



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Records Authority

2021/00131255

Department of Health

*Amendments to Health Protection and Health
Emergencies*

2021



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY	4
CONTACT INFORMATION	5
AUTHORISATION	6
HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES	7

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health 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 area of Health Protection and Health Emergencies. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the agency to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the agency. 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 agency 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 contains amendments to records authority 2018/00145234 for the Department of Health and should be used in conjunction with it. The amendments consist of the addition of two new temporary classes.
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.
 - Where the minimum retention period has expired and the records are not needed for the agency's business they should be destroyed as authorised in this authority.
 - Records that have not reached the minimum retention period must be kept until they do.
 - 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:
 - the 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
 - General Records Authority (31) - Destruction of source or original records after digitisation, conversion or migration (2015).
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 and AFDA Express. 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.
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.
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 agency 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 agency 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 agency 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 coming within 'retain as national archives' classes 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 agency's 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 2021/00131255

Notice of authorisation

Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:

Dr Brendan Murphy
Secretary
Department of Health
Scarborough House
1 Atlantic Street
Woden ACT 2606

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

Amendments to Health Protection and Health Emergencies.

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 (R381612021).

Authorising Officer



Jason McGuire
A/g Assistant Director-General, Government Data & Policy
National Archives of Australia

Date of issue

11 May 2021

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

The core business of protecting the health of the Australian community through effective national leadership and coordination, and building appropriate capacity to detect, prevent, respond to and manage threats to public health and safety, as well as health emergencies in Australia and overseas (likely to affect Australians).

The **core activities** include:

- receiving and providing advice and other forms of information to internal and external stakeholders, including through formal submissions and briefing sessions, relating to health protection matters or health emergencies;
- negotiating, establishing, reviewing and managing national and international agreements, including joint ventures with private sector organisations and other government agencies, to support health protection and health emergencies;
- managing the national medical stockpile (ie a strategic reserve of drugs, vaccines, antidotes and protective equipment for use in the national response to a public health emergency), including acquiring, procuring, maintaining, deploying, and disposing of items;
- responding to and managing health emergencies in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians), and activating the National Incident Room to ensure a nationally consistent and coordinated response to these health emergencies;
- conducting surveillance and monitoring of health events and health emergencies (eg outbreaks or occurrences of communicable diseases, clinical syndromes, biosecurity issues, or major disasters) in Australia or overseas (likely to affect Australians). Includes data collection;
- authorising 'human biosecurity officers' through legislative instruments of appointment;
- developing, implementing and reviewing policies, strategies, standards, plans, procedures, guidelines and programs to protect the health of Australians and to respond to health emergencies, threats, and crises;
- evaluating health protection events of national or international significance (eg national exercises and pre-prepared events) and the outcomes of health emergencies; and
- internal and external reporting, including reports on clinical syndromes, communicable diseases, biosecurity matters and health emergencies.

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

- preparing and presenting addresses and speeches;
- planning, conducting or facilitating internal and external audits;
- establishing, managing and participating in internal and external committees, meetings, working groups, leadership groups, forums, panels or other bodies;
- arranging and attending conferences, forums, seminars and workshops;
- managing and responding to complaints, enquiries and reactions on health protection and health emergency matters;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- liaising, collaborating and consulting with stakeholders;
- undertaking research and analysis relating to health protection matters or the management of health emergencies; and
- identifying, assessing and managing risks.

Cross references to AFDA Express Version 2

For media releases, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

For the preparation of budget estimates, budget proposals, cost modelling, and financial transactions, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

For advice, briefs and submissions to the portfolio Minister, cabinet submissions and the organisation's participation in formal inquiries, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

For development of new legislation and amendments to existing legislation, use EXTERNAL RELATIONS and/or STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

For the procurement of goods and services, other than for the national medical stockpile, use PROCUREMENT.

For developing and executing contracts under seal or deeds, including signed joint venture contracts under seal, use CONTRACTS UNDER SEAL/DEEDS.

Cross references to other records authorities

For routine medical evacuations from overseas requiring management of applications and an assessment of eligibility, use MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE ACCESS.

For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to reduce the incidence of or prevent chronic diseases such as arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, use CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION.

For policies, strategies, programs and campaigns designed to promote healthy environments and lifestyle behaviours (including healthy ageing), prevent disease through vaccinations, inform the community about lifestyle risk factors, including alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse, and ensure the safety of food, use HEALTH PROMOTION & SAFETY.

For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to hearing services, use HEARING SERVICES.

For the assessment of risks associated with the proposed importation or manufacture of industrial chemicals and providing notification of such risks, use INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS NOTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT.

For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to address broader social health issues in the community including mental illness, use MENTAL HEALTH.

For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to pharmaceutical benefits, use PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS AND ACCESS.

For the management of grants, use General Records Authority 28 - GRANT MANAGEMENT

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62861	Information collected for the self-isolation register via the Coronavirus Australia application form (app form) and Australia.gov.au online form between 29 March and 5 August 2020.	Destroy 3 months after register is decommissioned

HEALTH PROTECTION AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62862	Personal information collected through the Clinician Vaccine Integrated Platform (CVIP) known as 'temporary person records', comprising information retrieved from the Australian Immunisation Register as a result of data matching processes and information that forms part of the vaccination details uploaded to the Australian Immunisation Register.	Destroy 24 hours after successful upload of vaccination details to the Australian Immunisation Register, or 24 hours after completion of vaccination appointment where there is no requirement to upload vaccination details to the Australian Immunisation Register.