

Mandatory Standard 2 – Disposal

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Introduction

Purpose

Mandatory Standard 2 – Disposal (the Standard) outlines the minimum mandatory requirements related to the disposal of public records.

Authority

When approved - This Standard was made by the State Archivist under section 46(1)(a) of the *Public Records Act 2023* (the Act) and was approved by the Governor-in-Council in the Public Records Regulation 2025.

The *proposed* date of effect of the Standard is 1 April 2026.

This Standard, as varied or amended from time to time, shall have effect for a period of ten (10) years from the date of issue unless revoked prior to that date.

Applicability

This Standard applies to all Queensland public authorities under section 8 of the Act.

Public authorities must comply with this Standard under section 12(a) of the Act.

Section 11 of the Act requires the chief executive of a public authority to ensure that the public authority complies with the requirements of the Act, including compliance with this Standard.

This Standard applies to all formats of public records, including digital and physical formats.

The Standard should be read in conjunction with the *Guideline for Mandatory Standard 2- Disposal*.

Implementation

Permanent value public records

Permanent value¹, in relation to a public record, means that having regard to any archives' appraisal statement –

- (a) The record has been identified for retention under a disposal authorisation; or
- (b) The record otherwise has enduring value and is appropriate for retention in the custody of the archives.

While disposal authorisations are issued by the State Archivist under section 20 of the Act, the Queensland State Archives (QSA) Appraisal Statement outlines criteria for identifying public records appropriate for retention in the custody of the archives.

¹ Permanent value is defined in Schedule 3 of the *Public Records Act 2023*.

The State Archivist sets the risk tolerance for permanent value public records. **The risk tolerance for permanent value public records is low.** For public authorities, this means prioritising the management of these records above others is required.

Temporary value public records

QSA recommends the adoption of a risk-based approach to records management. Implementation of this approach could follow your public authority's existing risk management processes.

When implementing this Standard, public authorities must consider value and risk. In conjunction with advice provided by QSA and the State Archivist, your public authority sets the risk tolerance for temporary value public records. This includes identifying:

- your public authority's high-value public records which are records that your business could not function without
- your public authority's high-risk public records which may include, but are not limited to:
 - those likely to be required in legal proceedings
 - highly confidential or highly classified material
 - those of potential value for sharing across government in response to high priority activities
 - commercially sensitive information
 - personal or sensitive information
 - culturally sensitive information that is information relating to Aboriginal law, Aboriginal tradition, Ailan Kastom or Torres Strait Islander law
 - legacy digital records where regular digital preservation processes have not been undertaken
 - those required to be kept long-term (more than 25 years) by your public authority, noting active management of digital public records is required from the point of creation.

Some public records may be both high-value and high-risk records.

Identifying your public authority's high-value and high-risk public records means effort and resources can be prioritised towards managing these records over low-value or low-risk records.

Further implementation advice is provided in the *Guideline for Mandatory Standard 2 – Disposal*.

Disposal

Requirement 1: Disposal is underpinned by appraisal.

This requirement is met when:

- 1.1 Public records are assessed to identify value of these records to the community, to the public authority that makes and keeps these records and, to the government of Queensland.
- 1.2 Public records are assessed to identify risk to records in relation to unlawful disposal, loss or damage, unauthorised use or over retention.
- 1.3 Immediately prior to disposal, public records are assessed to determine if any changes in value, circumstances or risk have occurred, and a decision is made and documented to demonstrate whether disposal should occur.

Requirement 2: Public records are retained for as long as they are required.

This requirement is met when:

- 2.1 Disposal of public records is undertaken in accordance with section 23 of the *Public Records Act 2023*.
- 2.2 All staff, contractors and volunteers, are aware of their obligations regarding the retention of public records for as long as they are required to meet business, legislative, accountability and community purposes.
- 2.3 Disposal of permanent value source public records is only undertaken in accordance with the conditions and/or exclusions set out in a disposal authorisation issued by the State Archivist for this purpose.

Requirement 3: Disposal is managed and accountable.

This requirement is met when:

- 3.1 Disposal of public records is documented and includes information about appraisal justifications for the disposal action.
- 3.2 When systems are decommissioned, appraisal of public records within the decommissioned system is considered and documented.

- 3.3 Disposal actions for public records are authorised by the Chief Executive of the public authority or their authorised delegate and the decision is documented.
- 3.4 Disposal requirements are identified and addressed in all outsourced, cloud, contracted and similar service arrangements.
- 3.5 The retention of any public record that has exceeded its minimum retention period by five years has been risk assessed and is reported internally via governance mechanisms.

Requirement 4: Disposal is complete and secure.

This requirement is met when:

- 4.1 Methods for destruction of public records are secure and appropriate to the format/medium. As far as reasonably practicable, methods of destruction are irreversible.
- 4.2 Duplicate digital records are managed in accordance with disposal authorisations.
- 4.3 Disposal of sensitive data does not compromise information security or information privacy.

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Appendix A

Definitions

Term	Definition
Accessible	The ability of authorised individuals to locate, retrieve and use records and information
Appraise	Evaluate the merit, significance or value of records and information
Availability	The degree to which records are accessible to authorised users when needed
Defensible	The requirements can be supported by logical argument or sufficient evidence
Digital by default	A principle that prioritises the creation and management of records in digital form as the primary and official version
Governance framework	A structured set of guidelines, policies and processes designed to ensure activities are conducted in a compliant manner and uphold the principles of accountability, transparency and integrity
Metadata	Structured or semi-structured descriptive information about a record that enables the management, use and preservation of records through time. It provides context such as creator, date, activity, and relationships.

Related Documents

- *Mandatory Standard 1 – Make and Keep*
- *Guideline for Mandatory Standard 1 - Make and Keep*
- *Mandatory Standard 2 – Disposal*
- *Guideline for Mandatory Standard 2- Disposal*

Document History

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