



# RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

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# RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

## 1 Purpose

The Records management standards are designed to assist Scheme Agents meet the operational requirements for Records management. This standard applies to all open, re-opened and new workers compensation claims and policy Records held after commencement of Contract.

## 2 Contents

The following provides details of the required standards in making, keeping, storing and disposing of Scheme Records.

This manual replaces the Operational Instruction 26.1 in the Operational Document Set which was issued to potential Scheme Agents with the Request for Proposal.

## 3 Definition of Records

For the purpose of this document, Records include all information pertaining to the issue, renewal and discontinuance of Policies of insurance, and the receipt, administration and payment of Claims, regardless of whether that information is held in paper or electronic format.

Full and accurate Records are sources of detailed information and evidence that can be relied upon and used to support current activities, and have been created and managed in ways to ensure that they can be reused and understood in the future.

## 4 Objectives

The objectives of the Records management standards are to ensure that a Scheme Agent:

- keeps full and accurate Records
- ensures the safe custody, proper preservation and due retention or destruction of all Records under their control
- complies with relevant legislation and commercially acceptable standards.

## 5 Background

Section 154K of the *Workers Compensation Amendment (Insurance Reform) Act 2003* – Ownership of records – states:

- subject to the regulations, all records and other documents made and kept, or received and kept, by a Scheme Agent in the exercise of functions on behalf of the Nominal Insurer are the property of the Nominal Insurer
- the Nominal Insurer may give directions to a Scheme Agent with respect to possession, custody and control of, and the granting of access to, those records and other documents
- a Scheme Agent must comply with any such directions given by the Nominal Insurer to the Scheme Agent
- reference to a Scheme Agent includes a reference to a person who was formerly (but is no longer) a Scheme Agent.

WorkCover acts for, and exercises the powers of, the Nominal Insurer.

The records of the Nominal Insurer are exempt from the *State Records Act 1998*. However, WorkCover considers that it is important for Scheme Agents of the Nominal Insurer to establish Records management practices that are consistent with the *State Records Act 1998* as well as other relevant legislation and standards including:

- ISO AS 15489 Records Management Standard
- New South Wales General Disposal Authority 17 which applies to patient health records in the public health system of NSW
- State Records Retention and Disposal Authority GDA4 which provides guidance for records of short-term value, such as imaged documents
- the *Evidence Act 1995 (NSW)*.

## **6 General requirements**

Policies, procedures and business rules must be documented by a Scheme Agent to identify how and when Records should be made and captured.

All Scheme Agent staff must be aware of their responsibilities to make Records, and processes must be in place to periodically confirm this awareness and procedural compliance.

Systems and storage facilities must be designed to prevent the unauthorised access, alteration, deletion or destruction of Records, and these must be supported by Policies, procedures and business rules.

### 6.1 File quality

#### **6.1.1 File covers**

File covers must be:

- a wraparound cover or folder with a lateral end tab for colour codes or barcode stickers
- the Australian Standard size to house A4 documents, and fit within a standard Records box (internal dimensions 37.5 x 17 x 24cms)
- of a minimum 280gsm cardboard and be acid-free/ph-neutral.

#### 6.1.2 File fasteners

File fasteners are to be two-hole fasteners attached to the file with an adhesive patch. Metal pins, clips or fasteners should not be used, and if used should be removed before transfer to an off-site storage facility or another Scheme Agent.

#### 6.1.3 File labels

File labels must be clearly displayed on front of the cover and identify at a minimum the following:

Claim file labels

- Scheme Agent

- Unique Identifier / Claim number
- Claimant's surname, first name and second initial
- Date of injury

#### Policy file labels

- Scheme Agent
- Unique Identifier / Policy number
- Employer name

Note: These requirements do not apply to active policy files held by the Scheme Agent prior to 1 January 2006 unless the policy is transferring to another Scheme Agent.

#### 6.1.4 Electronic Records

A Scheme Agent must maintain electronic Records in accordance with recognised commercial best practice and as described in Australian Standard AS ISO 15489, Records Management.

Scheme Agents must ensure that electronic Records are capable of being converted to required formats for File Transfer (see 'Claims and policy file transfer manual').

Policies, procedures and business rules must ensure that:

- controls are in place to verify that imaged copies of Records are accurate and complete reproductions of the originals
- enhancements to technology utilised in capturing and maintaining electronic Records provides for access to, and use, of electronic Records from previous versions
- security controls prevent alteration of electronic Records.

#### 6.2 Stored Records

The following standards apply to records that are stored onsite or off-site at a secondary storage facility. The standards apply to hard copy records and electronic records.

A Scheme Agent must maintain storage of Records as described in Australian Standard AS 4390 – 1996, Records Management, Part 6, Storage.

Scheme Agents must provide suitable storage of Records, including:

- location – Records should be stored away from known hazards
- environment – Records should be stored in environmental conditions appropriate for their format and retention period
- shelving / packaging – Records should be stored using shelving and containers that ensure they are secure, accessible and protected from deterioration
- protection from disaster – disaster management programs should ensure that risks to Records are either removed or managed appropriately
- accessibility – Records should be stored in facilities where they can be identified, located and retrieved easily.

## 6.2.2 Security and access of stored records

A Scheme Agent must ensure Records are securely stored at all times and that access to Records is only provided to suitably authorised persons and/or in accordance with relevant legislation.

A Scheme Agent must ensure that retrieval and use of Records is subject to controls to prevent unauthorised access, damage or deterioration.

## 6.2.3 Costs of storage of records

The cost of storage of Nominal insurer records is covered under the Agent Service Fee.

# RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF POLICY AND CLAIMS RECORDS

At commencement of the new Scheme arrangements, Agents are advised that:

- No records are to be destroyed without permission of the Nominal Insurer;
- Agents will be free to apply their own physical control of records, including their own technology;
- A list of records and their location must be provided to the Nominal Insurer upon request.

After commencement of the new Scheme arrangements, The Nominal Insurer will implement a records retention and disposal authority (NIRRDA) aimed at applying a universal, cost-effective policy for all open, re-opened and new Claim and Policy Records which is able to be accommodated by the varying administrative systems of all Scheme Agents.

The NIRRDA aims to guarantee security and access to Records that support Policy and Claims management functions whilst ensuring that costs of storage are minimised by providing for the disposal of time-expired records.

The NIRRDA will provide:

- Specific retention and disposal periods, by policy and claim type
- Sentencing and sorting standards to support the retention and disposal periods
- The process for seeking the authorisation of the Nominal Insurer to dispose of records
- Preservation and protection of records that may be required for long periods of time

Subsequent versions of this manual will provide details of the NIRRDA.

## TRAINING

Agents must ensure that all staff are trained in the application of the standards.

## AUDIT

Agents will be audited for compliance with the standards. Remuneration will be subject to audit results.