

Information Classification Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the *Information Classification Policy* is to provide a consistent approach across the WA health system for the classification of information assets by outlining the minimum requirements and responsibilities of WA health system entities. The minimum information classification requirements prescribed in this Policy align with the *Western Australian Government Information Classification Policy* and [Cabinet Handbook](#).

This Policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Information Management Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(k) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This Policy is also a mandatory requirement for the Department of Health pursuant to section 29 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

This Policy supersedes Operational Directive 0537/14 *Information Classification Policy*.

2. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to all WA health system entities, as defined in this Policy.

To the extent that the requirements contained within this Policy are applicable to the services purchased from contracted health entities, WA health system entities are responsible for ensuring these requirements are accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

3. Policy requirements

3.1 Information Classification Categories

WA health system entities are required to adopt the mandatory information classification categories specified below for all information held in the WA health system:

1. Unofficial
 - Information not related to official work duties or functions.
2. Official
 - Information created or processed in the WA health system as part of the business of Government including Department of State, System Manager and Health Service Provider functions.
3. Official: Sensitive
 - Official information that could result in damage to individuals, organisations or government if released.

In addition to the mandatory information classification categories specified above, WA health system entities may receive, or handle information designated as either 'Commonwealth Security Classified' or 'Cabinet Information' which must be handled in accordance with section 3.2 of this Policy.

3.2. WA Health System Information Classification minimum requirements

WA health system entities must:

- Maintain appropriate local plans, policies and/or procedures to ensure information is classified in line with the information classification categories specified in section 3.1 of this Policy
- Maintain appropriate local education and awareness strategies to support compliance with this Policy
- Maintain appropriate local policies, processes and/or procedures to ensure information is monitored and, where appropriate, reviewed and reclassified throughout the information lifecycle
- Ensure information designated as Commonwealth Security Classified is handled in accordance with the relevant provision(s) of applicable inter-jurisdiction agreement(s)
- Ensure information designated as Cabinet Information is always classified as 'Official: Sensitive' and handled in accordance with the *Government of Western Australia Cabinet Handbook*.

4. Compliance monitoring

Health Service Providers are responsible for complying with this Policy.

The System Manager, through the Purchasing and System Performance Division, Department of Health, may carry out compliance audits to ascertain the level of Health Service Provider compliance with this Policy and may provide updates to Data Stewards, Chief Executives of Health Service Providers, the Director General and other relevant persons regarding the findings of compliance monitoring activities.

The Department of Health (Information and Performance Governance Unit), as a Department of State, is responsible for monitoring and reporting Department of Health compliance with this Policy to Executive.

5. Related documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this Policy:

- [Western Australian Government Information Classification Policy](#)

6. Supporting information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this Policy:

- [Western Australian Information Classification Policy Assessment flow chart](#)
- [Western Australian Information Classification Policy Business Impact Levels Tool](#)

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this Policy.

Term	Definition
Cabinet information	means confidential Cabinet documents, discussions and decisions as governed by the <i>Government of Western Australia Cabinet Handbook</i> .
Commonwealth Security Classified	means an information classification for information either originating from, or shared with, the Australian Government under an applicable inter-jurisdictional agreement.
Data Steward	A position with delegated responsibility from the Director General of the Department to manage a data collection. The Data Steward's primary responsibility is to protect the privacy, security and confidentiality of information within data collections. Data Stewards also approve the conditions for appropriate use and disclosure of information for clearly defined purposes that comply with WA Health's statutory obligations and Information Management Policy Framework.
Information	The terms 'information' generally refers to data that has been processed in such a way as to be meaningful to the person who receives it. Information can be personal or non-personal in nature.
Information classification	means a business-level process whereby the sensitivity of a piece of information (or collection of information) is evaluated such that the sensitivity will be clear to those who access it subsequently.
WA health system entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Health Service Providers as established by an order made under section 32(1)(b) of the <i>Health Services Act 2016</i>;The Department of Health as an administrative division of the State of Western Australia pursuant to section 35 of the <i>Public Sector Management Act 1994</i>. <p>Note: Contracted health entities are not considered WA health system entities.</p>

8. Policy contact

Enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to:

Title: Assistant Director General
Directorate: Purchasing and System Performance
Email: RoyalSt.PSPInfoManagement@health.wa.gov.au

9. Document control

Version	Published date	Effective from	Review date	Effective to	Amendment (s)
MP 0146/20	4 December 2020	4 December 2020	December 2023	19 August 2021	Original version
MP 0146/20 v1.0	19 August 2021	19 August 2021	December 2023	Current	Amended links to the Related document (<i>Western Australian Government Information Classification Policy</i>) and Support information (<i>Western Australian Information Classification Policy Assessment flow chart and Western Australian Information Classification Policy Business Impact Levels Tool</i>)

10. Approval

Approval by	Nicole O'Keefe, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Governance Division, Department of Health
Approval date	21 November 2020

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