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Introduction

Information is an organizational asset and the records of the Village of Arcadia are an important source of historical, evidential and administrative information. These documents are vital for the future of the organization not only in accountability but for an awareness and understanding of our organization's history and procedures.

Policy Statement

The Village of Arcadia has an obligation to ensure that proper protocols are put in place for the preservation and management of all municipal records. An effective records management system ensures that:

- Information received or created, is stored and retrieved efficiently.
- Information is destroyed or preserved in accordance with prescribed retention schedules.
- It meets current and future needs, and is capable of supporting change.
- It is easily accessible to those who make use of the records.

This policy is intended to establish an effective records management system for the Village of Arcadia that meets the objectives stated above. The Village of Arcadia recognizes that records are valuable corporate assets and that access, preservation and security must be ensured throughout the records life cycle.


Effective records management contributes to the overall operation and decision making of the municipality by maintaining records deemed to have fiscal, legal, regulatory, administrative, operational, evidentiary or historical value.

Purpose

To ensure the appropriate use, management, destruction and preservation of all records, regardless of format, that are in possession or control of the Municipality of Arcadia.

The purpose of the Records and Information Management Policy is to:

1. Ensure that records, regardless of their physical medium, are organized, secure, retrievable and retained under appropriate environmental conditions and managed efficiently throughout the active and inactive states of their life cycle;
2. Provide a framework and guidelines for the management of the creation, security, use, maintenance, retention and disposition of records. Final disposition of records shall be in accordance with the New Brunswick Municipal Records Authority (MRA) standard;
3. Establish and define accountability, roles and responsibilities for the program;
4. Ensure that non-confidential information is made available to the public while maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of sensitive or confidential information in

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accordance with the New Brunswick *Rights for Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (RTIPPA);

5. Prevent the creation of unnecessary records including forms, directives and reports;
6. Provide for effective storage and retrieval of all records while increasing the maximum use of storage space provided; and
7. Provide protection to vital and archival records while preserving corporate history.

Scope

Arcadia requires its recorded information, in all formats or media, to be managed in a systematic and cost-effective and controlled manner in accordance with Records & Information Management (RIM) best practices, the Municipal Records Authority of New Brunswick (MRA), the New Brunswick Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RTIPPA), the regulatory environment, and processes and guidelines developed.

Definitions

Active Records: Records that are consulted regularly. These records are stored in the department area or at an employee workstation for convenience.

Archival Records: Records that have been appraised and deemed for permanent retention due to historical, fiscal, legal, operational and administrative value.

Classification System: A systemic means of coding, categorizing and arranging records for use, retrieval, retention, and disposition purposes.

Destruction: Refers to the permanent deletion or obliteration of records, regardless of format.

Digitization: The process of converting physical documents into electronic form, by scanning or imaging of physical records such as paper documents, photographs, drawings, plans, etc.


Disposition: The final stage of the records life cycle. Records may be destroyed, retained permanently, or archived for preservation.

Inactive Record: A record that is no longer consulted on a regular basis, but is retained to fulfil legal, regulatory and operational requirements, or historical need.

Official Record: A record providing documentary evidence of the activities, rights, obligations and responsibilities of the Village of Arcadia. Recorded information that was created, received, distributed or maintained by the municipality in compliance with a legal obligation.

MRA: The Municipal Records Authority system, which is the Village's classification system.

Permanent Record: A record with permanent retention due to its ongoing administrative, historical, fiscal, legal or operational value.

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Record: All recorded information, regardless of structure or form, created, captured, received or maintained by the municipality and which serves as documentary evidence of daily activities. Records may include, but are not limited to: correspondence, contracts, email, memoranda, invoices, Council agendas, minutes, reports, photographs, maps, plans, drawings, etc.

Records Life Cycle: The life span of a record from its creation or receipt throughout its active and inactive stage to final disposition. The five stages of the life cycle of a record include: creation, distribution, use, storage/maintenance, retention and disposition/ destruction.

Records Liaison: A designated individual within each department serving as a liaison between the department and records management.

