



Records disposal schedule

Records Disposal Schedule Early Childhood Education and Care Services Department of Education

Disposal Schedule No. 2017/5

February 2017

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Preamble

Introduction

The *Information Act* states that public sector organisations must safeguard their records and must not delete or otherwise dispose of a record unless authorised to do so¹. Disposal of records is permitted through the use of records disposal schedules and enable regular, planned and authorised disposal of records controlled by an agency.

Records retention decisions are based on:

- the current and future business needs of the organisation
- compliance with legal and governance requirements of the organisation
- the current and future needs of internal and external stakeholders, including the wider community.

Records disposal schedules provide continuing authorisation for the legal disposal of records and are authorised by the records service, archives service and chief executive officer of the public sector organisation responsible for the schedule.

Records disposal schedules apply to records created and maintained in any format, including electronic records, records in business systems, and parts of records.

In the Northern Territory government there are two types of records disposal schedules:

- General records disposal schedules that apply to records common to most or all NT Government public sector organisations (http://www.nretas.nt.gov.au/knowledge-and-history/ntas/records/records_disposal), and
- Functional records disposal schedules that apply to records specific to an NT Government public sector organisation or function.

Functional records disposal schedules should be used in conjunction with general records disposal schedules.

Structure of a Records Disposal Schedule

Records disposal schedules set out minimum requirements for the creation, maintenance, retention or destruction actions to be taken in relation to existing or future records described in each class. Records disposal schedules specify

- a) whether a class of record has temporary or permanent status;
- b) the retention period for a temporary class of record;
- c) authorised disposal actions for a class of record.²

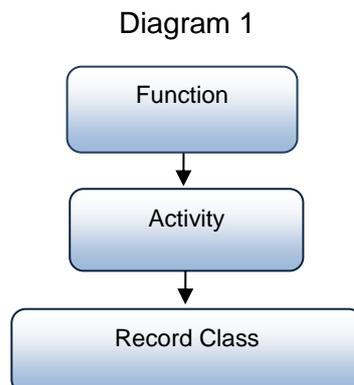
Each class of records created by an agency is described using classifications based on business analysis.

Disposal schedules are developed using the functional structure based on the business classification scheme of the *Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms* produced by the State Records Authority of NSW and modified for use by NT Government public sector organisations.

¹ S.145 *Information Act*

² S.136A(3) *Information Act*

Within the schedule, functions are documented as the highest level terms and business activities under the functions, followed by record classes, as shown in diagram 1.



Function

The function or keyword is the highest level in the classification scheme in this disposal schedule. The function is indicated at the start of each section and a description (scope note) provided.

Activity

Activities are the processes or operations that make up the business function. This is the second level in the classification scheme in this disposal schedule. The description (scope note) provides details of the transactions that take place in relation to the activity, for example, REPORTING or POLICY.

Record Class

A record class is a group of records that relate to the same activity, function or subject and require the same disposal action. The descriptions can relate to one record (such as a register) or a group of records documenting a particular set of business transactions.

Status and Disposal Action

The appraisal status of a record class is assigned as either permanent or temporary.

Permanent Records: Records appraised with permanent status have been identified as archives and must be transferred to the NT Archives Service for their preservation and eventual public access.

The retention period for permanent records is the maximum period before the records must be transferred to the NT Archives Service. Permanent records must be transferred no later than 30 years after creation in accordance with the Information Act, unless exemption has been granted (see Archives Management Standards Transfer of Archives, and Exemption from Compulsory Transfer of Permanent Records to the NT Archives Service). An Application to Transfer Records form must be submitted to the NT Archives Service before records will be accepted for transfer.

Temporary records: The retention period for temporary records is the minimum period before the records can legally be destroyed. The retention period is calculated after an event or a disposal trigger such as 'date of action completed', 'date of audit' or 'date of birth'. Destruction should be done following consultation with relevant operational business employees responsible for the records.

Retention periods for temporary records in a records disposal schedule are minimum periods only and agencies may keep records for a longer period if considered necessary for business requirements.

Reasons for longer retention could include,

- administrative need or agency directives,
- legal requirements such as current or pending legal action,
- relevance to an investigation or inquiry which is in progress,
- is subject to an Information Access application, or
- subject to a disposal freeze.

Records created prior to 1 July 1978 must not be disposed of without the authorisation of the NT Archives Service in accordance with Archives Management Standard Records Created Prior to 1978, unless specified in a schedule.

Sentence records with this records disposal schedule using the following five steps:

1. Determine the appropriate function and activity of the records. This can be done by examining an existing record or when creating a new record.
2. Identify the disposal class.
3. From the disposal action in the class, identify the trigger event and a date when the record can be disposed of, alternately, identify that the record is to be retained permanently as archives.
4. If the trigger event has already occurred (such as action is completed), confirm and implement the disposal action.
5. If the trigger event has not occurred (e.g. the record is still in active use), set a review date for the future.

