

— STATE RECORDS ACT 2000 (WA)

Western Australia

Archiving Social Media: A Guide For WA Government

 WA LAW ACCESS LAW RETENTION & DISPOSAL CHECKLIST ARCHIVE-READY

Everything your council or agency needs to know about social media recordkeeping: the records Act, the access regime, retention and disposal, and a ready-to-use readiness checklist.



SOCIAL MEDIA ARCHIVING FOR WA GOVERNMENT

WA social media records, ready when an **FOI request** arrives.

Ready to find it, review it and export it. Posts, comments, replies, edits, deletions and associated media on official accounts can be government records when they evidence official business — and when a FOI access application arrives, the response duty is statutory. The statutory period governs the decision and notice; locating the complete record set is the operational work needed to make that decision defensibly.

Freedom of Information Act 1992 — An agency must deal with an access application as soon as practicable and within the permitted period of 45 days after it is received, or another period agreed with the applicant or allowed by the Information Commissioner where statutory conditions are met. 'Deal with' means consider the application, decide access and charges, and give written notice of the decision; no timely notice produces a deemed refusal.

THE LEGAL CONTEXT

Social media records carry legal obligations. **A reliable archive helps your team meet them.**

State Records Act 2000 (WA). Government organisations, including local governments, must have an approved recordkeeping plan and keep records of their business in line with the State Records Principles and Standards 2002. Records may only be destroyed under an approved retention and disposal authority.

Retention in Western Australia. Retention follows the business function the content documents. Social media records sit under the same disposal authority as the activity they evidence, as set out in your recordkeeping plan. Capture is a risk-management decision; retention depends on the subject matter and an approved retention and disposal authority. Confirm the class with the State Records Office of Western Australia or your records team.

Primary sources

- **State Records Act 2000 (WA)**
- **Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)**
- **State Records Office WA — social media content as government records**
- **Office of the Information Commissioner WA**

Reviewed against current official sources: 30 August 2026 · General information, not legal advice.

The WA framework

Four things shape the social media record in Western Australia: the records Act, the access regime, retention and disposal, and the consequences of getting disposal wrong.

RECORDS ACT

State Records Act 2000 (WA)

State Records Act 2000 No. 52 of 2000

The State Records Office's advice notes the Act defines a record as 'information however recorded', so business-related social media content is subject to the same recordkeeping requirements as information created by other means.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)

Freedom of Information Act 1992

An agency must deal with an access application as soon as practicable and within the permitted period of 45 days after it is received, or another period agreed with the applicant or allowed by the Information Commissioner where statutory conditions are met. 'Deal with' means consider the application, decide access and charges, and give written notice of the decision; no timely notice produces a deemed refusal.

RETENTION & DISPOSAL

General Disposal Authority for Local Government Records and sector disposal authorities approved by the State Records Commission

Retention and disposal authorities

Retention follows the business function the content documents. Social media records sit under the same disposal authority as the activity they evidence, as set out in your recordkeeping plan. Capture is a risk-management decision; retention depends on the subject matter and an approved retention and disposal authority.

CONSEQUENCES

Destruction outside the recordkeeping plan can be an offence

State Records Act 2000 (WA) s 78

Section 78 of the State Records Act 2000 creates offences that include a government-organisation employee destroying a record unless the disposal is authorised by the organisation's approved recordkeeping plan — maximum penalty \$10,000, with the statutory defences in s 78(6). Under the FOI Act, no written notice within the permitted period is a deemed refusal, with internal and Information Commissioner review to follow.

If it was posted, commented on, edited or deleted on an official channel — it can be a government record when it evidences official business.

Who oversees the record

The authorities that set the recordkeeping standards, publish the social media guidance and review how requests are handled in Western Australia.

RECORDS AUTHORITY

State Records Office of Western Australia

Social communication tools guidance

Sets the recordkeeping standards and publishes the guidance that applies to official social media in Western Australia. Your retention and disposal decisions are made under its authorities.

OVERSIGHT

Office of the Information Commissioner WA

www.wa.gov.au/organisation/office-of-the-information-commissioner

Reviews how FOI access applications are handled, including complaints about delay or refusal — which makes a findable, exportable record the easiest way to keep a request routine.

WHO IS COVERED

WA agencies · Local governments · Regional subsidiaries

'Agency' includes local government, regional local government and regional subsidiaries (FOI Act Glossary cl 1).

WHAT TO CAPTURE

Posts, comments, edits, deletions and media

Preserve original content with its context: conversation relationships, timestamps, available metadata and version history. A screenshot may omit metadata, edits, deletions and conversation relationships — a capture that keeps the thread and the changes is easier to rely on later.

Without a complete archive, **responding with confidence** to a request, audit or inquiry gets harder every day.

— READY TO GET STARTED

Social Media Records **Readiness Checklist.**

A social media archive is a critical part of your recordkeeping strategy — one shared source of truth for your records, legal, IT and communications teams.

**Get the right people involved.**

Bring together records, communications, legal, governance and IT.

**Understand what laws apply.**

Know your records Act, access regime and retention authorities.

**Know your formats.**

Preserve original content, context, metadata, links and attachments.

**Think about privacy.**

Protect personal information and control access appropriately.

**Know which accounts are in scope.**

Identify every account used to conduct official business.

**Define what needs to be captured.**

Include posts, comments, replies, edits, deletions and media.

**Set your retention rules.**

Sentence records under your retention and disposal authority.

**Capture edits and deletions.**

Preserve content even after it changes or disappears.

**Plan for information requests.**

Make records easy to search, retrieve and export.

**Protect record integrity.**

Maintain authentic, complete and defensible records.

**Control access to your archive.**

Set clear permissions and maintain an audit trail.

**Test your process regularly.**

Make sure you can find and export records when needed.

Captured. Searchable. Defensible.

Ready to see how Brolly supports the capture, search, integrity and export steps on this list? Turn the page.



— TRUSTED BY GOVERNMENT

Keep the social record ready before the request arrives.

Social content can change or disappear long before an information request is received. Brolly gives authorised teams a searchable archive of supported content from connected official accounts, preserving available context so records can be found, reviewed and exported when needed.



"These are part of the public record. With Brolly, we can search by name or issue and retrieve the entire conversation, not just fragments."

Brett Byfield, Coordinator Data Information and Systems — City of Kalamunda

[Read the City of Kalamunda story →](#)

GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS THAT USE BROLLY

TOWN of CLAREMONT



City of
Bayswater



- ✓ Capture supported posts, comments, edits & deletions automatically
- ✓ Search and export response-ready record sets with metadata intact
- ✓ Nothing disposed of without your instruction

[Book a free demo →](#)

[The WA law guide](#)

Captured. Searchable. Defensible.