Records Management: The planning and systematic control of the creation, capture or receipt, maintenance, use and final disposition of records.

Records Series: A group of related documents that are filed together for retrieval and retention. This group is assigned an identifying code and title.

Retention Period: The period of time that records must be kept to fulfill operational, legal, regulatory, fiscal or other requirements before they are eligible for final disposition.

Retention Schedule: A control document defining the record series (categories) and the period of time each series must be kept. This document will be used to classify records and establishes legal authority of the destruction of records after the retention period has expired.


Signing Authority: Refers to the Clerk, Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

Transitory Records: Records having only temporary or limited usefulness or have been used in the preparation of a record. Often maintained for the completion of a routine task or in preparation of other records and are not required for operations or statutory obligations. Examples include working papers, external publications, duplicate copies, etc.

Vital Records: Records essential to resumption or continuation of operations after an emergency or disaster; those necessary to recreate the corporation's legal and financial position; and/or those necessary to preserve the rights of the corporation, its employees, customers, and ratepayers. Examples of vital records include accounts receivable / accounts payable records, tax rolls, contracts and agreements, Council minutes, By-Laws, policies and procedures, etc.

Records Ownership

All records created, captured, received and maintained by employees in the course of municipal business are the property of the Village of Arcadia. Employees leaving their position at the Village of Arcadia will leave all Corporate Records to their successor or supervisor including, but not limited to, physical, electronic and email records. This also applies to transfers within the organization and temporary leave.

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Records Management Program

The Municipal Records Authority (MRA) is the recommended standard for the management of municipal records within the province of New Brunswick. The MRA manual will provide guidelines for the creation, capture, management, retrieval, storage, access and security of records throughout the records lifecycle.

This manual will include and identify information on all aspects of the records management program and functions.

The objectives of the Records and Information Management Policy shall be to:

- a) Establish and maintain a framework of good record keeping practices to support the operational, fiscal, legislative, regulatory and historical needs of the Village of Arcadia.
- b) Establish clear and consistent procedures for records and information management.
- c) Educate departments and divisions on the importance of proper records management, Corporate-wide consistency and availability of assistance.
- d) Ensure that creation, management, storage and disposition of records is carried out in accordance with established procedures and in accordance with the MRA.
- e) Ensure legal and regulatory compliance.
- f) Ensure the preservation of the authenticity and integrity of records.
- g) Identify and preserve records deemed to have permanent or archival value and those deemed to be vital records.
- h) Establish accountability and responsibility for records management at all levels.
- i) Provide input on topics effecting the management of information.

Training and Assistance


Training sessions and assistance will be offered as time permits. The MRA manual, training aids, and the records retention schedule will be made available to each department.

Assistance will be available in the following areas:

1. Records and information management basics
2. The records retention schedule, classification system and destruction of records
3. Records and information management policies and procedures
4. Security and access of records and information
5. Records storage
6. Digitization of records

Records Retention and Destruction

Municipalities can destroy records, provided that a retention/classification schedule is in place. The retention period guidelines are set out in the New Brunswick Municipal Records Authority

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(MRA) standard. Retention periods also take into account current usage, legal and regulatory requirements, operational, fiscal and archival needs.

1. Records Storage

- a) The Village of Arcadia maintains a decentralized records storage system, meaning that each department is responsible for the storage of records within their care.
- b) Where records are transferred to departments or off-site storage facilities (Records Center or Public Archives of New Brunswick) for storage, a Records Transfer Form must be completed.

