

Record Management and Storage

State Records Office of Western Australia

Effective record-keeping is essential for an Association to have efficient management. Records not only document the history of the Association, they are extremely useful for assessing, planning and monitoring for future decision making.

It is a legal requirement that all records of the Association kept by an Office Bearer are handed over to their successor within a reasonable time frame (WACSSO recommends no longer than 2 weeks). Please see the P&C Handover Guide.

Records of the P&C include the Constitution, Certificate of Incorporation, Register of Members, Office Bearer register, Minutes, Correspondence, Financial documents and Employment Records. Books and documents may be inspected by any financial or *ex-officio* member of the Association on conditions set by the P&C Executive Committee.

Constitution and Certificate of Incorporation

All Associations must be incorporated and the Constitution is your Association's governing document. It is integral to your organisation. If you do not have a copy of your Constitution or Certificate of Incorporation please contact the WACSSO Office.

Register of Members and Record of Office Holders

It is a constitutional requirement that a register of members and office bearers be maintained. This register must be kept in perpetuity (forever). It should only contain:

- member's name
- date of joining
- email address OR residential address or PO Box address
- Office Bearer or Executive position on P&C
- membership type (financial or *ex officio*)

Minutes

Minutes of all meetings must provide:

- an official record of attendance
- business discussed
- correspondence received
- reports tabled
- decisions made
- resolutions adopted

For each resolution, the minutes should clearly state what the decision was, who will be responsible for its implementation and when, if the decision is to be reviewed (when and by whom) and who should be informed of the decision and how. In order to access resolutions if required, a resolution register is highly recommended. Agendas/ Notices of meetings should also be kept with the minutes showing date of issue in case of later dispute.

The Minutes of the Association must be kept in perpetuity (P&C Constitution Rule 20.2).

Correspondence

The Correspondence of the Association should be noted in the minutes and is required to be retained for 12 months (P&C Constitution Rule 20.3).

Financial & Employment Records

Financial Records

Each Association must keep accurate financial records which explain each financial transaction and the financial position of the Association. This is a P&C constitutional requirement as well as being required by the *Association Incorporations Act 2015*. The year to date information should be reported to each P&C meeting and be properly audited at the end of each financial year. The audited records must be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

It is the decision of the Association as to how it organises its accounts. This will vary depending upon the size and complexity of the Association's financial situation.

- Financial records will include:
- cash payment books (either hard copy or electronic)
- cash receipt books
- GST tax invoices and tax records
- employment records (see below)
- bank reconciliation statements
- other relevant financial documents

Financial records must be retained for a period of 7 years (P&C Constitution Rule 20.4).

Employment Records

It is a legal requirement that all employers keep time and wages records showing that each employee has been paid correctly and received their full entitlements. Such records are also necessary for tax and superannuation purposes.

It is compulsory to keep records for all employees detailing:

- employee's name
- date of birth if under 21 years of age
- date the employment started
- total number of hours worked each week
- the gross and net amounts paid to the employee
- all pay deductions and the reasons for them
- all leave taken, whether paid, partly paid or unpaid
- all information required to calculate long service leave entitlements and payment

NOTE: For additional information about what employers are required to record for employees covered by a WA award, please refer to the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety website: www.commerce.wa.gov.au/labour-relations.

For employers whose employees are covered by a national award, please refer to the Fair Work Ombudsman website: www.fairwork.gov.au

Other employment records would include records of all job descriptions, selection criteria, related industrial agreements, past advertisements and job position evaluations, employee performance and position review, grievances, staff training and professional development; or records relating to individual conditions of employment, changes or requests.

All employment records must be stored for 7 years after an employee ceases employment, i.e. the records for the employee's entire employment history have to be kept for 7 years after they leave (P&C Constitution Rule 20.5). This is a requirement of the *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993 (WA)*.

Record Format

Records can exist as a physical record or an electronic record. Whichever record keeping system an Association chooses to adopt, it should be functional, accurate, reliable and user-friendly. *Please consider the following:*

- the nature of information to be stored and retrieved
- the security and access of files and information (particularly computer records)
- the validity and reliability of the information collected and the system on which it is recorded
- the resources and training required
- the length of time that the records should be kept

Special consideration is required for the electronic storage of records. Electronic records include:

- document files
- databases
- spreadsheets
- electronic mail
- Internet documents

Electronic records should have an appropriate security system to prevent original documents from being altered. Electronic records must also be managed so that they remain accessible. With the advancement of technology, archived documents should be regularly copied onto up-to-date devices to ensure reliability and usability of records.

WACSSO recommends that Associations have electronic records that follow the above recommendations.

Storage of Hard Copy Records

All records are the property of the P&C and therefore should be stored within the school grounds, convenient for both School and P&C. It is very important for documents to be stored in safe, secure and appropriate facilities.

Storage facilities should:

- be conveniently located to the user
- comply with occupational health and safety standards
- comply with building standards
- have secure and controlled access
- be appropriate for the kinds of documents to be stored
- facilitate easy access and retrieval
- have containers that are suitable, durable and appropriate for the kinds of documents
- protect documents from disasters (e.g. fire) and deterioration (e.g. by excluding direct sunlight)

Storage of Online Records

- Just as hard-copy files at the property of the P&C, so too are digital files. It is important that the P&C has secure, robust processes for storing and maintaining online data.
- Access to electronic files is important, particularly for Office Bearers. P&Cs need to set up simple and effective methods of handing over access to electronic files if there is a change in membership on the Executive.

Simple tips:

- Consider generic email addresses (e.g. perthschoolpcpresident@gmail.com) as these are easier to manage and handover at the end of an individual's term.
- Decide on an organisation system for files that makes sense to all Executive members
- Establish a system for version control
- Manage leadership-only or confidential files (if applicable) by using permissions or encryptions as needed
- Ensure that your records meet any legislative requirements (eg by the ATO or for staff files)

Destroying and Archiving Records

No record should be destroyed without the appropriate authorisation. Appropriate motions must be voted upon at a general meeting of the Association. Records that have been kept for the required length of time, must be destroyed confidentially, i.e. shredded. An Association should have a policy on archiving and destroying records.

Records that must be kept permanently must be archived and must not be destroyed. Records that have permanent value are historical documents, minutes of meetings and legal documents.

In the event that a school closes, the properly collated records of the dissolved P&C should be forwarded to an appropriate organisation such as the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc. (WACSSO) or the Western Australian State Library.

For further information please contact:

The WACSSO Office on Ph: 6210 0100
or E: info@wacssso.wa.edu.au

NOTE: This guideline was formulated using information provided by INC. A Guide for Incorporated Associations in Western Australia. Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (September 2017).