RECORDS MANAGEMENT
POLICY
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1. **PREAMBLE**

The Emalahleni Local Municipality seeks to ensure that all official records are managed according to the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act (Act No.43 of 1996) Section 13 of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act, 1996 requires Emalahleni Local Municipality to manage its records in a well-structured record keeping system, and to put the necessary policies and procedures in place to ensure that its record keeping and records management practices comply with the requirements of the Act.

2. **PURPOSE**

- To establish the municipal standards and requirements for the management of all official records
- To promote a systematic approach to records management for the Emalahleni Local Municipality
- To strive to enforce consistency with regard to management of all official records of the municipality.
- To serve as a guideline for the staff members and managers of the entire municipality on Records Management
- To ensure that Information is a resource of the same importance to good management as other standard resources like people, money and facilities
- Information resources of Emalahleni Local Municipality must therefore be managed as a valuable asset to
  - enable Emalahleni Local Municipality to find the right information easily and comprehensively
  - enable Emalahleni Local Municipality to perform its functions successfully and efficiently and in an accountable manner
  - support the business, legal and accountability requirements of Emalahleni Local Municipality
  - ensure the conduct of business in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner
  - ensure the consistent delivery of services
  - support and document policy formation and administrative decision-making
  - provide continuity in the event of a disaster
  - protect the interests of Emalahleni Local Municipality and the rights of employees, clients; present and future stakeholders
- support and document the Emalahleni Local Municipality activities, development and achievements
- to reduce vulnerability to legal challenge or financial loss and promotes best value in terms of human and space resources through greater co-ordination of information and storage systems

3. **DEFINITIONS**

Terms and definitions that will be used throughout the procedure that need clarification for the reader, this can also include any keywords. Include also technical terms, abbreviations that maybe used in this document

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<tr>
<th>WORD/TERM</th>
<th>DEFINITION (WITH EXAMPLES IF REQUIRED)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic Records</td>
<td>This is the collective noun for all components of an electronic information system, namely: electronic media as well as all connected items such as source documents, output information, software applications, programmes and meta data (background and technical information i.r.o. the information stored electronically) and in hard copy. All these components are defined as records by the Act. They must therefore be dealt with in accordance with the Act's provisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Records Management</td>
<td>Records Management is a process of ensuring the proper creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records throughout their life cycle to achieve efficient, transparent and accountable governance</td>
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<td>Disposal</td>
<td>The action of either destroying/deleting a record or transferring it into archival custody</td>
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<td>Disposal Authority</td>
<td>A written authority issued by the National Archivist specifying which records should be transferred into archival custody or specifying which records should be destroyed/deleted or otherwise disposed of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic Records System</td>
<td>A unique number identifying each disposal authority issued to a specific office.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This is the collective noun for all components of an electronic information system, namely: electronic media as well as all connected items such as source documents, output information, software applications, programmes and metadata (background and technical information i.r.o. the information stored electronically) and in hard copy. All these components are defined as records by the Act. They must therefore be dealt with in</td>
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<td><strong>Filing System/File Plan</strong></td>
<td>The collective noun for a storage system (like files, boxes, shelves or electronic applications and storage system) in which records are stored in a systematic manner according to a file plan (A pre-determined classification plan by which records are filed and/or electronically indexed to facilitate efficient retrieval and disposal of records).</td>
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<td><strong>Records other than correspondence systems:</strong></td>
<td>Records that do not form part of a correspondence file, or a case file e.g. registers, maps, plans, electronic records, audio-visual records, etc,</td>
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| **Records** | 1. Recorded information regardless of form or medium  
2. Evidence of a transaction, preserved for the evidential information it contains |
| **Records Classification System** | A plan for the systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods and procedural rules represented in the classification system. |
| **Recording** | Anything on which sounds or images or both are fixed or from which sounds or images or both are capable of being reproduced, regardless of form |
| **Record keeping** | Making and maintaining complete, accurate and reliable evidence of official business in the form of recorded information |
| **Retention period** | The length of time that records should be retained in offices before they are either transferred into archival custody or destroyed/deleted |
| **Schedule for records other than correspondence systems** | A control mechanism for records other than correspondence files (other records), which contains a description and the disposal instructions and retention periods of all other records. It consists of the following parts:  
- Schedule for paper-based records other than correspondence files  
- Schedule for electronic records system other than the electronic correspondence system  
- Schedule for microfilm records  
- Schedule for audio-visual records |
| **System procedures manual** | A manual containing information regarding the hardware, software and network elements that comprise the system and how they interact. Details |
4. **APPLICATION AND SCOPE**

The policy will be applicable to all the employees of the Emalahleni Local Municipality, as well as prospective employees.

