



Records Management Policy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Records Management Policy is to ensure that comprehensive and accurate records of all activities and decisions of Respect Victoria staff are created, managed and kept in accordance with relevant legislation.

2. Policy

Respect Victoria works to address all forms of family violence across the whole community and with new strategic partners, in a range of settings in which Victorians live, work, learn, play and engage.

Respect Victoria provides policy and technical advice to policy makers, organisations and communities. It coordinates research that builds evidence on the prevention of all forms of family violence and it builds organisational and workforce capacity, including through its assessment and endorsement of family violence prevention programs. Respect Victoria will also develop a framework for the monitoring of trends in family violence and violence against women and the outcomes of programs.

Respect Victoria collects, uses, stores and discloses a range of personal and health information for the purposes of providing services or to carry out its statutory functions.

Respect Victoria develops and delivers policies, programs and services that support and enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians. This requires recordkeeping practices and systems that ensure the creation, maintenance and protection of accurate and reliable records.

Creating, retaining and referring to records:

- protects the interests of Respect Victoria's staff, stakeholders and business partners,
- improves operational efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided,
- ensures transparency and accountability, and
- reduces risks.

Records are an important asset of Respect Victoria and must be managed from the point of creation to their eventual destruction or transfer to the State Archives.

Records underpin Respect Victoria's transparency and accountability by providing proof of business practices, communications, decisions and actions.

Respect Victoria owns all records created, and received, by employees, contractors and consultants working on behalf of Respect Victoria.

Respect Victoria also owns all records created by organisations in the delivery of services funded by Respect Victoria. A number of fact sheets have been developed for the community services sector that provide information on Records Management as it applies to those organisations.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Respect Victoria's staff including contractors and volunteers.
- All records of Respect Victoria's business activities and functions performed across Victoria.
- Records in all media and formats (e.g. hardcopy and electronic documents, emails, databases, web-based records, maps, plans and photographs).
- Records in all business systems.

All of Respect Victoria's policies, standards, practices, systems and procedures affecting recordkeeping are to be consistent with this policy.

4. Responsibilities

Records management responsibilities for Victorian Government agencies are detailed in the records management standards and specifications issued by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) under the *Public Records Act 1973*.

4.1 The CEO

Respect Victoria's CEO is responsible for ensuring the responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities for records management are assigned, documented, communicated and assessed on an annual basis.

The CEO must:

- Ensure that records management is a distinct business function strategically linked to other corporate services

including information management, risk management, freedom of information, legal and information technology.

- Assign senior officers with the responsibility for recordkeeping operations and ensuring Respect Victoria's compliance.
- Ensure employees with the appropriate skills and competence have been assigned responsibility for the provision of expert records management advice, tools, procedures, standards, guidelines, delivery of compliance assessments and services consistent with PROV standards.
- Ensure Respect Victoria assesses its internal compliance with its records management policies, standards, procedures, training and systems at least every two years.
- Records management policy is integrated with other relevant Respect Victoria policies. These policies include but are not limited to: FOI, Privacy, Information and Communication Technology, Risk Management, Incident Reporting, Business Continuity, Human Resources, Contract Management and Procurement.
- Records management requirements are identified and integrated into key interagency, intra-agency and cross jurisdictional strategic projects, programs and systems that have been assessed as having recordkeeping implications.
- The appropriate resources (funds, skilled staff, infrastructure, systems and any other resources) are made available to implement, maintain and improve the records management strategy and action audit requirements.

4.2 Managers

People Managers at all levels are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their staff meet their recordkeeping responsibilities (including when staff leave or change roles).
- Ensuring that their staff have appropriate training in Records Management Policy and the business procedures and systems used to support it.
- Ensuring quality assurance processes are applied to recordkeeping practices in their business units.
- Monitoring staff compliance with the policy as part of regular performance assessment.
- Ensuring that appropriate resources exist within their business units for fulfilling records management responsibilities.
- Fostering and supporting a culture that promotes good records management practices.

4.3 Staff

All members of staff, including contractors and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Creating complete and accurate records of their work as soon as possible after the activity or decision (for example, making file notes of telephone calls and keeping official meeting minutes).
- Complying with the Records Management Policy, procedures and standards (for example, hardcopy records must be placed on official files registered in TRIM).