About this Records Disposal Schedule

Purpose

The purpose of this Records Disposal Schedule is to enable regular, planned and authorised disposal of records of Early Childhood Education and Care Services of the Department of Education.

Scope

Application of this Records Disposal Schedule is mandatory for Early Childhood Education and Care Services records of the Department of Education.

This Records Disposal Schedule applies to Early Childhood Education and Care Services records in all formats.

Responsibility

The Chief Executive of the Department of Education is responsible for the content and implementation of this Records Disposal Schedule including the provision of advice and training, and for monitoring compliance.

Authority

This Records Disposal Schedule is authorised in accordance with S. 136B of the *Information Act*.

Disposal Schedule No. 2017/5 was approved by the Director of the NT Archives Service (The Archives Service), Senior Director, Digital Policy, Department of Corporate and Information Services (The Records Service), and the Chief Executive of the Department of Education on 20 February 2017 and is effective immediately.

Regulatory Framework

The regulatory basis for this Records Disposal Schedule is defined in:

- *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Information Act*
- NT Government Records Management Standards
- NT Government Archives Management Standards
- Australian Standards AS ISO 15489 Records Management

Related Documents

This Records Disposal Schedule is to be read in conjunction with:

- NT Government Records Management Standard – Records Disposal
- policies and procedures of the Department of Education current authorised disposal schedules for Department of Education

Normal Administrative Practice

Public sector organisations are permitted to dispose of some short term or ephemeral documents under the authority of the Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records. These include:

- duplicate (eg information or reference copy)
- obviously unimportant (e.g. telephone message slips)
- of short term facilitative value (e.g. compliment slips)
- a combination of these

The guiding principle is that organisations should be sure that destroying these records will not destroy evidence that might be needed.

Records that have been captured into a recordkeeping system should be destroyed using the Disposal Schedule for Short Term Value Records unless the class of records has been identified in a specific disposal schedule.

Notification of Destruction

Provide formal notification of destruction of all records to the NT Records Service.

Note: In the case of the Disposal Schedule for Records of Short Term Value (Disposal Schedule No. 2003/10), notification is only required for the destruction of records described in Disposal Class No. 1.10.1.

Acknowledgement

The NT Archives Service and the NT Records Service acknowledge that material produced by National Archives of Australia, State Records Authority of New South Wales, State Records of South Australia, Public Records Office of Victoria, Territory Records Office and Standards Australia was used in the development of this schedule.

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission of the NT Archives Service. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the Director, NT Archives Service. The terms in the business classification scheme are based on the Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms (Government of New South Wales, 1998), and are produced under a licence agreement between the NT Archives Service and the State Records Authority of New South Wales.

Compliance Checklist

- Implement a records disposal program to ensure regular appraisal, sentencing, destruction and transfer of all records
- Assign responsibility for the management and application of regular records disposal action using authorised records disposal schedules, to an appropriately skilled records manager who consults with the NT Archives Service and NT Records Service
- Familiarise all employees of the organisation with the authorised records disposal schedules relevant to the organisation's records
- Identify and sentence all records described in this schedule in all formats including electronic records and records in business systems, copies of records and parts of records
- Ensure all copies of temporary records are destroyed in any format (including backups), unless otherwise stated in a disposal schedule
- Apply this records disposal schedule to records in the organisation's records management systems, including systems for the management of paper records, electronic records, or records in any other format
- Apply this records disposal schedule to records in the organisation's business systems, either directly or by linking the business system to a records management system
- Implement quality assurance mechanisms to periodically check that the disposal class originally assigned at the creation of the records is still applicable at the time of sentencing of the record
- Implement review or quality control procedures in recordkeeping systems to ensure disposal actions are implemented correctly
- Identify records that require re-sentencing where a previous disposal schedule has been superseded
- Stop applying sentences from previous schedules that have been revoked or amended
- Retain all records in good order and condition to be available for retrieval during the retention period.
- Identify and update control records so that you can demonstrate what happened to each record, whether paper or electronic
- Implement an appropriate and approved strategy for retention of records of continuing value, eg. preservation in original form, migration to new systems, and conversion to long term medium
- Dispose of all records sentenced according to this schedule in all formats including electronic records and records in business systems, copies of records and parts of records
- Transfer records of permanent value to the NT Archives Service for retention as archives not later than 30 years after creation
- Inactive records can be transferred to offsite service providers providing they have been sentenced
- Destroy time expired temporary records in a secure manner that ensures complete deletion/destruction beyond any possible reconstruction
- Notify the NT Records Service of destruction of all records
- Do not destroy records that are not described in an authorised records disposal schedule.
- Do not destroy any records created prior to 1 July 1978 without specific authorisation from the NT Archives Service

Disposal Schedule

1. Early Childhood Education and Care Services

The function of ensuring high quality early childhood education and care services are accessible and meet the needs and circumstances of all NT children and their families.

