
SECTION 5

RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

5.01 INTRODUCTION

AUTHORITY: *ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ACT*

ADMINISTRATION: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS
PUBLIC ARCHIVES AND RECORDS OFFICE

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 2023

5.01 INTRODUCTION

(1) PURPOSE

The purpose of this records and information management policy is to provide direction to public bodies with regard to the development, implementation, operation and maintenance of a standardized records and information management (RIM) program in order to ensure compliance with the *Archives and Records Act*.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- (a) give public bodies control over the information contained in records (regardless of format), by making it readily available for decision-making and recognizing it as a valuable resource;
- (b) assign responsibility for the various components of a RIM program;
- (c) ensure that required information is created, obtained, used and maintained effectively, and ensure timely access to reliable information for active, semi-active and inactive records;
- (d) ensure that records are properly protected, and are not destroyed or removed from the control of public bodies unless authorized by the *Archives and Records Act*;
- (e) ensure that records with archival value are preserved;
- (f) ensure that transitory, non-records, or records that have reached the end of their life cycle are destroyed in a timely, secure and environmentally sound manner, or transferred to archives when appropriate; and
- (g) reduce storage costs through use of off-site records storage facilities.

(2) APPLICATION

This policy applies to all public bodies defined by the *Archives and Records Act*. All employees of these public bodies, including Executive Council officials, volunteers, students, permanent, temporary or casual employees and individuals under contract must follow this policy.

Public bodies that develop supplemental records and information management policies and/or procedures differing from this policy require approval from the Public Archives and Records Office.

The spirit and intent of this policy should serve as a guideline for all other public bodies in developing their own policies.

(3) DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

- (a) **“Administrative records”** or “common records” are records which are common to all offices and that are distinct from operational records. Administrative records support functions such as the management of facilities, property, material, finance, personnel and information systems. Administrative records also relate to common management functions such as committee activities, agreement development, contract management, information services and obtaining legal opinions. Examples are personnel records, budgets, committee minutes, and facilities maintenance records.
- (b) **“Archival records”** are records of enduring historic value which have been selected for permanent preservation. In the provincial context, archival records are designated as such by the Public Archives and Records Office (PARO), through the appraisal process, for preservation in order to document administrative continuity, legal and proprietary rights of government institutions, to protect rights of individuals, as well as to facilitate government and public research. Archival records may be generated either by public bodies or by members of the public.
- (c) **“Classification Plan and Retention Schedules (CPRS)”** is the approved Government-wide standard for the classification, filing, retrieval and disposition of administrative or common records. The CPRS is a block-numeric system which reflects both function and subject. It provides the appropriate retentions for administrative/common records.
- (d) **“Employee”** includes Executive Council officials, volunteers, students, permanent, temporary or casual employees, and individuals under contract to a public body.
- (e) **“Final disposition (FD)”** is the final stage in the lifecycle of records. It refers to actions taken with regard to public records that are no longer needed for current Government business as determined by their appraisal, pursuant to legislation, regulation and administrative procedures. Disposition includes both destruction and transfer of records of historic value to the control and custody of the Public Archives and Records Office.
- (f) **“Litigation Representatives”** are employees, appointed by public bodies, to act as liaisons and supports for active litigation. PARO will request the appointment of Litigation Representatives on an as-needed basis when instructed to do so by Legal Services or outside legal counsel. Because not all public bodies may be party to the matter at issue, request will be specific to the requirements of the litigation. For example, tobacco representatives are appointed by public bodies affected by the Tobacco Legal Hold. Position duties will be provided by the requesting solicitor.

