RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

#2026-10-01

1. Policy Title

This policy may be cited as the Records Management Policy.

2. Authority

This policy is adopted pursuant to the Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act and other applicable legislation governing records management, information governance, privacy, access to information, and records retention. It supports compliance with applicable federal and provincial requirements, including but not limited to:

- Municipal Government Act;
- Access to Information and Protection of Privacy provisions;
- Personal Information International Disclosure Protection Act, where applicable;
- Archives and Records Act;
- Canada Revenue Agency record retention requirements; and
- Any other applicable legislation, regulations, or legal requirements governing municipal records.

3. Ownership of Records

All records created, received, maintained, transmitted, or stored in the course of municipal business by employees, elected officials, boards, committees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, or agents of the Municipality are the property of the Municipality of the County of Pictou, regardless of format, storage location, or device used.

No person shall remove, destroy, alter, dispose of, or retain municipal records except as authorized by this policy and applicable legislation.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All departments of the Municipality;
- Council and Council committees;
- Municipal boards, commissions, agencies, and advisory committees under the authority of the Municipality;
- Employees, elected officials, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and agents of the Municipality.

This policy applies to all records regardless of format, including paper, electronic, audio, video, photographic, cartographic, email, text message, social media, cloud-based, and other information resources.

5. Purpose

The purposes of this policy are to:

- Establish effective management and control over the creation, receipt, use, maintenance, storage, retrieval, retention, preservation, and disposition of municipal records;
- Support legislative compliance;
- Define responsibilities and accountability for records management;
- Ensure records management requirements are incorporated into business processes and technology systems;
- Eliminate unnecessary collection and duplication of information;
- Promote transparency and public access where permitted by law; and
- Preserve records of operational, legal, financial, administrative, historical, and archival value.

6. Definitions

CAO
Means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality of the County of Pictou.

Council
Means the Council of the Municipality of the County of Pictou.

Electronic Record
Means information created, received, maintained, stored, or transmitted in digital form and capable of being processed by a computer system.

Record
Includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, electronic records, databases, emails, text messages, social media content, cloud-based information, audio recordings, video recordings, and any other medium containing information relating to municipal business.

Records Management System
Means the approved paper or electronic system used by the Municipality to manage records throughout their lifecycle.

Manual
Means the current edition of the Nova Scotia Association of Municipal Administrators Records Management Manual, as amended from time to time.

7. Policy Statement

The Municipality recognizes records as a strategic corporate asset and shall manage records throughout their lifecycle in a manner that:

- Supports effective decision-making;
- Protects legal, operational, financial, and historical interests;
- Supports accountability and transparency;
- Facilitates public access where authorized;
- Protects privacy and confidentiality;
- Preserves records of enduring value; and
- Ensures compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

8. Records Management System

The Municipality adopts the Nova Scotia Association of Municipal Administrators Records Management Manual as the approved records classification and retention framework.

The Records Management System shall:

- Apply standardized classification and retention schedules;
- Support both physical and electronic records;
- Maintain record integrity, authenticity, reliability, and accessibility;
- Facilitate efficient retrieval of information; and
- Support lawful disposition and preservation of records.

9. Responsibilities

Council

Council shall:

- Adopt and amend this policy; and
- Provide governance oversight of municipal records management.
- Chief Administrative Officer

The CAO shall:

- Ensure implementation of this policy;
- Designate a Records Management Officer;
- Allocate appropriate resources for compliance; and
- Ensure records management practices are integrated into municipal operations.

Designated Officer

The Designated Officer shall:

- Administer the Records Management Program;
- Maintain the Records Management System;
- Develop procedures and standards;
- Monitor compliance with retention requirements;
- Authorize records destruction in accordance with approved schedules;
- Maintain destruction records; and
- Report significant records management issues to the CAO.

Employees and Officials

Employees and elected officials shall:

- Create and maintain records documenting municipal business;
- Protect records against unauthorized access, alteration, or destruction;
- Follow approved records management procedures; and
- Cooperate with records management requirements established by the Municipality.

10. Electronic Records

Electronic records are recognized as official municipal records and may constitute original records where permitted by law.

Records created or received through:

- Email;
- Messaging applications;
- Text messages;
- Collaboration platforms;
- Social media platforms; and
- Cloud-based services

are subject to this policy where they document municipal business.

Municipal information systems shall support retention, retrieval, protection, authenticity, and lawful disposition of records.

11. Access and Privacy

The Municipality shall provide access to records in accordance with applicable legislation while protecting confidential, sensitive, and personal information.

The collection, use, disclosure, retention, and disposal of personal information shall comply with all applicable privacy legislation.

12. Archival Preservation

Records possessing historical, cultural, legal, operational, or archival value shall be preserved in accordance with approved archival practices.

The Municipality shall preserve records documenting:

- Council decisions;
- Significant policies;
- Municipal programs and services; and
- The history and development of the Municipality.

13. Retention and Disposition

The Municipality adopts the retention schedules contained within the Manual as its official retention schedule.

Records shall only be disposed of in accordance with:

- Approved retention schedules;
- Applicable legislation;
- This policy; and
- Authorized procedures.

14. Records Destruction

Records may only be destroyed upon expiration of the approved retention period and authorization by the Designated Officer.

The CAO or Designated Officer may suspend destruction where records are subject to:

- Litigation;
- Audit;
- Investigation;
- Access to Information requests;
- Legal proceedings; or
- Any other legal or operational hold.

A permanent record of destruction shall be maintained, and destruction shall be carried out in a manner that protects confidentiality and privacy.

15. Records Exempt from Destruction

The following records shall not be destroyed except where expressly authorized by legislation:

- Council minutes;
- Bylaws;
- Policies;
- Resolutions;
- Records designated as permanent or archival; and
- Records required by law to be retained.

16. Employee Departure

Upon resignation, retirement, termination, or completion of service, individuals shall return all municipal records and information assets in their possession and shall not retain copies except as authorized by law or the Municipality.

17. Policy Review

The Designated Officer shall periodically monitor compliance and report significant records management matters to the CAO.

This policy shall be reviewed at least every five years or sooner if required by legislative, operational, organizational, or technological change.