

# SHAREPOINT

MS Office SharePoint Server (SharePoint) allows for the creation of secure sites/work spaces where members of a team can work together on the same task or project regardless of organization or geographic location. Participants outside of government may also be granted access to sites. Managing government records on these workspaces can be a challenge. This guideline provides a brief overview of employee responsibilities for using and managing government records created and posted to SharePoint sites.

## 1. Recordkeeping Responsibilities



Employees need to create and keep complete, accurate records sufficient to document their decision-making and work activities. This includes any documents maintained on SharePoint sites that provide the best evidence of government business activities, transactions, policy or decisions. Manage these records in accordance with government records management policies and standards. Here are some tips:

- **Assign responsibility** for the management of SharePoint documents to a specific office, branch, or individual (e.g., the site administrator).
- For project-based sites, **do not wait until the project is over** before identifying who needs to manage and file the documents.

Make classifying and filing records in the shared office recordkeeping system part of your normal work routine!

For committee or project team workspaces, recommended practice is for the **office or branch responsible for secretarial/project lead functions** to serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) and file non-transitory/official committee records into its [recordkeeping system](#).

Note that for inter-ministry or inter-jurisdictional committees, a lead ministry should be identified as responsible for the committee's records. Each participating ministry/agency must also maintain its own OPR file (as the OPR role is ministry/agency-specific rather than government-wide).

Ensure that any shared **sensitive or confidential information** is appropriately protected and only shared with authorized individuals.

## 2. Document Management: Version Control and Naming

When documents are the result of collaboration, one author needs to take responsibility for **declaring documents as final** when appropriate, and creating new **versions** of documents as and when required.

Establish **document naming conventions** for documents being posted to the site. Tips:

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- **Title:** include a clear description of the document, the version number and date of the document (creation date or date of update).
- **Format:** establish a standard format for including these elements in the title, such as:
  - subject version date.ext **or** date-subject-version.ext
  - version 1 **or** v.1
  - YYYY-MM-DD **or** DD MONTH YYYY

### 3. What Should I File and When?

Documents should be filed in the office recordkeeping system when:

- The records are **critical to documenting the activities and decisions** made by the group using the site – regardless of whether they originated from outside of your office/branch (e.g., another ministry, government, vendor or group).
- The records schedule requires the documents be transferred to the **government archives**.
- Authorised staff who are not members of the site require access (e.g., for litigation).
- A project ends and the site is being **shut down**.
- Once the official records are classified and filed, any duplicate copies may be treated as **redundant** and destroyed.

SharePoint is not suitable for the ongoing management and preservation of government records. Storing documents in a SharePoint site **is not** equivalent to using a fully functional office recordkeeping system.

#### Limitations of SharePoint for managing government records include:

- **Restricted access.** No one outside of the SharePoint site membership has access to, or knowledge of, the records.
- **Difficulty searching for records.** Records may be missed when needed for operational or administrative purposes, when responding to a request under the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (FOIPPA), or during the document discovery process for litigation.
- **Limited control of records.** Records are not managed in the office recordkeeping system.
- **Possible loss of records with long-term value.** No ability to ensure the preservation of government's historic records.

### 4. Sharing Records

Depending upon the types of records being posted and site membership (e.g., outside your ministry/agency), you may need to place access restrictions on particular documents or document libraries. Staff using SharePoint sites need to ensure that sensitive or personal information is protected in accordance with *FOIPPA* and government policies and procedures.

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#### Additional Information

Contact your [Records Officer](#) or check out the rest of the Records Management website.