



Records disposal schedule

Records Disposal Schedule Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention Department of Health

Disposal Schedule No. 2017/2

January 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, 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.

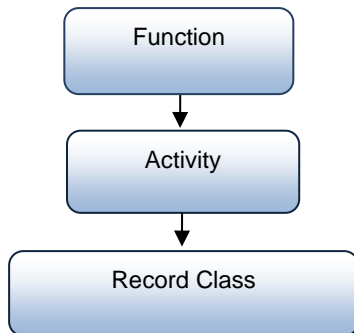
Disposal schedules are developed using the functional structure based on the business classification scheme of the *Keyword AAA: A Thesaurus of General Terms* produced by the State Records Authority of NSW and modified for use by NT Government public sector organisations.

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.

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 Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention of the Department of Health.

Scope

Application of this Records Disposal Schedule is mandatory for Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention records of the Department of Health.

This Records Disposal Schedule applies to Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention records in all formats.

Responsibility

The Chief Executive of the Department of Health 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. 2017/2 was approved by the Director of the NT Archives Service (The Archives Service), Senior Director, Digital Policy (The Records Service), and the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Health on 6 January 2017 and is effective immediately.

Regulatory Framework

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

- *Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Act*
- *Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Regulations*
- *Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention Act*
- *Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention 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 Health
- current authorised disposal schedules for Department of Health.

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	
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement a records disposal program to ensure regular appraisal, sentencing, destruction and transfer of all records	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop applying sentences from previous schedules that have been revoked or amended
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Retain all records in good order and condition to be available for retrieval during the retention period.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and update control records so that you can demonstrate what happened to each record, whether paper or electronic
<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarise all employees of the organisation with the authorised records disposal schedules relevant to the organisation's records	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all copies of temporary records are destroyed in any format (including backups), unless otherwise stated in a disposal schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer records of permanent value to the NT Archives Service for retention as archives not later than 30 years after creation
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Inactive records can be transferred to offsite service providers providing they have been sentenced
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Destroy time expired temporary records in a secure manner that ensures complete deletion/destruction beyond any possible reconstruction
<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Notify the NT Records Service of destruction of all records
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement review or quality control procedures in recordkeeping systems to ensure disposal actions are implemented correctly	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not destroy records that are not described in an authorised records disposal schedule.
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify records that require re-sentencing where a previous disposal schedule has been superseded	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not destroy any records created prior to 1 July 1978 without specific authorisation from the NT Archives Service

Disposal Schedule

1. Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention

The function of providing for the prevention of volatile substance abuse and the protection of individuals and communities from harm resulting from volatile substance abuse, includes approved management areas, appointments of assessors and authorised officers, assessment applications, guidelines and investigations into offences as required under the *Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention Act*.

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	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.1.1	Records documenting the provision of advice to and from the Minister in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention where a detailed response has been provided, such as legislative and policy amendments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major advice • Ministerial • Briefing notes 	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.1.2	Records documenting declarations of volatile substances by the Minister. Includes gazette notices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarations of volatile substances 	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.1.3	Records documenting routine advice to and from the community in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention, such as restricted products. Includes ministerials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine advice • Ministerials 	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed

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1.2 Authorisation

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

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.2.1	<p>Records documenting approved requests for an area to be declared by the Minister as a Management Area under the Act, including management plans, variations and amendments.</p> <p>Includes gazette notices, applications, management plans and supporting documentation.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings about the proposed management area, letters informing residents and other interested persons of the area of land described in the application, consultation notes and correspondence with the Commissioner of Police, the CEO of the agency and the relevant local authority.</p> <p>May include investigations conducted by the Minister.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approved Management Areas - Declared Management Areas 	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed</p>
1.2.2	<p>Records documenting applications for declarations of management areas under the Act that have not been approved by the Minister, including withdrawn applications.</p> <p>Includes applications and supporting documentation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management Areas – Not Approved 	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 7 years after action completed</p>

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

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.2.3	Records documenting approved employees, or a class of employee, to make assessment applications by the Minister. Includes gazette notices.	- Approved employees or classes – assessments	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.2.4	Records documenting delegations of powers and functions given to an employee by the Minister as required under the Act.	- Delegations of powers and functions to an employee	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.2.5	Records documenting delegations of powers and functions given to employees by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Health Officer, includes where the Commissioner of Police has delegated powers and functions to an employee under the Act.	- Delegations of Powers	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.2.6	Records documenting declarations of a place or premises, or class of place or premises, to be a place of safety to which	- Declared places/premises to be	Permanent

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Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
	an apprehended person may be taken as required under the Act by the Minister, such as sobering up shelters and women's shelters. Includes gazette notices.	safety	Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.2.7	Records documenting appointments of assessors as required under the Act by the Chief Health Officer. Includes copies of qualifications and experience.	- Appointments of Assessors	Temporary Destroy 7 years after appointment ends
1.2.8	Records documenting appointments of authorised persons under the Act to search, seize and dispose of volatile substance, or items used for inhaling these substances, including powers to apprehend without arrest. Includes terms and conditions, copies of qualifications and experience, criminal history checks and other supporting documentation. May include returned identity cards.	- Appointments of Authorised Persons	Temporary Destroy 7 years after appointment ends

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1.3 Clinical Services

The activities associated with providing medical observation and medical treatment of patients, including the use of materials and equipment for the purpose of caring for a sick person.

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.3.1	Records documenting clinical services provided to persons who have been mandated for treatment under the Act where they have been assessed as being at risk of severe harm. Includes memoranda, assessment reports, recommendations for treatment, letters to referrers, clinicians' assessments, treatment orders, affidavits and other related correspondence. May include warrants.	- Clinical Files – treatment	Temporary Destroy 25 years after date of last discharge
1.3.2	Records documenting assessment of persons believed to be at risk of severe harm where the assessor makes an assessment as required under the Act and treatment is not recommended. Includes applications and supporting documentation, assessment reports and written	- Clinical Files – no treatment	Temporary Destroy 15 years after action completed

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1.3 Clinical Services

The activities associated with providing medical observation and medical treatment of patients, including the use of materials and equipment for the purpose of caring for a sick person.

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
	<p>notifications to the assessment applicant.</p> <p>May include Treatment order applications, treatment plans, treatment warrants and court orders.</p>		
1.3.3	<p>Records documenting decisions by the assessor not to make an assessment of persons.</p> <p>Includes applications and supporting documentation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case files not assessed 	<p>Temporary</p> <p>Destroy 10 years after action completed</p>

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1.4 Control

The activities associated with creating, maintaining and evaluating control mechanisms.

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.4.1	Register of gazetted Areas or Plans declared by the Minister under the Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published register 	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.4.2	Register of Assessors and Authorised Officers under the Act. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal details - Terms - Functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessors / Authorised Officers list 	Temporary Destroy 7 years after last entry

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1.5 Procedures

Standard methods of operating laid down by an organisation according to formulated policy.

Class No.	Description of Records	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.5.1	Master set of procedures and guidelines in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention, such as standard operating procedures. May include gazette notices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessor Guidelines • Assessment Guidelines • Contractors Guide for Visiting Communities • Authorised Persons Guidelines 	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.5.2	Records documenting the development of procedures and guidelines in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention. Includes drafts and consultation notes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft guidelines and procedures 	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed

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1.6 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	Examples	Status and Disposal Action
1.6.1	Final reports in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final reports 	Permanent Transfer to the NT Archives Service 10 years after action completed
1.6.2	Records documenting the development of reports in relation to volatile substance abuse prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Versions of reports 	Temporary Destroy 5 years after action completed