



**Australian Government**

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**National Archives of Australia**

**Records Authority  
2023/00654800**

**Child, Family and Elder Protection  
Policy and Programs**

Attorney-General's Department

2023



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## INTRODUCTION

The Attorney-General's Department (the Department) and the National Archives of Australia have developed this records authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying records for the core business of Child, Family and Elder Protection Policy and Programs. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Department to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the Department. It takes into account the agency's legal and organisational information management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, the agency and the National Archives.

The authority sets out those records that need to be retained as national archives and specifies the minimum length of time that temporary records need to be kept. This authority gives the Department permission under the *Archives Act 1983*, for the destruction of the temporary records described after the minimum retention period has expired. Retention periods for these temporary records are based on an assessment of business needs; broader organisational accountability requirements; and community expectations, and are approved by the National Archives on the basis of information provided by the agency.

As changes in circumstances may affect future information management requirements, the periodic review of this authority is recommended. All amendments must be approved by the National Archives.

## APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This authority is part of a suite of records authorities that supersedes RA 2002/04572652. The superseded records authority cannot be used by the Department to sentence records after the date of issue of this authority.
2. This authority is to be used to determine how long records must be kept. Records are matched to the relevant core business and records class in the authority.
  - a. Where the minimum retention period has expired, and the records are not needed for Department business they should be destroyed as authorised in this authority.
  - b. Records that have not reached the minimum retention period must be kept until they do.
  - c. Records that are identified as 'retain as national archives' are to be transferred to the National Archives for preservation.
3. This authority should be used in conjunction with general records authorities such as:
  - a. [Administrative Functions Disposal Authority \(AFDA\) Express Version 2](#) issued by the National Archives to cover business processes and records common to Australian Government agencies; and
  - b. [General Records Authority 31 - Destruction of source or original records after digitisation, conversion or migration](#).
4. The normal administrative practice (NAP) provision of the *Archives Act 1983* gives agencies permission to destroy certain records without formal authorisation. This usually occurs where records are duplicated, facilitative or for short-term use only. NAP does not replace arrangements agreed to in this authority but can be used as a tool to assist in identifying records for destruction together with an agency's records authority or authorities, and with *AFDA Express Version 2*. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a NAP policy. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop a NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
5. Records that are reasonably likely to be needed as evidence in a current or future judicial proceeding or are subject to a request for access under the *Archives Act 1983*, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* or any other relevant act must not be destroyed until the action has been completed.

6. Records subject to a disposal freeze must not be destroyed until the freeze has been lifted. Further information about disposal freezes and whether they affect the application of this authority is available from the National Archives website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
7. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from an analogue system to a digital system, or when information is migrated from one system to a new system) this authority can still be applied, providing the records document the same core business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this authority. The Department will need to maintain continuing access to the information, including digital information, for the periods prescribed in this records authority or until the information is transferred into the custody of the National Archives.
8. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The Department may extend minimum retention periods if it considers that there is an administrative need to do so, without further reference to the National Archives. Where the Department believes that its accountability will be substantially compromised because a retention period or periods are not adequate, it should contact the National Archives for review of the retention period.
9. Records identified as 'retain as national archives' class in this authority have been determined to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*. The determination of Commonwealth records as archival resources of the Commonwealth obliges agencies to transfer the records to the National Archives when they cease to be current and, in any event, within 15 years of the records coming into existence, under section 27 of the *Archives Act 1983*.
10. Records in the care of agencies should be appropriately stored, managed and preserved. Agencies need to meet this obligation to ensure that the records remain authentic and accessible over time. Under Section 31 of the *Archives Act 1983*, access arrangements are required for records that become available for public access including those records that remain in agency custody.
11. Appropriate arrangements should be made with the National Archives when records are to be transferred into custody. The National Archives accepts for transfer only those records designated as national archives. Records created digitally after 1 January 2016 can be transferred in digital formats only.
12. Advice on how to use this authority is available from the Department information manager. If there are problems with the application of the authority that cannot be resolved, please contact the National Archives.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with this authority or for advice on other information management matters, please contact National Archives' [Agency Service Centre](#).

# AUTHORISATION

Records Authority 2023/00654800

## Notice of authorisation

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Katherine Jones PSM  
Secretary  
Attorney-General's Department  
Robert Garran Offices  
3-5 National Circuit  
BARTON ACT 2600

## Purpose

Authorises arrangements for the disposal of records in accordance with section 24(2)(b) of the *Archives Act 1983*.

Determines records classed as 'retain as national archives' in this records authority to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*.

## Application

All records relating to Child, Family and Elder Protection Policy and Programs.

## Authority

This authority gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. This authority will apply only with the consent of the agency currently responsible for the business documented in the records described.

This document has been authorised through a digital workflow R1224372023.