Includes approving and monitoring early childhood education and care services, rating their quality of services, annual reporting, grant allocation, investigations into incidents and the provision of early year programs and policies.

1.1 Advice

The activities associated with offering opinions by or to the organisation as to an action or judgement. Includes the process of advising.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.1.1	Records documenting formal advice provided to and from the Minister, other government bodies and relevant industry stakeholders in relation to early education and care services, such as Early Childhood Australia. Includes ministerials and briefing notes.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.1.2	Records documenting advice provided to regulatory bodies with regards to new facilities and upgrades for early childhood and care service providers, such as the Development Consent Authority, NT Public Environmental Health, and NT Fire and Rescue Services.	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed
1.1.3	Records documenting routine advice provided to members of the community in relation to early education and care services, such as policies and procedures.	Temporary Destroy 3 years after action completed

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1.2 Agreements

The processes associated with the establishment, maintenance, review and negotiation of agreements. Includes formal agreements and /or exchange of letters between parties, as well as informal agreements.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.2.1	Records documenting the establishment, negotiation, maintenance and review of major agreements with other government bodies or industry stakeholders in relation to early childhood education and care services, such as National Partnership Agreements. Includes draft agreements, memoranda of understanding and related correspondence.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.2.2	Records documenting the establishment, negotiation, maintenance and review of minor agreements, such as with non-government organisations. Includes service level agreements and memoranda of understanding.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after expiry or termination of agreement

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1.3 Authorisation

The process of seeking and granting permission to undertake requested action.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.3.1	<p>Records documenting all applications for provider approvals and service approvals by the regulatory authority, including amendments, suspensions and cancellations.</p> <p>Includes applications, assessments, terms and conditions, supporting documentation and receipts of prescribed fees.</p> <p>May include suspensions of providers, including show cause notices, notices of death of an approved provider, approval of executors, representatives or guardians as approved providers. Furthermore, applications for approved service approvals for an education and care service, including refused applications, amended applications, notifications of transfers of service approvals, terms and conditions, copies of the service approval provided to the approved provider and receipts of annual fees.</p> <p>May include notices of changes to nominated supervisors, applications for service waivers, revoked service waivers, temporary waivers, applications for supervisor certificates, amended supervisor certificates, suspensions and cancellations of supervisor certificate.</p> <p>May also include reviewable decisions under an external review by the local court.</p>	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed</p>
1.3.2	<p>Records documenting applications for provider approvals and service approvals that have been refused by the regulatory authority</p> <p>Includes applications, assessments, supporting documentation and written notices of decisions, prescribed fees.</p>	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 10 years after action completed</p>

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1.3 Authorisation

The process of seeking and granting permission to undertake requested action.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
	May also include reviewable decisions under an external review by the local court.	
1.3.3	Records documenting delegations of functions and powers of the National Authority Board to the Regulatory Authority, CEO, or any other entity approved by the Ministerial Council.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.3.4	Records documenting the authorisation of authorised officers as required under the Act. Includes terms and conditions, may include returned identity cards.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after end of appointment

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1.4 Committees

The activities associated with the management of committees, sub committees, councils, forums working groups, boards and task forces (internal and external, private, community, local, state, national, international, etc.). Includes the committee's establishment, appointment of members, terms of reference, proceedings, minutes, reports, agendas etc.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.4.1	Records documenting the establishment of the Ratings Review Panel in accordance with the Act, including appointments of panel members appointed by the Board, and minutes and agendas.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.4.2	Records documenting high level committees including those established by the National Authority Board, such as the Quality and Consistency Committee, and the Communications Working Group. Includes reports to the Ministerial Council, agendas and minutes.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.4.3	Records documenting inter-departmental committees such as the Indigenous Early Childhood Parenting Reference Group and other working groups.	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed

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1.5 Compliance

The activities associated with complying with, or monitoring compliance with, mandatory or optional accountability, fiscal, legal, regulatory or quality standards or requirements. Includes compliance with legislation and with national and international standards.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.5.1	<p>Records documenting compliance and monitoring activities, such as preschools and early childhood services.</p> <p>Includes inspections, staff probity checks, evidence of qualifications, copies of policies and procedures, children attendance records, programming, parental authorisations, incidental accident notifications, notifications from the Department of Health and photographs.</p>	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 30 years after action completed</p>
1.5.2	<p>Records documenting the assessment and ratings of services under the National Quality Standard.</p> <p>Includes reports, instruments, extracts of documents, photographs, copies of quality improvement plans, applications for reassessment, related correspondence and other related documentation.</p>	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 10 years after action completed</p>

