

TITLE:	Records Management Policy		
DIVISION:			
ADOPTED BY:	Barkly Regional Council		
DATE OF ADOPTION:	28 June 2018	DATE OF REVIEW:	June 2020
MOTION NUMBER:	OC 118/18		
POLICY NUMBER:	CP000029		
AUTHORISED:	Barkly Regional Council		

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees of the Barkly Regional Council and Elected Members

PREAMBLE

The aim of all policy is for Councillors to provide strategic input into the effective operational framework of the organisation under S.11 of the Local Government Act

SUMMARY

To provide a Records Management Framework for the creation and management of complete and accurate records of the business of Barkly Regional Council.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to outline responsibilities and obligations for all staff in respect to records of the Council under the variety of relevant legislation not limited to but including, Information Act, Local Government Act, Local government Administration Regulations, the Northern Territory Records Management Standards for Public Sector Organisations, the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009 and Fair Work Regulations.

BACKGROUND

Barkly Regional Council is committed to good governance and the achievement of compliance of all relevant legislation. The Council affirms that the promotion and practice of good recordkeeping is a key focus for meeting these outcomes.

The Council is required by the Information Act to ensure that complete and accurate records of the business of the Council are created and managed for as long as required to support business, accountability and legislative requirements until their authorised disposal under approved records disposal schedules.

These records provide evidence of the Council's functions and activities and form part of the public record. Through its commitment to effective recordkeeping policy, the Council acknowledges its recordkeeping responsibilities and accountability to government, clients and the local community.

This policy applies to all staff of the Council and to records of all business activities performed by or on behalf of the Council regardless of the media in which they are created or captured. All practices, systems and procedures pertaining to recordkeeping are to be consistent with this policy.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS - NT

- **Governance** (including identification of records) - Records must be created within a managed framework
- **Capture** - Records must be captured into the corporate records management system
- **Discovery** - Records must be findable and accessible for as long as they are required
- **Security** - Records must be secure
- **Disposal** - Records must be disposed of systematically and accountably

POLICY STATEMENT

The Council will maintain an approved electronic records management system for the management of all records. The following principles will apply:

1. Records Management Plans, strategies and activities are supported by policies, systems and practices to suit the business, legal and public accountabilities, operational requirements and technical and intellectual capabilities of the Council.
2. Records security and access controls must be in place to minimise risks to the confidentiality, integrity, reliability and availability of council records.
3. Records of Council are identified, classified, and registered into the approved electronic recordkeeping system, business system with compliant records management functionality, or a business system that interfaces with the approved records management system.
4. Records are not disposed of without an authorised records disposal schedule and authorised approval.
5. Records of legislative, audit or historical significance are preserved in a way that ensures they remain readable and accessible for future reference.
6. All Council staff are trained in best recordkeeping practices and procedures appropriate to their position.

DELEGATION

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Barkly Regional Council has a duty to ensure that the organisation complies with Part 9 - Records and Archives Management, within the Information Act. The CEO is to ensure that the Policy is communicated and implemented at all levels in the organisation.

Management

Managers are responsible for: Supporting the application of records management policies throughout Council. Ensuring that appropriate staff are designated to assist with the implementation of Records Management procedures. Ensuring that staff are supported in terms of training and development in adhering to Records Management policy and procedures. Including Records Management

Records Officer

Records Officer is responsible for all aspects of records management, including the design, implementation and maintenance of records systems and their operations, and for training users on records management and records systems operations as they affect individual practices.

Individual Employees

All records, in whatever form, created by employees of the department are the property of the department. Individual employees are therefore responsible for ensuring that: They adhere to this policy and make accurate and reliable records of their actions and decisions as representatives of the department and that these records are enclosed within the approved recordkeeping system.

LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

The Council is required to comply with the recordkeeping mandated within the following legislation and standards:

- Information Act
- Local Government Act
- Local Government (Administration) Regulations
- NT Records Management Standards for Public Sector Organisations
- Fair Work Act
- Fair Work Regulations
- All relevant legislation under which the Council has responsibilities

ENFORCEMENT

Penalties under the Information Act – Part 9 and 10 will be enforced if an employee does not comply with the conditions stipulated within this policy and its associated procedure. Penalties range from 100 to 400 penalty units. Offences which contravene the Information Act are: Mishandling records False or misleading statements Concealing or disposing of Council information or prevent access and correction Breach of Confidentiality

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This Policy is to be reviewed every 2 years, or as required by legislative changes.