<b>Authorising Officer</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>
Celia Blake  Assistant Director-General, Collection Management (a/g) National Archives of Australia	22 December 2023

## **CHILD, FAMILY AND ELDER PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAMS**

The function of developing, coordinating, delivering, reviewing, and evaluating legislative frameworks, policies, strategies and programs to protect, improve the safety of, and prevent harm to children, families and elders, including protection from child sexual abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse.

The **core activities** include:

- developing and implementing policies, frameworks, strategies, principles and guidelines;
- leading and facilitating whole-of-government, cross-agency and cross-jurisdiction policy and program development, reforms, reviews, consultation, coordination and cooperation, including the involvement of non-government organisations and law enforcement agencies;
- facilitating, monitoring and coordinating research, data sharing and reporting on child, family and elder protection and safety issues, initiatives and programs; and
- publicising and raising awareness of child, family and elder protection and safety issues, initiatives and outcomes.

The performance of the function is supported by **general activities** such as:

- identifying and progressing emerging and ongoing issues;
- developing, researching and drafting information products such as newsletters, guidelines, educational materials and websites;
- establishing, managing and participating in committees, working groups and meetings;
- consulting with stakeholders;
- establishing and managing agreements, contracts and partnerships;
- providing and administering funding;
- undertaking research and analysis;
- planning and reporting;
- evaluating and reviewing;
- managing risks;
- planning, conducting and facilitating audits; and
- managing business systems which support the function.

Note: The Attorney-General's Department does not deal with any matters relating to individual cases of child sexual abuse, domestic violence or elder abuse.

### ***Cross References to other Attorney-General's Department records authorities***

*For family law policies and programs that affect families, elder Australians and children but are not specifically directed to their safety or protection, use LEGAL AND INTEGRITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.*

### ***Cross References to other records authorities***

*For formal advisory bodies established to provide independent advice to the Minister, government and the Department, such as the National Strategy Advisory Group and National Clinical Reference Group, use General Records Authority 26 – ADVISORY BODIES.*

*For the provision and administration of grant funding, where recipients are required to act in accordance with specified terms or conditions for the funding received, use General Records Authority 28 - GRANTS MANAGEMENT.*

### ***Cross references to AFDA Express Version 2***

*For providing and receiving advice, including advice provided to Cabinet, the portfolio Minister and other government agencies, including providing advice on the appointment, reappointment or*

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*termination of individuals to boards, committees and statutory positions administered by the Department, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For making formal proposals and submissions, including to national and international bodies and forums, governments, Cabinet, the portfolio Minister, agencies and other organisations, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For preparing and providing advice and briefs to a Minister, government or incoming government, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For final versions of speeches presented by portfolio Ministers, members of the Government, agency heads, members of advisory bodies, and senior agency staff, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.*

*For developing proposals for new legislation and amendments to existing legislation administered by the agency, including submissions prepared for the agency's executive or corporate management committee, use STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.*

*For the production and distribution of publications, including public websites, except for researching, drafting and editing publication content, use PUBLICATION.*

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
63131	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development, coordination, implementation, review and evaluation of national, cross-agency or cross-jurisdiction policies and programs to promote child, family and elder safety and to prevent harm to children, families and elders such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonwealth Child Safe Framework;</li> <li>• National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse;</li> <li>• National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• protection from online harms, including online child sexual abuse;</li> <li>• effectiveness of legislation and remedies for victims;</li> <li>• national approaches to coercive control; and</li> <li>• National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.</li> </ul> <p>Includes research, major drafts and final versions, consultation and stakeholder engagement records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development and launch of major information, educational and awareness raising campaigns, initiatives or products such as guidance material for child services providers;</li> <li>• high level agreements or memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with stakeholders, which establish significant partnerships or other cooperative arrangements other than grants,</li> </ul>	Retain as national archives



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	<p>including international programs such as the Indo-Pacific Child Protection Program. Includes records of negotiation, major drafts and agreement execution;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high level internal and external committees, working groups and other bodies providing consultation and stakeholder engagement, where the Department provides leadership and secretariat, such as the Family Violence Working Group. Includes records of establishment and membership, minutes, agenda items and supporting documents such as reports and discussion papers;</li> <li>• facilitation, monitoring, commissioning and coordinating research, data sharing and reporting on existing and emerging issues, initiatives and programs, such as National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing Between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protection Systems;</li> <li>• high level reports, studies and publications related to this function, such as progress reports for the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse; and</li> <li>• master statistical collections and datasets showing long-term trends.</li> </ul>	
63133	Records documenting the receipt and referral to other agencies of ad hoc disclosures and allegations of child sexual abuse.	Destroy 45 years after action completed
63132	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and</li> <li>• child, family and elder protection policy and programs activities, other than those covered in 63131 and 63133.</li> </ul>	Destroy 7 years after action completed