



Recordkeeping and Your Organisation

What are records and why should my organisation keep them?

Records provide evidence of what an organisation has done, and why. Making and keeping full and accurate records of business activities means that your organisation can account for its actions, meet legislative requirements, and make informed and consistent decisions. Records can be in any format, including hard copy files, letters, notes (including file notes and informal notes), emails, databases, photographs, text messages, and social media posts.

State and local government organisations in WA must comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 2000*, and related documents such as their Recordkeeping Plan. Non-government organisations should be aware of any relevant laws or policies requiring them to keep certain records.

What sort of records does my organisation need to keep?

Organisations should make and keep records of their business activities, transactions and decisions. A record should be made if a matter relates to the organisation's work, or may be required for future reference.

For a meeting or conversation, a record (file note) may need to be created manually. These notes should include details of the meeting or conversation, the matters discussed, any decisions or commitments made, and follow up actions.

How should my organisation manage its records?

Records should be managed in a designated system/s or register, so information can be kept together and be easily accessed.

An organisation's recordkeeping practices should be set out in formalised policies and procedures. These should cover activities such as: how records should be captured/filed, storage of hard copy or digital records, security and access, recovering records following a disaster, retention periods, and training for staff and volunteers.

How long do records need to be kept?

Records must be retained with consideration given to accountability and legal requirements, and business needs.

For government organisations in WA, records must **only** be disposed of by using a disposal authority that has been approved by the State Records Commission. Non-government organisations must be aware of any retention requirements in relevant law or policy.

More information: See also the [Recordkeeping Responsibilities and You](#) (government organisations only) and [Recordkeeping Basics](#) documents issued by the State Records Office.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017)

For further guidance on creating and keeping records of child sexual abuse cases or allegations, and other records that may be needed in future, see the document [Guidance for identifying and retaining records which may become relevant to an actual or alleged incident of child sexual abuse](#).

If you have other queries about recordkeeping, please contact the State Records Office of WA at sro@sro.wa.gov.au.