5. **LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The Records Management Policy is informed by the following legislations:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa
- National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act (Act No.43 of 1996 as amended)
- Public Finance Management Act (Act No. 1 of 1999)
- Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act No. 2 of 2000)
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act No. 3 of 2000)
- Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (Act No. 25 of 2002)

6. **POLICY PRINCIPLES**

This policy is guided by the following main principles

- Consistency
- Fairness
- Reasonableness
- Transparence
- Value System
- Accountability
- Security
- Privacy
- Confidentiality

7. **POLICY STATEMENT**

All records created and received by Emalahleni Local Municipality shall be managed in accordance with the records management principles contained in section 13 of the National Archives and Records Service Act, 1996.
8. **RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER POLICIES**

The information Security Policy which is managed by the IT Manager

**The internet usage policy which is managed by the municipality**

Promotion of access to information policy which is managed by the Municipal Manager who is designated as Chief Information Officer (CIO) in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act

9. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

9.1 Municipal Manager of Emalahleni Local Municipality

- Ultimately accountable for the record keeping and records management practices of Emalahleni Local Municipality,
- Committed to transparency and improvement of records management
- Ensuring that sound records management practices are implemented and maintained
- Supports the implementation of this policy and requires each staff member and Emalahleni Local Municipality to support the values underlying in this policy
- Appoint a Chief Information Officer as a designated official to control access to information in the municipality.
- Designate an official at middle management level to be the Records Manager of the Emalahleni Local Municipality

9.2 Members of the Executive Management

- Responsible for the implementation of this policy in their respective Directorates.
- Shall ensure that all staff members are made aware of their record keeping and records management responsibilities and obligations
- Shall ensure that the management of records including e-mail is a key responsibility of all the staff members in their Directorates

9.3 Records Manager

- Shall implement and monitor this policy
- Promote staff awareness regarding this policy
- Manage all records according to the Records Management principles
• Determine the records retention periods in consultation with the users and taking into account the functional, legal and historical need of the body to maintain records of transactions,
• Shall issue circulars and instructions regarding the record keeping and records management practices

9.4 Chief Information Officer

• Approve the requests for information in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act
• Inform the Records Manager if a request for information necessitates a disposal hold to be placed on records that are due for disposal

9.5 Head: Information Technology (IT)

• To maintain day-to-day electronic systems that stores records
• To work in conjunction with the Records Manager to ensure that public records are properly managed, protected and appropriately preserved
• To ensure that appropriate systems technical manuals and systems procedures manual are designed for each electronic system that manages and stores records
• To ensure that all electronic systems capture appropriate systems generated metadata and audit trail data for all electronic records to ensure that authentic and reliable records are created
• To ensure that electronic records in all electronic systems remains accessible by migrating them to new hardware and software platforms when there is a danger of technology obsolescence including media and format obsolescence
• To ensure that all data, metadata, audit trail data, operating systems and authentic, reliable and accessible records should a disaster occur
• To ensure that back-ups are stored in secure off-site environment
• To ensure that systems that manage and store records are virus free

9.7 Head: Legal Advisory Services

• To advise the Records Manager on the legal implications about legal and statutory environment.
9.8 Registry staff

- Responsible for the physical management of the records in their care
- Responsible for the safe keeping of the records
- Responsible for the opening of files
- Responsible for the issuing of files
- Responsible for the maintenance of records

9.9 Staff members

Every staff member shall create records of transaction while conducting official business and manage those records efficiently and effectively by:

- Allocating reference numbers and subjects to paper-based and electronic records according to the file plan;
- Sending referenced paper-based records to the registry for filing
- Ensuring that records are destroyed/deleted only in accordance with a written disposal Authority issued by the Provincial Archivist.

10. RECORDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS AND RELATED STORAGE AREAS

10.1 CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEMS

10.1.1 Filing systems/file plans

- Only the filing systems/file plans approved by Provincial Archivist shall be used for the classification of correspondence records. The filing systems/file plans shall be used for the classification of paper-based and electronic (including e-mails) records
- When correspondence is created/received for which no subject exists in the filing systems/file plan, the records manager should be contacted to assist with additions to the filing systems/file plans
- Under no circumstances may subjects be added to the filing system/file plans if they have not been approved by the Records Manager

10.1.2 Storage Areas

10.1.2.1 The Main Registry

- All paper-based correspondence system records that are not HR related are housed in the main registry
- All these records are under management of the Records Manager who is mandated to ensure that they are managed properly.
• The Emalahleni Local Municipality maintain a set of paper-based files for general matters related to functions of the Municipality
• These files are confidential in nature and are housed in a secure storage area in the main archives.
• The files exist only in paper-based format.
• The registry is a secure storage area and only registry staff are allowed in the records storage area
• Staff members that need access to files in the registry shall place a request for the files at the counter
• The registry shall be locked when registry is not in operation
• Staff members are not allowed to remove any document on the file without the approval from the Records Manager

10.1.2.2 The Human Resources Registry

• All Human Resources related records are housed in the HR Registry
• The general HR subject files as well as HR case files are under the management of the Records Manager who is mandated to ensure that they are managed properly
• The Emalahleni Local Municipality maintain a set of paper-based case files for each staff member
• The files are confidential in nature and are housed in a secure storage area in the HR Registry
• The case files are managed as part of the List of Series of Separate Case Files that is maintained and managed by Records Manager
• The files exist only in paper-based format and the physical tracking of the case files are managed with the file tracking system in the Integrated Document and Records Management System.
• Only Human Resource staff can request staff files through the counter in the registry
• Human Resource staff must request files only at the counter

10.1.2.3 Storage of Electronic Correspondence Records

• Electronic correspondence records that is stored in an electronic repository that is maintained by the IT section
• Access to storage areas where electronic records are stored is limited to the IT staffs that have specific duties regarding the maintenance of the hardware, software and media.
10.1.2.4 RECORDS OTHER THAN CORRESPONDENCE SYSTEMS

- The Records Manager maintains a schedule of all records other than the correspondence system
- The schedule contains a description of each set of records other than the correspondence system and indicates the storage location and retention periods of these records regardless of format
- Should records be created/received that are not listed in the schedule, the Records Manager should be contacted to add the records to the schedule

10.1.2.5 STORAGE AREAS

10.1.2.6 Paper-based

- Emalahleni Local Municipality have a set of paper-based records other than the correspondence systems that are in the custody of the various officials that use them on a daily basis
- These records are under the control of the Record Manager who is mandated to ensure that they are managed properly.

10.1.2.7 Micrographic records

- These records are under the control of the Records Manager who is mandated to ensure that they are managed properly

10.1.2.8 Audio-visual records

- These records are under the control of the Records Manager who is mandated to ensure that they are managed properly

11. DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

- No public records shall be destroyed, erased or otherwise disposed of without prior arrangements with the Records Manager and written authorization from the Provincial Archivist
- When a Provincial Archivist issues a standing Disposal Authority for the disposal of records classified against the approved filing system. The Records Manager must manage the disposal schedule.
- The Records Manager should be contacted to discuss a more appropriate retention period with the Municipal Manager.
- Disposal in terms of these disposal authorities will be executed annually
• All disposal actions should be authorized by the Records Manager prior to their execution to ensure that archival records are not destroyed inadvertently
  o Non-archival records that are needed for litigation, Promotion of Access to Information requests or Promotion of Administrative Justice actions may not be destroyed until such time that the Senior Manager: Legal Advisory Services has indicated that the destruction hold can be lifted
  o Paper-based archival records shall be safely kept in main registry until they are due to be transferred to the Provincial Archives Repository.
  o Specific guidelines regarding the procedure to dispose of electronic records are contained in the electronic records management policy,

12. STORAGE AND CUSTODY

• All records shall be kept in storage areas that are appropriate for the type of medium
• Specific policies for the management of electronic storage media are contained in the electronic records management policy

13. ACCESS AND SECURITY

• Records shall at all times be protected against unauthorized access and tampering to protect their authenticity and reliability as evidence of the business of Emalahleni Local Municipality
• Security classified records shall be managed in terms of the Information Security Policy which is available from the security manager
• No staff member shall remove records that are not available in the public domain from the premises of Emalahleni Local Municipality without the explicit permission of the Record Manager in consultation with the Chief Information Officer
• No staff member shall provide information and records that are not in the public domain to the public without consulting the Chief Information Officer. Specific guidelines regarding requests for information are contained in the Promotion of Access to Information Policy which is maintained by the Chief Information Officer
• Personal information shall be managed in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act until such time that specific protection of privacy legislation is enacted.
• No staff member shall disclose personal information of any member of staff or client of Emalahleni Local Municipality to any member of the public without consulting the Chief Information Officer first
• An audit trail shall be logged of all attempts to alter/edit electronic records and their metadata
• Records storage areas shall at all times be protected against unauthorized access. The following shall apply:
  o Registry and other records storage areas shall be locked when not in use
  o Access to server rooms and storage areas for electronic records media shall be managed with key card access
  o Appropriate (CO2) Fire extinguishers should be installed in the registries in order to attend to any fire that might occur.

