

CORPORATE POLICY



Policy Title: **Records Management Policy**
Policy Category: **Administration Policy**
Policy No.: A-005
Department: Corporate Services
Approval Date: July 15, 2013
Revision Date:
Author: Julie Scott, Records Management Coordinator
Attachments: Glossary of Records Management Terms
Related Documents/Legislation:
Municipal Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Retention By-Law, Email Records Management Policy
Key Word(s): Records, Management, Data

POLICY STATEMENT:

The City of Waterloo is committed to promoting and facilitating good management of its records throughout their life cycle in order to support accountable and effective government administration.

PURPOSE:

The policy outlines consistent standards and practices for the life cycle management of records in the care and custody of the City of Waterloo. Information contained in records is a critical corporate asset. The policy supports the proper management and maintenance of records which aids in organizational efficiency and decision making, assists in business continuity and litigation support, satisfies legislative and regulatory requirements, and serves as the City's corporate memory by preserving organizational and operational history.

DEFINITIONS:

Disposition – The final action taken upon the expiration of a record's retention period provided the record is not subject to a Record Hold.

Life cycle – The span of time from the creation or receipt of a record through its useful life to its final disposition or preservation as an archival record. Phases in a record's life cycle include creation/collection, maintenance and use, storage and retrieval, and retention and disposition.

Mandatory Policy, *Municipal Act*: No
Policy Administration Team, Review Date: May 21, 2013
Corporate Management Team, Review Date: June 12, 2013

Record – Information created, received and maintained as evidence and information in the transaction of business or the pursuance of legal obligations. A record may be recorded or stored in printed form, on film, by electronic means or otherwise, and includes correspondence, memorandums, handwritten notes/notebooks, books, plans, maps, drawings, diagrams, pictorial or graphic works, photographs, films, microfilms, sound recordings, videotapes, machine readable records, any other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and any copy thereof.

Record Hold – The process whereby records are identified for additional retention or transfer to legal counsel for review in the event of or in anticipation of an audit, investigation, litigation, order by another decision making body or other matter.

The Records Management Liaison Group - A staff team representing all departments, who actively support and promote the implementation and operation of the Records Management Program.

Records Retention Schedule – A timetable identifying the period of time after which disposition of a group/series of records not subject to a record hold is authorized as a matter of policy.

Transitory Records are records of temporary usefulness needed only for a short time, having no ongoing value beyond an immediate and minor transaction to complete a routine task, or to prepare a subsequent record. They do not contain information needed to support operations, make decisions or account for organizational activities, and they should be destroyed as soon as possible after use. This includes backup tapes and data files created for the purposes of system testing. Their retention and disposition are not governed by the Retention By-Law.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all records in the care and custody of the City of Waterloo, including those created or received in all departments, by volunteers or by the Mayor and Members of Council.

Note: Mayor and Councillor records are considered “personal” records where they are not related to the discharge of their responsibilities as a member of Council or where they are not in the custody or control of the City. This includes records commonly referred to as constituency records. Further guidance regarding records of the Mayor and Councillor is provided in publications available through the Information on Privacy Commissioner. Such records are not within the scope of this policy and are not subject to the custody or control of the City’s Records Management Program.

POLICY COMMUNICATION:

This policy will be made available to staff through the City Website and Intranet. It will be communicated to staff via regular updates and also through records management training coordinated as necessary for new and existing employees.

POLICY:

1. Records created/received and maintained by employees or volunteers are City property.
2. Departments, divisions and sections are responsible for managing records in their custody and control in accordance with the Retention By-Law and associated Policies or Procedures (Records Management Program).
3. The Legislative Services Division shall maintain primary responsibility for coordinating the Records Management Program and shall provide advice, assistance and training to staff and the Records Management Liaison group.
4. Records are subject to management throughout their life cycle according to the requirements of the Records Management Program.
5. Records may be identified for additional retention or transferred to legal counsel as part of a Records Hold Procedure.
6. Transitory records will be destroyed as soon as they have served the purpose for which they were collected, received or created. Transitory records may be destroyed at any time unless otherwise specified in the Retention By-Law or as required for the purposes of a Record Hold.
7. Electronic records shall be stored in the designated repository and shall be controlled and managed according to the Records Management Program. Access to the repository is designed to eliminate barriers to information sharing with the exception of folders containing confidential, sensitive, and legal or human resources information.
8. All employees, volunteers and Members of Council will manage records in accordance with this policy, related policies, and supporting procedures by performing such actions as, but not necessarily limited to:
 - o capturing or depositing records in designated repositories.
 - o retaining and disposing of records in accordance with the current version of the Retention By-Law.
 - o protecting records in their custody or control from loss, damage, alteration or unauthorized access.
 - o reducing the volume of paper records created by creating and managing records in an electronic format whenever possible.

- managing and/or retaining records subject to a Records Hold if/as required.

COMPLIANCE:

In cases of policy violation, the City may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.