- (g) “**Operational records**” are records that relate to the unique operations and services provided by a public body in carrying out the functions for which it is responsible according to statute, mandate or policy. Operational records are distinct from administrative records or common records and are unique to each public body. Examples: Curriculum Planning records in the Department of Education and Early Years; Highway Maintenance records in the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure.
- (h) “**Provincial Archivist (PA)**” is the employee (or designate), appointed under the *Archives and Records Act*, responsible for ensuring that the intent and purposes of the Act are carried out. The PA is responsible for overseeing the functions of the Public Archives and Records Office.
- (i) “**Public Archives and Records Office (PARO)**” is the body designated by the *Archives and Records Act* to act as the provincial archives for the Government and the coordinator for the Government-wide records and information management program. The objects and functions of PARO are:
- (i) to acquire and preserve private and public records of provincial significance and to provide access to them;
 - (ii) to develop policies, standards, procedures and services for effective records and information management in Government;
 - (iii) to be the permanent repository of public records; and
 - (iv) to encourage and assist archival activities and the archival community.
- (j) “**Public body**”, means a body as defined by clause 1(1)(f) of the *Archives and Records Act*.
- (k) “**Public records**” are records created, received or maintained by a public body in the course of its activities, including court administration records. Public records can be in physical forms such as printed documents, photographs, and maps, or stored as electronic media, such as emails, information stored in databases, word-processing documents and spreadsheets.
- (l) “**Public Records Committee (PRC)**” is defined in subsection 13(1) of the *Archives and Records Act* as a committee consisting of the Provincial Archivist (Chair), the Clerk of Executive Council, the Deputy Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Deputy Attorney General or designate, the Deputy Minister of Finance or designate, and no more than two other persons appointed by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The *Archives and Records Act* gives authority to the PRC to approve all records retention and disposition schedules; review policies, procedures and legislation related to management of public records; provide advice on records and information management; and approve the issuance of directives by the Provincial Archivist.

- (m) **“Record”** means a record of information in any form, including electronic form, but does not include a mechanism or system of generating, sending, receiving, storing or otherwise processing information.
- (n) **“Records and Information Management (RIM)”** is a system of rules and procedures governing the creation, use, storage and disposition of all recorded information, regardless of format, within government. RIM addresses the lifecycle of records that is the time that records are in the custody of a public body. RIM provides various tools that help manage information from creation to final disposition. The management of information in records is based on principles and techniques to process, store, retrieve, manipulate and control access to information so that users can find what they need.
- (o) **“Records and Information Management (RIM) Designates”** are employees, appointed by public bodies, to have specific RIM responsibilities such as Senior Records Management Designate, a RIM Coordinator in those public bodies which do not have an assigned RIM Coordinator from the PARO, or a Tobacco Litigation Representative.
- (p) **“Records Analysts (RAs)”** are employees who assist in coordinating the ongoing development, implementation, and review of operational records retention and disposition schedules as well as maintaining and assisting in the government-wide implementation of the Classification Plan and Retention Schedules. These positions also provide supervision to the RIM Coordinators employed by the Public Archives and Records Office.
- (q) **“Records retention and disposition schedule”** is a document, identifying the records of an organization or administrative unit and specifying which records should be preserved permanently at archives and which can be destroyed after a certain period as obsolete or superseded. Retention and disposition schedules provide ongoing authorization for the transfer of records from offices to records centres along with the destruction of obsolete records and the preservation of archival materials.
- (r) **“Records and Information Management (RIM) Coordinators”** are employees who provide support, advice, guidance, and education to all levels of staff of public bodies to manage records and information in all formats, in accordance with the *Archives and Records Act*. Duties include the planning, promotion training, administration and maintenance of a records and information management program, as well as ensuring that procedures, standards and guidelines are followed.
- (s) **“Senior Records Management Designate (SRMD)”** is the public body’s senior support to the RIM Coordinator in the provision of RIM direction to the public body. The SRMD is accountable for ensuring the public body meets records and information management business objectives and legislated requirements.

(4) POLICY

The Government of Prince Edward Island recognizes the importance of managing its public records in order to meet its obligations as outlined in the *Archives and Records Act*. All public records are the property of the Government of the Province of Prince Edward Island. While records are in the active and semi-active stages of their lifecycle, responsibility for their control and custody is vested in departments, agencies, boards, commissions, corporations and reporting entities (herein called “public bodies”). Records which have reached the end of their life cycle are transferred to the custody and control of the PARO or are destroyed in accordance with approved records retention and disposition schedules.

(5) INTERPRETATION

In cases where an interpretation is required, such should be referred to the Public Archives and Records Office, who will make the interpretation, or refer the matter to the Secretary to Treasury Board to determine if a Treasury Board decision is deemed necessary.