2. Destruction of Records

- a) Records that have been categorized according to the MRA may be destroyed if:
 - i. the retention period has expired;
 - ii. the record is a copy of the original record, provided there are no notations on copy retention for that series.
- b) Records must be destroyed promptly upon expiration of the retention period. Records that have expired, but have not been destroyed, put the Village of Arcadia in a position of risk. If records are destroyed promptly and routinely, legal defensibility of records destruction can be established at the Village of Arcadia.
- c) The following procedure shall apply for destructions of records;
 - i. Records destruction, in compliance with the MRA, requires a completed Records Destruction Form signed by the Department Head or signing authority and the Municipal Clerk prior to the destruction of the records. This form shall be retained permanently by the Municipal Clerk.
 - ii. A certificate of destruction, provided by the secure destruction vendor, must be kept with the Records Destruction Form. Stored together, the records destruction form and certificate of destruction provide legal proof that a record has been destroyed.
 - iii. All records containing personal information must be destroyed in a secure and confidential manner. This includes physical, electronic and transitory records.
 - iv. Destruction of physical records after digitization is governed by processes which ensure the authenticity and integrity of records (See Section Digitization Programs).
 - v. Back-up copies may be used to fulfill long-term or permanent retention requirements.
- d) In the event of litigation or investigation, routine destruction of records related to the matter will be suspended.
- e) Where retention of a record for a further period after expiration is required, a Records Retention Authorization Form must be approved.

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3. *Transitory Records*


- a) Transitory records have only temporary or short term usefulness, and are often used in the preparation of another record. Transitory records are often used in the completion of a routine task and are not required for operations or statutory obligations. These records are not considered Official Records.
- b) The records retention schedule shall not apply to transitory records. These can be destroyed when no longer needed and in the course of regular business.
- c) For example, a report for Council is prepared and saved on the employee's drive. When the report is signed and submitted for the agenda, the copy of the report on the employee's drive is considered transitory and can be destroyed when no longer needed. See table below for more examples.
- d) All legal holds issued shall also apply to transitory records. When a legal hold is released routine destruction may resume.

Official vs Transitory Records

Official Records	Transitory Records
Correspondence, including email	Duplicate copies
Original Minutes	Convenience copies
Reports	Drafts with limited importance
Agendas	Reference Material
Permits	Personal files
Maps/Plans	Working papers
Memoranda	External Publications
Policies	
Financial Transactions	
By-laws	
Personnel Records	

4. *Electronic Records*

- a) Electronic records are subject to the same legal, fiscal, regulatory and operational requirements and policies as physical records. Electronic records may be word documents, pdf documents, emails, text messages sent on a mobile device issued by the Village, Village related documents on any computer used by employees to complete work, etc.
- b) Electronic records including Email, Voicemail, Social Media and Mobile or chat communications are records and are therefore subject to the legal, fiscal, regulatory and operational guidelines for records retention.
- c) Digitization programs will be established to ensure proper standards are adhered to in the digitization of records.

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- d) Data stored on the Village of Arcadia back-up server shall not be considered a record for the purposes of records retention or requests, and is intended for use only in disaster recovery or system failure.

5. *Digitization Programs*

There are requirements for the digitization of records, storage and retention in electronic form. Digitized records are required to meet certain criteria if they are intended to become the authoritative copy of the record. These criteria will ensure the authority, integrity and thereby legal defensibility of electronic-only records.

Physical records which have been digitized are not to be destroyed unless:

- a) The proper authorization for digitization is obtained, as required by the Government of New Brunswick Digitization Standard.
- b) Established digitization procedures are adhered to.
- c) Quality control of digitization is completed.
- d) Proper authorization for destruction is obtained.

6. *Vital Records*

A record of any form or format containing information that is essential to continue the immediate operation of the municipality and that is necessary to recreate its legal and financial position.

7. *Archival Records*

- a) Archival records will be preserved and stored for long-term preservation.
- b) Archival records will be created and preserved in formats suitable for the retention period to ensure long-term usability.
- c) Records subject to archival review will be submitted to the Clerk for evaluation when the retention period has expired.

8. *Accountability*

- a) The municipality recognizes the importance of accountability and transparency to be responsive to the needs of the community while maintaining privacy and confidentiality on matters of security and sensitivity.
- b) Employees shall be held accountable for the management and use of information and resources in their custody or control. In order to ensure compliance, appropriate procedures and training materials will be delivered to employees as they are developed.

Approval

Approved by Council on: April 27, 2026


 Mayor—Clinton Sharpe




 Clerk—Jessica McGarity