LINKS

http://www.nt.gov.au/dcis/docs/records_policy_standards/records_management_standards.pdf
<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/legislation/information-act>
<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/legislation/local-government-administration-regulations>

RELATED POLICIES

CP000050 – Document Control Policy

APPENDIX

Document Retention Schedule

RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE

The Record Retention Schedule is organized as follows:

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ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

Record Type	Retention Period
Accounts Payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Accounts Receivable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Annual Audit Reports and Financial Statements	Permanent
Annual Audit Records, including work papers and other documents that relate to the audit	7 years after completion of audit
Annual Plans and Budgets	7 years
Bank Statements and Cancelled Checks	7 years
Employee Expense Reports	7 years
General Ledgers	7 years
Interim Financial Statements	7 years
Notes Receivable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Investment Records	7 years after sale of investment
Credit card records (documents showing customer credit card number)	Destroy immediately

Credit card record retention and destruction

A credit card may be used to pay for the Barkly Regional Council products and services such as rates. All records showing customer credit card number must be destroyed immediately by staffs who collect it.

It is determined that information on a document, which contains credit card information, is necessary to be destroyed instantly without having a trace to recover sensitive customer information in the document.

CONTRACTS

Record Type	Retention Period
Contracts and Related Correspondence (including any proposal that resulted in the contract and all other supportive documentation)	7 years after expiration or termination

CORPORATE RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Corporate Records (minute books, signed minutes of the Board and all committees, corporate seals, articles of incorporation, bylaws, annual corporate reports)	Permanent
Licenses and Permits	Permanent

CORRESPONDENCE AND INTERNAL MEMORANDA

General Principle: Most correspondence and internal memoranda should be retained for the same period as the document they pertain to or support. For instance, a letter pertaining to a particular contract would be retained as long as the contract (7 years after expiration). It is recommended that records that support a particular project be kept with the project and take on the retention time of that particular project file.

Correspondence or memoranda that do not pertain to documents having a prescribed retention period should generally be discarded sooner. These may be divided into two general categories:

1. Those pertaining to routine matters and having no significant, lasting consequences should be discarded *within two years*. Some examples include:
 - a. Routine letters and notes that require no acknowledgment or follow-up, such as notes of appreciation, congratulations, letters of transmittal, and plans for meetings.
 - b. Form letters that require no follow-up.
 - c. Letters of general inquiry and replies that complete a cycle of correspondence.
 - d. Letters or complaints requesting specific action that have no further value after changes are made or action taken (such as name or address change).
 - e. Other letters of inconsequential subject matter or that definitely close correspondence to which no further reference will be necessary.
 - f. Chronological correspondence files.

Please note that copies of interoffice correspondence and documents where a copy will be in the originating department file should be read and destroyed, unless that information provides reference to or direction to other documents and must be kept for project traceability.

2. Those pertaining to non-routine matters or having significant lasting consequences should generally be retained permanently.

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

1. Electronic Mail: Not all email needs to be retained, depending on the subject matter.

- All e-mail—from internal or external sources—is to be deleted after seven years.
- Staff will strive to keep all but an insignificant minority of their e-mail related to business issues.
- Barkly Regional Council will archive e-mail for twelve months after the staff has deleted it, after which time the e-mail will be deleted after seven years.
- All Barkly Regional Council business-related email should be downloaded to a service centre or user directory on the server.
- Staff will take care not to send confidential/proprietary Barkly Regional Council information to outside sources.
- Staff with more than 1GB in their e-mail account will be unable to send or receive messages until the size of their account is reduced. Staff will be notified by IT Department as their account size approaches 1GB.
- Any e-mail staff deems vital to the performance of their job should be copied to the staff's P: drive folder, and printed and stored in the employee's workspace.

2. Electronic Documents: including Microsoft Office Suite and PDF files. Retention also depends on the subject matter.

- **PDF documents** – The length of time that a PDF file should be retained should be based upon the content of the file and the category under the various sections of this policy. The maximum period that a PDF file should be retained is 6 years. PDF files the employee deems vital to the performance of his or her job should be printed and stored in the employee's workspace.

