



File No: 21/5/P

## **CIRCULAR NO 1 OF 2025**

### **TO ALL HEADS OF GOVERNMENTAL BODIES AT NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL LEVEL**

#### **SYSTEMATIC DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC RECORDS IN THE CUSTODY OF GOVERNMENTAL BODIES**

1. Governmental bodies are reminded that according to the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act (43 of 1996 as amended) (NARSSA Act), Section 13 (1) of the NARSSA Act stipulate that the National Archivist/Provincial Archivist is charged with the proper management and care of all records in the custody of governmental bodies.
2. In accordance with section 13(2)(a) of the NARSSA Act (43 of 1996 as amended), no public records under the control of any governmental body shall be transferred to an archives repository, destroyed, erased or otherwise disposed of without written Disposal Authority issued by the National Archivist or Provincial Archivist in the case of governmental bodies at Provincial and Local level.
3. The governmental bodies are requested to ensure that their organisations have been issued with disposal authorities, maintain destruction register and submit the destruction of certificate to the National/Provincial Archivist to comply with the NARSSA Act. There are three different types of Disposal Authorities that can be issued by National /Provincial Archives to governmental bodies, namely: Standing Disposal Authority, Limited Disposal Authority and General Disposal Authority.

These Authorities are utilised as follows:



**a. Standing Disposal Authority**

This disposal authority is issued for current records like the current paper-based filing system, current schedule for records other than correspondence systems, current electronic records and projects, and current micrographic records and projects.

**b. Limited Disposal Authority**

This disposal authority is issued for all terminated records. This type of authority is granted to a specific office upon request for the destruction of certain specified records and it's not repetitive in nature.

**c. General Disposal Authority**

This disposal authority is issued for specific types of records that are common in all bodies such as financial records, personnel records, etc. The existence of a General Disposal Authority does not automatically imply that the records can be destroyed.

4. Prior to the disposal of records, the governmental body must have determined the retention periods, in line with the disposal authority issued. Governmental bodies should ensure that records earmarked for disposal are those that are no longer required, have no litigations, pending investigations or request which would involve records in question in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA) and Promotion of Personal Information Act (POPIA).
5. If the governmental bodies have outsourced the destruction services of records, it is the responsibility of the governmental body to ensure that records are disposed in a manner that does not compromise the information contained in the records. Whichever method used to destroy records should ensure records are destroyed in totality. Governmental bodies should also take into consideration that the National/Provincial Archives does not provide vetting processes to service providers rendering destruction services.



6. The recommended method of disposal for paper records is shredding, followed by recycling of the shredded material. Electronic records should be permanently deleted from all storage media. For records stored on physical devices (such as hard drives, CDs, USBs, cassettes, banners, etc.), disposal must be carried out in line with the ICT and SCM internal processes of the relevant government body. This should only take place once the Records Manager has confirmed, with reference to the issued Disposal Authority, that the information has no archival value.
7. To ensure that governmental bodies continue to comply with the requirements of the National and Provincial Archives, no records shall be destroyed without the knowledge of the Records Manager/Head of the Records Management Unit of the governmental body. The Records Manager/Head of records should obtain disposal authority from the National/Provincial Archivist.
8. To ensure the systematic disposal of records, governmental bodies are requested to remove all shredders in the passages, offices and easily accessible areas. Shredders must be placed in access controlled centralised areas, under the control of the records manager to maintain destruction register and ensure the legal disposal of records with the institution.

For more information or clarity on disposals, feel free to contact Ms. Sbonile Mbhele on [SbonileM@Dsac.gov.za](mailto:SbonileM@Dsac.gov.za) or 012 441 3269, or visit the National Archives website <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.za/node/1278> for contact information of the respective Provincial Heads.

Your assistance in ensuring responsible records management is appreciated.

Regards,  
**Mr. Puleng Kekana**  
The National Archivist

