

Q279

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy context: This policy relates to

Legislation or other requirements

Privacy Act 1998 (Cth)
Privacy Act Amendment 2004 (Cth)
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)
National Information Privacy Principles (Cth)
Information Privacy Principles (SA)
State Records Act 1997 (SA)
Freedom of Information Act 1991 (SA)
Information Sharing Guidelines (SA)
General Disposal Schedule No. 30 (SA)
Implementing a Records Disposal Program (SA)

Introduction

Enhanced Lifestyles (EL) and Lifestyle Assistance & Accommodation Service (LAAS) aim to ensure that organisational records are created, used, stored and managed in a manner which is:

- Consistent across the organisation
- Professional
- Compliant with Commonwealth and State Govt requirements
- In line with the requirements of legislation on privacy, confidentiality, information sharing and freedom of information.

The organisational records of EL & LAAS may be subject to audit from government stakeholders and the Australian Taxation Office. Organisational records may also be subpoenaed for a variety of legal requirements. The accurate and professional management of organisational records is therefore a significant matter of compliance and sustainability.

This policy outlines a records management process across the life cycle of EL & LAAS organisational records, encompassing both hard copy and electronic records. The life cycle of records can be characterised as follows:

1. Creation of records
2. Use and dissemination of records
3. Storage and maintenance of records
4. Long term management:
 - a. Disposal
 - b. Archiving

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Creation, Use and Site-Based Storage of Records

Records are produced on a daily basis by EL & LAAS staff. Records management at this level involves standard practices in line with the EL & LAAS Code of Conduct, Privacy and Confidentiality Policies.

Site-Based Records: Medium-Term Storage

Some records have specific retention schedules which must be adhered to for legal reasons (for example financial records), for funding compliance (eg Customer records and staff screening / qualification records) or which are useful to retain for operational purposes until they become outdated or redundant.

In instances where records are required to be stored for a medium-term period (ie between 1 and 7 years after regular use of the records have ceased) a management plan should be developed to maintain secure storage of records during the retention period and to undertake secure disposal in a timely fashion at the end of the retention period.

For operational records which are required to be retained for NDIS purposes (for example; Customer records and staff HR records), current records should be stored on server drives in the mandated folder structure with all non-current records stored in an archive folder on the server drive for a minimum seven years, as per current NDIS records management requirements.

- In the case of Customers, current records will include records relating to the current plan period. All records from previous plan periods should be stored in the Customer's archive folder in the H drive.
- In the case of staff, current records will include current screening and qualification records, current banking and personal details, and current / historical correspondence and leave request data. Lapsed screenings and qualifications should be stored in the staff member's archive folder on the G drive.

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Schedules for Archiving & Disposal

Financial records are required by Australian taxation law to be retained for seven years, after which it is suitable for such records to be securely disposed of.

Service records which have minimal personal information but which contain details of service provision with a financial aspect should be retained for seven years as they are financial records, and are then suitable to be disposed of after seven years.

All Customer / Client records should be retained permanently for the following reasons:

- To ensure capability of responding to subpoena requests on the records of a former or current client
- To enable provision of information to clients through Freedom of Information processes
- To follow government practices relating to the permanent storage of Aboriginal records for family link and native title considerations
- To follow government practices relating to the permanent storage of children's records for child protection and institutional abuse considerations

Site records relating to substantial development / maintenance, and any records pertaining to asbestos management should be permanently archived. Other site-based records should be managed on site at the discretion of management.

Employee and volunteer records should be permanently archived. Unsuccessful employment and volunteer application materials must be disposed of after the completion of recruitment processes.

Electronic records that are suitable for archiving may be stored in a manner to be determined by management.

Periodic disposal of records is recommended at the completion of each financial year (ie soon after June 30 each year).

Disposal of archived records must only be undertaken with permission from the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operations Officer

The General Manager Corporate Services will be responsible for overseeing archiving and records management processes.

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Archiving Procedure

Records that are being compiled for archiving should be prepared via the following guidelines:

1. Only documents produced by EL & LAAS should be archived.
2. Only one copy of each record is required.
3. Documents should be stored in manila folders – do not use plastic sleeves, Lever Arch folders or suspension files.
4. Folders should be clearly labelled with a short description of folder contents and the year(s) covered by the folder contents.

Documents will be stored in standard archive boxes. Boxes should not be filled to a weight greater than 16kg as per WHS considerations for manual handling of these boxes. Boxes should not be overfilled – a small gap should be retained in each box.

Each box of archived materials should be coded numerically and added to the EL / LAAS Archive Register.

Appropriate indications should be made regarding the confidentiality and access limitations on particular archive boxes, both physically on the boxes and in the details inserted into the Archive Register. Access to supplementary spreadsheets containing content of archive boxes should also be managed accordingly.

Once archive boxes are prepared and information has been recorded in the Register and supplementary spreadsheets (as required), the archive storage contractor may be contacted to facilitate secure offsite storage of records.

Archive Information Retrieval Procedure

Requests to search for and retrieve archived records should be directed to the General Manager Corporate Services. Searching will be facilitated by the content on the Archive Register and any supplementary spreadsheets detailing the contents of specific archive boxes.

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Documentation

Documents related to this policy	
Related documents	Q108 Privacy & Information Sharing Policy Q109 Customer Records Policy Q232 Confidentiality & Intellectual Property Policy P108 Privacy Procedure EL Archive Register