14. LEGAL ADMISSIBILITY AND EVIDENTIAL WEIGHT

(The records of Emalahleni Local Municipality shall at all times contain reliable evidence of business operations). The following shall apply

14.1 Paper-based records

• No records shall be removed from paper-based files without the explicit permission of the Records Manager
• Records that were placed on files shall not be altered in any way
• No alterations of any kind shall be made to records other than correspondence files without the explicit permission of the Records Manager
• Should evidence be obtained of tampering with records, the staff member involved shall be subject to disciplinary action

41.2 Electronic records

• The Emalahleni Local Municipality shall use systems which ensure that its electronic records are:
  o Authentic
  o Not altered or tampered with
  o Auditable and
  o Produced in systems which utilize security measures to ensure their integrity
• The Electronic Records Management Policy contains specific information regarding the metadata and audit trail information that should be captured to ensure that records are authentic

15. TRAINING

• Records Manager and Registry Officer must attend the records management course presented by the National Archives
• Registry staff shall attend records management courses
  Registry Officer has a duty to conduct in house training of the registry clerks during normal working hours

16. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

• Records Manager will monitor the implementation of this policy and will submit monthly reports to the Director: Corporate Service for submission to the Municipal Manager

17. COMMUNICATION/EDUCATION OF THE POLICY

• The Records Management policy will be communicated by means of workshops, circulars, to all employees of the municipality

18. APPROVAL OF THE POLICY

• Records Management Policy will be approved by Council on recommendation of the Municipal Manager

19. DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISM

• In the event of disputes arising out of Records Management Policy implementation, such disputes will be dealt with as per the Public Service Commission Act 46/1997: Rules for dealing with Grievances of Employees in the Public Services.

20. REVIEW OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

• This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis from the date of approval and when there are material changes in the enabling legislation by the appointed Policy Task Team Members. The reviewed version of the policy will be approved by the Council or by the Municipal Manager as per the departmental delegations
APPROVAL OF THE POLICY

RECOMMENDED / NOT RECOMMENDED

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..........................................................

.................................................  ......................

DATE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER

APPROVED / NOT APPROVED

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PROCEDURE FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

STEP 1

Creating of Document

- A record / document are created by municipal I officials
- A reference number is written by consulting a Series index of a Manager if not clear the Records Manager must be consulted
- The document is circulated or dealt by the official concerned for consideration or approval
- The document is sent to the registry for filing with a writing FILE with a black pen

STEP 2

Opening of the File

- The document is received by the registry office
- Registry Officials check whether the instruction to file the document is indicated
- Registry official check whether the reference number is correct before opening a file
- Registry official open a file using the reference number on the document
- A file is then prepared that consists of the file description, volume number and reference number written on the outside of file cover
- Document is pinned in the file using a metal strip
- File is written in the Register for Opened Files.

STEP 3
Maintaining of files

- File is stored in the file shelves in numerical order according to the sequence of the filing plan
- Personal files are filed alphabetically
- A file is closed when it reaches 3cm thickness and a new volume opened
- Documents must be filed in a chronological order with the recent date on top and each page or document numbered
- A control sheet is attached inside the file cover which gives description of all the documents that are in the file

STEP 4

Movement of files

- Files are requested and returned at the counter in the registry from the registry clerk
- Files are requested by providing the file number only, not the description of the subject content
- Files in the registry should not be booked out for more than 10 days
- Official borrowing a file need to fill a BOOKING OUT FORM which consists of the date, file number, the official name, who is booking the file,

STEP 5

Disposal / transfer of files

- When the managers needs to destroy records, the records manager must be consulted
- A details list with all files that needs to be destroyed is drafted
- The Records Manager submit the disposal list to the Archive for appraisal
- Archives will then gives indication on which file to destroy or be transferred to their repository, those with historical value
- No records may be destroyed without the written authorization of the Provincial Archives
- Registry personnel must also ensure that destruction records are disposed of when instructed by the Records Manager
Before any records can be destroyed, a destruction certificates must be issued by the Provincial Archives