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1.6 Grant Allocation

The process of administering the provision of grants to other organisations.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.6.1	Records documenting the receipt of applications from non-government sources for grant funding by the organisation where the application was successful, such as the early childhood services subsidy, the long day care upgrade grant and the toy and equipment grant. Includes applications, notices of acceptance, acquittals and related correspondence.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after grant acquitted
1.6.2	Records documenting unsuccessful applications for grant funding by the organisation. Includes applications and notices.	Temporary Destroy 2 years after action completed
	Use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – ACCOUNTING for records documenting sponsorship to other organisations.	

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1.7 Implementation

The activities associated carrying out or putting into action, plans, policies, procedures or instructions, all of which could be internally or externally driven. Includes manual or automated databases, applications or systems, but excludes the installation of equipment. Also includes monitoring to ensure that the implementation goes according to schedule and that standards are met.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.7.1	Records documenting the implementation of policy and plans in relation to early education and care services. Includes project management plans, key direction statements and reports.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after action completed

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1.8 Investigations

The acts and processes involved in ascertaining facts by enquiry or examination.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.8.1	<p>Records documenting investigations into reports or complaints in relation to early childhood education and care services, such as where a child has sustained serious injury at a childcare facility.</p> <p>Includes investigation reports, ministerials, witness statements, extracts of documents, photos, file notes and other supporting documents.</p> <p>May include review applications, compliance directions and compliance notices issued by the Regulatory Authority, emergency action notices, court orders and prohibition orders.</p>	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed</p>
1.8.2	<p>Records documenting investigations undertaken by other agencies into complaints in relation to early childhood education and care services.</p> <p>Includes investigation reports, witness statements, extracts of documents, photos, file notes and other supporting documents.</p>	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 10 years after action completed</p>

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1.9 Policy

The activities associated with developing and establishing decisions, directions and precedents which act as a reference for future decision making, as the basis from which the organisation's operating procedures are determined.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.9.1	Master set of policies, standard operating procedures and guidelines in relation to early education and care services.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.9.2	Records documenting the development of policies, procedures and guidelines in relation to early education and care services. Includes draft versions, file notes, consultation notes and other related correspondence.	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed

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1.10 Program Management

The activities associated with the development and delivery of programs.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.10.1	Final versions of program documentation in relation early childhood education and care services, such as the Families as First Teachers Program. Includes management briefing reports, progress reports, training records, implementation plans, resources and materials and related correspondence.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.10.2	Records documenting draft versions of programs in relation to early childhood education and care services. Includes draft versions, research reports, consultation with other agencies, stakeholders and the community, correspondence and feedback.	Temporary Destroy 10 years after action completed
1.10.3	Records documenting the delivery of early childhood education and care services programs. Includes delivery plans, progress reports, file notes, minutes of meetings, statistics and other related correspondence.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after program superseded

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1.11 Project Management

The activities associated with the development and delivery of projects.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.11.1	Final versions of project documentation in relation early childhood education and care services, such as the early transition policy package. Includes management briefing reports, progress reports, training records, implementation plans, resources and materials and related correspondence.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.11.2	Records documenting draft versions of projects in relation to early education and care services. Includes draft versions, research reports, consultation with other agencies, stakeholders and the community, correspondence and feedback.	Temporary Destroy 10 years after action completed
1.11.3	Records documenting the delivery of early childhood education and care services projects. Includes delivery plans, progress reports, file notes, minutes of meetings, statistics and other related correspondence.	Temporary Destroy 7 years after program superseded

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1.12 Reporting

The processes associated with initiating or providing a formal response to a situation or request (either internal, external or as a requirement of corporate policies), and to provide formal statements or findings of the results of an examination or investigation. Includes agenda, briefing, business, discussion papers, proposals, reports, reviews and returns.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.12.1	Final versions of major reports, including annual reports by the Board of the National Authority to the Ministerial Council.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.12.2	Records documenting the development of major reports in relation to early childhood education and care services.	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed

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1.13 Research

The activities involved in enquiring into a subject or area of interest in order to discover facts, principles etc. Used to support the development of projects, standards, guidelines etc., and the business activities of the organisation in general. Includes following up enquiries relating to organisational programs, projects, working papers, literature searches etc.

Class No.	Description of Records	Status and Disposal Action
1.13.1	Final versions of research reports in relation to early childhood education and care services.	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.13.2	Research data, including surveys, reference material, consultation notes, questionnaires, statistics, ethic approvals, and other raw data. May include terms of references.	Temporary Destroy 25 years after action completed