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| Records management for organisations funded under the Service Agreement |
| Fact sheet 2: Storage |

Date: August 2020

This fact sheet is produced by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services in support of the Service Agreement and its requirements regarding recordkeeping. Information in this fact sheet is for general guidance only and references to contractual or legislative obligations are descriptive only. The Service Agreement and any applicable laws or legislation, including all standards and materials issued by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), take precedence over this fact sheet. The fact sheet does not constitute and must not be relied upon as legal or other professional advice. Each funded organisation should always obtain specific legal or other professional and recordkeeping advice[[1]](#footnote-1) tailored to its individual circumstances as needed. No liability is accepted by the department for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred because of reliance on this document.

# Storing records

When storing records, whether electronic or hard copy; physical devices and/or hardware used to store electronic records, organisations should ensure that:

* records are kept in consistent and appropriate conditions and are protected from known risks, degradation and unauthorised access
* all records containing client information are securely and appropriately stored when not in use and when the organisation is closed
* records are stored in locations where they can be easily identified, retrieved and used for authorised purposes
  + a routine maintenance program and disaster plan is in place[[2]](#footnote-2).

Records must be stored in a manner that enables funded organisations to identify, locate, view and read their records. Each funded organisation needs to:

* know what records it has
* be able to find and retrieve all records within an appropriate set time period
* be able to open and read a record at any point in its retention period and understand the contents; and
* be able to provide copies of records if requested.

# Storage of electronic files

Electronic records should be protected from interruptions, fluctuations or outages to power supplies and stored securely with appropriate back up and disaster recovery systems in place. The greatest level of care is to be taken for client-related records.

# Storage of hard copy files

Hard copy files should be stored in secure locations that are regularly maintained and cleaned, with pest management programs in place, and kept free from water, dampness and mould. They should be stored away from direct sunlight, heat and risk of fire.

PROV has a list of Approved Public Record Office Storage Suppliers (APROSS) if an organisation wishes to use a commercial storage provider. See <https://prov.vic.gov.au/recordkeeping-government/certified-suppliers-vendors/apross-for-agencies>

# Client records and CRISSP/IRIS

The Client Relationship Information System for Service Providers (CRISSP) provides a case management information system for funded organisations providing community care and disability services. CRISSP supports the provision of services and coordinated care to clients funded by the department and facilitates effective communication between funded organisations and the department about common clients.

A hard copy file may need to be created to store such things as handwritten notes or court reports if they are not kept in the electronic CRISSP file. A brief record should be entered on the CRISSP file for each record added to the hard copy file, such as the type of document, author and date received.

The Integrated Reports and Information System (IRIS) is used by agencies for simple case management and electronic referrals (between one IRIS application in a funded organisation to another IRIS application in another funded organisation) and supports data collection.

# Other client management systems

The department acknowledges that funded organisations may use other client management systems including off-the-shelf applications, and systems which are unique and solely supported by an organisation.

# Retention of client records

Records must be stored for the duration of their retention period, as specified by PROV Retention and Disposal Authorities (RDAs)*.*

Further information on retention and disposal is outlined in *Fact sheet 4: Record disposal and transfer* and the *Record retention guide for funded organisations*.

# Quick questions and answers

**What do I do with a medical file that is in hard copy as it has been received from an external body?**

Funded organisations need to ensure documents are kept and retained in a way that is accessible to the department and the client, if requested.

**My organisation has a client with a disability who has drawings and videos for their plan – what do I do with those?**

If you cannot scan the drawing and add it to a client management system or electronic recordkeeping system, then it will need to be kept in hard copy. Videos should be moved to DVD format[[3]](#footnote-3) and kept on hard copy files despite being bulky.

# Related documents

This fact sheet is produced by the Department of Health and Human Services as part of a set of fact sheets providing record related information to the sector.

*Fact sheet 1: General information on recordkeeping*

*Fact sheet 2: Storage*

*Fact sheet 3: Access and security*

*Fact sheet 4: Record disposal and transfer*

*Fact sheet 5: Freedom of information and funded organisation records*

*Fact sheet 6: Digitisation*

*Factsheet 7: Managing records pre and post transition to NDIS*

*Guideline: Archiving disability records*

*Checklist for the transfer of records to DHHS (editable)*

*Record retention guide for organisations funded under the Service agreement*

*Records description list*

Available at: [*https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/policies-and-procedures*](https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/policies-and-procedures)

# Sources of information

For more detail on records storage refer to the PROV Standard PROS 11/01 Storage Standard, associated Specifications and Training Materials, which are available on the PROV website - *http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/standards-and-policy/all-documents/pros-11/01*

For general advice relating to retention periods of records, go to *http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/disposal-and-transfer/retention-and-disposal-authorities*

Funded organisations utilising cloud storage solutions should refer to:

* PROV Cloud Computing Policy - <https://prov.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2016-05/Cloud_Computing_Policy.pdf>
* PROV Cloud Computing Guideline 1*:* Cloud Computing Decision Making - <https://prov.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2016-05/Cloud_Computing_Guideline_1.pdf>

PROV Cloud Computing Guideline 2:Cloud Computing Tools *-*  <https://prov.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2016-05/Cloud_Computing_Guideline_2.pdf>

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1. A list of Records Management professionals can be found on the [Australian Society of Archivists](https://www.archivists.org.au/community/consultants-register) website. The records management unit at the department can be contacted by emailing [RecordsServiceCentre](mailto:RecordsService.Centre@dhhs.vic.gov.au) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. If the organisation knows it will be going out of business, merging, being acquired or closing down, for whatever reason, email the DHHS [RecordsServiceCentre](mailto:RecordsService.Centre@dhhs.vic.gov.au) or call on 1300 344 727. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ensure appropriate software and hardware needed to access the information and records stored on them (e.g. 8 or 51/4 inch floppy disk, CD/DVD player) is available. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)