



Records and Information Management

Purpose

The Guelph Public Library (GPL) recognizes the importance of organizing and retaining business and personal records according to standards that ensure ease of retrieval while maintaining appropriate levels of security and confidentiality. The Library will ensure access to accurate, authentic and reliable records in all formats, including electronic, to meet legislated requirements, support the effective management and work of the Library, and/or to record the history of the Library.

Responsibilities

The CEO or designate is responsible for the administration of the Library's records management program in accordance with the approval authority provisions of the Guelph Public Library Board.

Authorized Supervisors/Managers will act for the Library in the management of Library records in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.

The Library Board authorizes the CEO to establish a Records Retention Schedule, procedures, and practices required to enact the policy.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Library Board Members, Employees, and Volunteers
- All records, in all formats, created or received while carrying out Library roles and employment/volunteer-related responsibilities
- All records, in all formats, created during off-site outreach or research
- All records, in all formats, documenting policy and program decisions or records that have archival or evidential importance to the Library

This policy does not apply to:

- Items in the Library's materials collection acquired for use by the public.

1 Definitions

1.1 Active Record

Records that are retained in the library and are required for the day-to-day business of the library.

1.2 Disposal/Disposition

The decision regarding retention after a record is no longer considered active (i.e. retained as permanent or destroyed).

1.3 Destruction/Destroy

Eliminate permanently (e.g. through shredding) a record within a record series at a time indicated on the records retention schedule.

1.4 Permanent/Historical Record

Records determined to have a long-term value to the library in terms of recording its corporate, service, and cultural history. They are maintained for a variety of reasons, including documentation of the establishment of the Board as an entity, its policies, key historical events and milestones, and the evolution of the library system.

1.5 Record

Recorded information in any format and includes, but is not limited to, documents, business records, financial statements, personnel files, minutes, accounts, correspondence, memoranda, plans, maps, drawings, photographs, and films.

1.6 Record Series

Documents arranged in accordance with a filing system or kept together because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, document a specific kind of transaction, take a particular physical form, or have some other defined commonality.

1.7 Records Retention Schedule

A description of the record series that are being managed, how long they need to be retained, and what their final disposition will be based on legal, business, and historical requirements.

1.8 Transitory Record

Any record that has temporary usefulness and is not required to meet legislated requirements, establish guidelines and procedures, set policy, certify a transaction, become a receipt, or provide evidence of legal, financial, operational, or other decisions of the library. Examples of such records include duplicate copies, working documents, and notes from a meeting for which the reports and minutes have been finalized or adopted.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Guelph Public Library will maintain and apply records management practices and procedures which ensure that records in the custody of the Library are:
- a. Available and accessible to support strategic and operational business decisions and Freedom of Information requests as described in the *Privacy Policy*
 - b. Held in an efficient, cost-effective, and coordinated manner
 - c. Secured and properly protected
 - d. Available to support the business recovery process
 - e. Retained as Active Records as long as required
 - f. Disposed of in accordance with established retention schedules.
- 2.2 This policy establishes record definitions and a schedule of the minimum retention periods during which records must be kept by the Guelph Public Library. This policy and Records Retention Schedule will meet and be consistent with legislated requirements and professional standards including, but not limited to, the *Municipal Act 2001*, the *Public Libraries Act*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, the *Employment Standards Act*, and Canada Revenue Agency regulations.
- 2.3 All Records in the custody and control of the Library, regardless of the medium, are the property of the Library, are managed as corporate resources, and will be retained and preserved in a manner recognizing that Library Records are important corporate assets.
- 2.4 All Records are organized to facilitate access by those who require it through the proper and coordinated management of Active and non-Active Records, subject to legal and policy restraints.

3 Record Retention and Disposition

- 3.1 Transitory Records, unless they have become necessary for legal purposes or as otherwise provided for by law, will not be retained and may be destroyed at any time beyond their usefulness.
- 3.2 Active Records will not be retained beyond the retention period without a valid reason.
- 3.3 Records are disposed of in accordance with the approved Records Retention Schedule (Appendix A).
- 3.4 Records Retention Schedules and Disposition will be consistent across all media.
- 3.5 Where Records must be retained for pending tax audits or legal issues, the Records Retention Schedule is not changed for the entire Record Series, but only for those Records that are required for audit or legal purposes.
- 3.6 When Records are reviewed for Disposition, Records considered historical in content may be appraised by the Archivist at the GPL and retained in the Archives.
- 3.7 The Destruction of Records will be done in a secure manner, mindful of confidentiality requirements.

4 Storage

- 4.1 Inactive records will be held in a safe and secure location, with reasonable accessibility, by authorized Library Employees.
- 4.2 Storage practices will support the cost-effective use of office space, computer server space and storage facilities.
- 4.3 All records will be clearly labeled and marked and, to ease retrieval, no document shall be created without the appropriate file name chosen and indicated at the bottom of the document.
- 4.4 Records shall be stored in such a manner to minimize the risk of loss or destruction due to flood, fire, etc.
- 4.5 The CEO shall ensure that records are stored in a manner that provides access only to those in charge of the records.
- 4.6 In responding to requests to examine records, employees must observe the library's standards of confidentiality and accessibility.

5 Historical Records

5.1 Historical records are maintained for a variety of reasons:

- a. To document the establishment of the Board as an entity (e.g., minutes of meetings and by-laws)
- b. To capture the Library's policies
- c. To document key historical events and milestones
- d. To document the evolution of the Library system and the City of Guelph.

5.2 When reviewing records for transfer or disposition, records designated as historical should be reviewed as part of an entire file or series of files to determine if the context of the information needs to be maintained.

6 Related Documents

[Municipal Act, 2001](#) sections 253-255

[Privacy Policy, OP-03](#)