

Office of the State Archivist

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Retention of records of potential relevance to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

TO

All relevant Tasmanian government organisations covered by the *Archives Act 1983*, and other organisations that hold Tasmanian government records because of outsourcing.

PURPOSE

This document is to tell you that Tasmanian government records related to people with disability may be relevant to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

You may wish to issue a disposal freeze within your organisation to ensure that relevant records remain available:

- for the Royal Commission and any resulting actions by the Australian government
- for future reference and accountability purposes
- to protect the rights and entitlements of stakeholders.

‘People with disability’ is defined by the Terms of Reference as meaning “people with any kind of impairment, whether existing at birth or acquired through illness, accident or the ageing process, including cognitive impairment and physical, sensory, intellectual and psycho-social disability.”

BACKGROUND

On 5 April 2019, the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, announced the Australian Government’s establishment of a Royal Commission into the experiences of people with a disability. The Terms of Reference of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability are included in the Letters Patent, which the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia signed on 4 April 2019.

The Commission is expected to run for three years.

RECORDS

Investigations of inquiries in progress, such as Royal Commissions, override authorised disposal schedules or disposal authorisations.

The Royal Commission will inquire into what governments, institutions and the community should do to prevent harm and better protect people with disability. See the [Letters Patent](#) which includes the Terms of Reference.

Records in all formats may be relevant, no matter where they are kept.

Relevant records may include defunct or predecessor organisations, as well as those held by outsourced businesses.

ACTION REQUIRED

1. Identify any records that may be relevant to the Royal Commission and issue a disposal freeze for your organisation. You may find our [How to identify records for the Disposal Freeze for Records Relating to Children](#) tool a useful model to identify records for this Royal Commission.
2. Inform all workers (staff, board members, elected representatives, volunteers, contractors etc.) of the Royal Commission and the impact on records.
3. Conduct a risk assessment to:
 - discover if worksites (including contractors or service providers) have any records due for destruction that come within the scope of the Royal Commission
 - identify and keep relevant existing and future records until further notice.
4. Check records already proposed for destruction to ensure they are not covered by the Royal Commission.
5. Update relevant policies and procedures.
6. If you have relevant records, provide a contact from your organisation to work with the Office of the State Archivist.

For more information on the Royal Commission, visit <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au>.

Yours sincerely

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