3. Web Page Files: Internet Cookies

- All workstations: Internet Explorer should be scheduled to delete Internet cookies once per month.
- Barkly Regional Council does not automatically delete electronic files beyond the dates specified in this Policy. It is the responsibility of all staff to adhere to the guidelines specified in this policy.
- Each day Barkly Regional Council will run a tape backup copy of all electronic files (including email) on Barkly Regional Council's servers, as specified in the Barkly Regional Council Disaster Recovery Plan. This backup tape is a safeguard to retrieve lost information within a one-year retrieval period should documents on the network experience problems. The tape backup copy is considered a safeguard for the record retention system of Barkly Regional Council, but is not considered an

official repository of Barkly Regional Council records. In certain cases a document will be maintained in both paper and electronic form. In such cases the official document will be the electronic document.

CEMETERY RECORDS

Cemetery Records comply with and are governed by this policy and retention schedule including.

Persons cremated or buried documentation	Permanent
History	Permanent
Original Purchase/Sale/Lease Agreement	Permanent
Property Insurance Policies	Permanent

GRANT RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Original grant proposal	7 years after completion of grant period
Grant agreement and subsequent modifications, if applicable	7 years after completion of grant period
All requested IRS/grantee correspondence including determination letters and —no change in exempt status letters	7 years after completion of grant period
Final grantee reports, both financial and narrative	7 years after completion of grant period
All evidence of returned grant funds	7 years after completion of grant period
All pertinent formal correspondence including opinion letters of counsel	7 years after completion of grant period
Report assessment forms	7 years after completion of grant period
Documentation relating to grantee evidence of invoices and matching or challenge grants that would support grantee compliance with the grant agreement	7 years after completion of grant period
Pre-grant inquiry forms and other documentation for expenditure responsibility grants	7 years after completion of grant period
Grantee work product produced with the grant funds	7 years after completion of grant period

MISCELLANEOUS

Record Type	Retention Period
Consultant's Reports	2 years
Material of Historical Value (including pictures, publications)	Permanent
Policy and Procedures Manuals – Original	Current version with revision history
Policy and Procedures Manuals - Copies	Retain current version only
Annual Reports	Permanent
Original Purchase/Sale/Lease Agreement	Permanent
Property Insurance Policies	Permanent

PROGRAM AND SERVICE RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Barkly Regional Council convening's	Permanent (1 copy only)
Research & Publications	Permanent (1 copy only)

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Pay and Hours of Work Records	7 years
EEO- 1 /EEO-2 - Employer Information Reports	7 years
Employee Earnings Records	Separation + 7 years
Employee Handbooks	1 copy kept permanently
Work Injury Reports	1 copy kept permanently
Employee Medical Records	Separation + 7 years
Employee Personal Records (including individual attendance records, application forms, job or status change records, performance evaluations, termination papers, withholding information, training and qualification records)	7 years after separation
Employment Contracts – Individual	7 years after separation
Employment Records - Correspondence with Employment Agencies and Advertisements for Job Openings	3 years from date of hiring decision
Employment Records - All Non-Hired Applicants (including all applications and resumes - whether solicited or unsolicited, results of post-offer, pre-employment physicals, results of background investigations, if any, related correspondence)	2-4 years (4 years if file contains any correspondence which might be construed as an offer)
Job Descriptions	7 years after superseded
Forms I-9	7 years

SPONSOR PROJECT RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Sponsorship agreements	Permanent

PROPERTY RECORDS

Record Type	Retention Period
Correspondence, Property Deeds, Assessments, Licenses, Rights of Way	Permanent
Original Purchase/Sale/Lease Agreement	Permanent
Property Insurance Policies	Permanent

TAX RECORDS

General Principle: Barkly Regional Council must keep books of account or records as are sufficient to establish amount of gross income, deductions, credits, or other matters required to be shown in any such return. These documents and records shall be kept for as long as the contents thereof may become material in the administration of federal, state, and local income, franchise, and property tax laws.

Record Type	Retention Period
Tax-Exemption Documents and Related Correspondence	Permanent
IRS Rulings	Permanent
Excise Tax Records	7 years
Payroll Tax Records	7 years
Tax Bills, Receipts, Statements	7 years
Tax Returns - Income, Franchise, Property	Permanent
Tax Workpaper Packages - Originals	7 years
Sales/Use Tax Records	7 years
Annual Information Returns - Federal and State	Permanent
IRS or other Government Audit Records	Permanent