

## MICROSOFT 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 through the use of BCeIDs.

In addition to sharing documents, SharePoint can be used for other collaborative tools such as surveys, blogs and discussion forums, and wikis.

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 and accurate records sufficient to document their decision-making and work activities.*<sup>1</sup> This applies to all types of government records, including any documents maintained on SharePoint sites that provide the best evidence of government business activities, transactions, policy or decisions.

These records must be managed in accordance with corporate records management policy and standards.

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<sup>1</sup> [IM/IT Supplemental Policy Manual](#)

**Assign responsibility** for the ongoing management of documents to a specific office, branch or individual. This will often be the site administrator, who manages the site and invites members to participate in the workspace. Do not wait until the project is over before doing this.

*Make classifying and filing records to the shared office recordkeeping system a part of the normal work routine.*

For ministry committee or project team workspaces, the recommended practice is for the **office or branch responsible for secretarial/project lead functions** to take long term care of non-transitory records by serving as the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR). Note that for inter-ministry or inter-jurisdictional committees, copies of records may also need to be filed in individual committee member's ministry recordkeeping systems.

*Treat documents posted to these sites in the same manner as other government records.*

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

**Note:** SharePoint sites may include records transferred from Groove workspaces. There is no automatic backup of Groove workspaces, data is stored locally and does not reside on any network drives. However,

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there is a process for transferring records to a SharePoint site, EDRMS TRIM, or office LAN for storage and back up purposes. See RP#6 for more information about using Microsoft Groove.

### 2. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT: VERSION CONTROL AND DOCUMENT NAMING

When documents are the result of collaboration between several authors, recommended practice is for one of the authors to take responsibility for:

- declaring them as final when appropriate
- creating new versions of documents as and when required

Establish document naming standards for documents being posted to the site. For example:

- include a clear description of the document, the version number and date of the document (creation date or date of update)
- establish a standard format for including these elements in the title, for example:
  - subject\_version\_date.ext or date-Subject-version.ext
  - version 1 or v.1
  - YYYY-MM-DD or DD MONTH YYYY

Ask your Ministry or Corporate Records Officer about standards in your ministry or agency.

### 3. CLASSIFY AND FILE

At a minimum, documents should be filed in the office recordkeeping system when:

- the records retention and disposition schedule requires the document be transferred to the government archives
- authorised staff, who are not members of the site require access, e.g., in order to respond to access and litigation requests
- the project ends and the site is being shut down

This may include documents/records in the workspace that originated outside of your office/branch (e.g., another ministry, government, vendor or group) but which are critical to documenting the activities and decisions made by the members.

SharePoint sites are not suitable for the ongoing management and preservation of government records. Storing and managing documents/records within a SharePoint site **is not** equivalent to using the shared office recordkeeping system.

Limitations of these spaces 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 responding to search

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requirements for a request under [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPP Act\)](#) or during the document discovery process.

- **limited records management tools.** The technology currently in use does not enable compliance with government retention and disposition policies.
- **loss of archival records.** No ability to ensure long term preservation of government's historic records.

Once the "official" copy is classified and filed in the office recordkeeping system, the duplicate copies in the SharePoint document library may be treated as transitory records.

*Transitory records are of only short-term or temporary usefulness and are not required for financial, legal, audit or other statutory purposes. They may be disposed of when no longer needed. For more information see the [Transitory Records Schedule 102901](#).*

Government employees must manage their copies of these shared records in accordance with corporate policy and standards.

Site members should be aware of procedures/policies relating to the sharing of sensitive or personal information on collaborative work spaces.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need more information or assistance with managing MS SharePoint Server records and sites, please contact your Ministry or Corporate Records Officer.

See also the *Advanced Communication and Collaboration Services (ACCS) Guidelines* (internal publication) which, in addition to records management guidelines, contains information regarding privacy and security issues

For more information about ARCS, ORCS, EDRMS (TRIM), and relevant records management concepts, policies and standards, visit the [government records management website](#).

#### 4. SHARING RECORDS

When staff working in different program areas or ministries, or individuals outside of the B.C. Government, are invited to a SharePoint site, they are provided with read only access or the ability to contribute (e.g., copy, edit, and share records). Further access restrictions may be placed on individual documents/document libraries.