

Public Record Office Victoria

ACCESS STANDARD PROS 19/06

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This Standard sets out the principles and requirements that Victorian public offices must comply with in order to ensure records are accessible for the period of time they must be retained and that access is not restricted, unless required by legislation, regulation or policy.

The Access Standard is comprised of the following areas:

- Open access
- Open access to records in the custody of the Keeper of Public Records
- Accessibility

Introduction

Authority of Standards

Under section 12 of the *Public Records Act 1973*, the Keeper of Public Records ('the Keeper') is responsible for the establishment of Standards for the efficient management of public records and for assisting Victorian public offices to apply those Standards to records under their control.

Heads of public offices are responsible under section 13b of the *Public Records Act 1973* for carrying out a program of efficient management of public records. The program of records management needs to cover all records created by the public office, in all formats, media and systems across the organisation.

The Standards support the Victorian Electronic Record Strategy (VERS) Digital Forever 2018-2021¹, which is designed to ensure the creation, capture and preservation of authentic, complete and meaningful digital records.

This Standard, as varied or amended from time to time, shall have effect for a period of ten (10) years from the date of issue unless revoked prior to that date.

Obligation

It is mandatory for all Victorian public offices to follow the principles and comply with the requirements of the Standards issued by the Keeper.

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¹ The previous *PROS15/03 Standard for the encapsulation of digital records* has been revoked and the requirements have now been included in the *PROS19/05 Create, Capture and Control Standard* and associated Specifications.

Principles & Requirements

1. OPEN ACCESS

PRINCIPLE: Access to records held by public offices must not be restricted, unless required by legislation or in accordance with policy or authorised criteria

REQUIREMENTS

1. Records must be shared across the organisation, unless restrictions are required by legislation, policy or to meet approved criteria.
2. Public offices must support open and transparent government by only restricting access to records when required by legislation, regulation or policy (e.g. Freedom of Information exemptions, privacy principles, government or organisational security framework).

2. OPEN ACCESS TO RECORDS IN CUSTODY OF KEEPER

PRINCIPLE: Records in Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) custody are open for public access, unless closed for a period of time under the *Public Records Act 1973*

REQUIREMENTS

1. When determining the access status of records (whether records should be open to the public or closed for a period of time), the interests of stakeholders must be carefully considered, and consulted where practicable.
2. The access status of records must be established prior to transferring permanent records to PROV, in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973*.

3. ACCESSIBILITY

PRINCIPLE: Records must be effectively managed by public offices to ensure they can be retrieved and used for the period of time they must be retained

REQUIREMENTS

1. Records must be described and managed so that they can be identified, retrieved and used for authorised purposes.
2. Systems holding records must enable them to be identified, retrieved and used for the period of time they must be retained.

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