responsible for collecting and opening all mail. All incoming & outgoing mail is recorded in the ERMDS which details the following information:

- Date received
- Sender
- Description of content
- Relevant Officer (to which the mail relates)
- File Reference

Incoming mail is distributed to the relevant officers on a daily basis through the ERMDS.

Elected Members Records: Elected Members mail is opened by the Executive Assistant and added to the ERMDS with details the following information:

- Date received
- Sender
- Description of content
- Relevant Officer (to which the mail relates)
- File Reference

The incoming mail is then captured and attached to the physical file, then distributed to the relevant members.

Electronic Records: Relevant electronic records are printed and attached to the physical file as a 'File Copy'. Relevant email records are also printed and attached to the physical file.

The electronic finance system in place 'SynergySoft' is backed up daily and maintenance of this system is outsourced to an experienced Information Technology firm. The SynergySoft system allows 'audit trails' to be kept of changes made to all finance records.

Website Management: Website management is maintained by the Media & Communications Officer and Executive Assistant. Electronic access to the website and other social media sites is outlined in Policy 2.22 - Social Media, in the Shire of Merredin Policy Manual.

Security and Protection of Records: All records are to be categorised as to their level of sensitivity and adequately secured and protected from violation, unauthorised access or destruction, and kept in accordance with necessary retrieval, preservation and storage requirements.

Access to Records: Access to the Shire of Merredin's records by staff and contractors will be in accordance with designated access and security classifications. Access to the Shire of Merredin's records by the general public will be in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1992 and Shire of Merredin policy. Access to the Shire of Merredin's records by elected members will be via the CEO in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Access to confidential records (Human Resources & Payroll) is kept locked in the Payroll & Rates Office. Electronic records are stored in secure folders in the Shire's shared drive.

Appraisal, Retention and Disposal of Records: All records kept by the Shire of Merredin will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records, produced by the State Records Office of WA.

Disposal of records is determined by the Records Officer. A register of records to be disposed of is compiled and required to be authorised (prior to disposal) by the Executive Manager Corporate Services and the CEO.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CEO

The CEO is to ensure that there is an organisational system which facilitates the maintenance and management of records in compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* and Council’s guidelines and procedures.

All Staff

All staff are to create, maintain and retain records relating to the business activities they perform. They are to identify records and ensure that all records are captured and recorded in the appropriate record keeping system, and, protected and disposed of in accordance with the State Records Office’s General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records.

Elected Members

Councillors are to ensure that they are aware of the record keeping procedures that ensure records are created and kept regarding their participation in the decision-making processes of the Shire.

Policy Ownership

The custodian of this Policy is the Executive Manager Corporate Services. The Records Officer has operational responsibility for the Policy.

8. MONITOR AND REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by the Executive Manager Corporate Services and Records Officer in consultation with other staff (i.e CEO, DCEO etc) at least every five years.

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