5. Recordkeeping

5.1 Creation and capture

Respect Victoria's records must be adequate, complete, meaningful and comprehensive evidence of its business activities and decisions. Adequate records contain sufficient information to convey the particulars of the activities and decisions they document. Complete records contain content, context and structure. Meaningful records contain metadata and links that enable them to be understood in relation to their context. Comprehensive records cover all business activities and decisions undertaken by Respect Victoria.

Creating records systematically means that records are consistently created by authorised people or systems as

part of normal business practice and in accordance with clear procedures.

Records should be created at or near to the time of the event, activity or decision they document.

5.2 Security

The *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* requires that public sector employees with access to official information ensure it is only used for official purposes and in an approved manner. Official and personal information is handled according to relevant legislation and public sector body policies and procedures. Public sector employees may only disclose official information or documents acquired in the course of their public employment when required to do so by law, in the legitimate course of duty, when called to give evidence in court, or when proper authority has been given.

Records must only be retrieved and used for authorised purposes in accordance with relevant legislation and access policies.

Records must be kept secure from unauthorised access, unauthorised release, alteration and unlawful destruction.

5.3 Accessibility

Access to records must be open, unless there is a justifiable reason to restrict or close the access.

Respect Victoria supports open public access to records under the *Freedom of Information Act (1982)*, the *Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014)* and the *Health Records Act (2001)* subject to the restrictions imposed by other legislation.

5.4 Storage

The PROV Storage Standard requires that all public records, regardless of format, are stored in areas appropriate for their security, preservation and retrieval.

Respect Victoria currently manages records in a predominately electronic environment and records must be placed on official files registered in the corporate recordkeeping system TRIM.

Hardcopy records must be stored in designated records storage areas compliant with PROV standards. Records no longer in use must be transferred to local Records Management units for archiving with Approved Public Record Office Storage Suppliers (APROSS).

Electronic records must be kept in authorised systems that ensure the preservation and accessibility of the records for the duration of their retention periods.

Records must not be kept in personal or local drives, or on media such as CDs and portable storage devices. Lotus Notes is not an authorised recordkeeping system; email records must be placed on official files.

5.5 Movement

The location of every record must be recorded and updated when records are moved between staff and locations. This enables Respect Victoria to account for the records as business assets.

Hardcopy files are not to be transferred to external organisations unless a court order specifically states that original files must be supplied.

5.6 Retention and disposal

Records must be retained for the periods prescribed in Retention and Disposal Authorities issued by PROV. Records may only be destroyed by authorised Records Management staff in accordance with legislative requirements.

6. Legislation and standards

Respect Victoria recognises its legislative and regulatory requirements as a Victorian Government agency, and is committed to the principles and practices prescribed by the PROV as well as those set out in the *Australian Standard for Records Management (AS ISO 15489)*.

Statute, case law and regulations govern our business environment and are relevant particularly to the obligation to retain documents, store them appropriately and not to disclose their contents to third parties without authority. These include, but are not limited to the:

- [Audit Act \(1994\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/aa199471/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/aa199471/>
- [Civil Procedure Act \(2010\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cpa2010167/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cpa2010167/>
- [Crimes Act \(1958\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ca195882/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ca195882/>
- [Evidence Act \(2008\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ea200880/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ea200880/>
- [Evidence \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act \(1958\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/epa1958361/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/epa1958361/>
- [Freedom of Information Act \(1982\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/foia19822/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/foia19822>
- [Health Records Act \(2001\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/hra200114/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/hra200114>
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act \(2014\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/padpa2014271/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/padpa2014271/>
- [Public Administration Act \(2004\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/paa2004230/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/paa2004230/>
- [Public Records Act \(1973\)](http://austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/pr1973153/)
<austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/pr1973153/>

All records management standards, procedures and systems must be compliant with the legislation and standards that affect recordkeeping.

7. Monitoring compliance

The *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* requires that government policy is implemented in an open and transparent manner. This includes maintaining accurate and reliable records as required by relevant legislation, policies and procedures. It also includes keeping these records in such a way as to ensure their security and reliability and making them available to appropriate scrutiny as required.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that compliance with this policy is routinely monitored to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of recordkeeping systems and processes, and conformity with the *Public Records Act 1973* and associated standards and codes of best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	4 October 2018	Approved by Board

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