



CITY PROCEDURE

SECTION: Municipal Government

NO: MU-IN-11

REFERENCE: Information Management

Date: Nov 2011

**Next Review Date: Nov
2013**

TITLE: Document Naming Protocol/Procedure

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To set out standard naming conventions for use within The City of Dryden's EDRMS (Electronic Document Records Management System). Naming documents or records consistently and according to agreed upon conventions or formats facilitates the efficient storage and retrieval of records.
- 1.2 Implementing standard document names will support the following objectives:
- (a) Facilitate better access to and retrieval of electronic documents;
 - (b) Allow sorting of documents in logical sequence (e.g. subject, date);
 - (c) Help users to identify the items they are looking for easily and support the ability to recognize the content of a document from a list; and,
 - (d) Help keep track of versions of documents.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 The following are subject to this policy:
- (a) All electronic records created, received and maintained by any department as evidence of transactions of business and legal obligations, including paper records digitized for input into the EDRMS;
 - (b) City of Dryden employees (regular, part-time, casual or contract);
 - (c) City of Dryden members of Council;

- (d) City of Dryden Boards and Agencies (Library Board, Police Services Board, DDC, Museum Advisory Board); and,
- (e) Contractors, Agents and Consultants.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 EDRMS - means the designated corporate Electronic Document Records Management System.
- 3.2 Metadata - means data about data. For a document that is data such as its author, name, creation date, department, document year, type or any other information that can be associated with it. This data is entered into fields on the electronic profile forms.
- 3.3 Naming Protocols or Conventions - is a list of standardized terminology, words, or phrases, used for indexing and information retrieval usually in a defined consistent format; also referred to as controlled vocabulary.

*For a complete list of Definitions, refer to:
Appendix "A" of the Corporate Records Management Policy*

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES, PROCEDURES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The Document Naming Protocol should adhere to the following guidelines:
 - (a) File names should be kept as short as possible yet still be meaningful. Long file names mean long file paths and long URLs which increase the likelihood of error, are more difficult to remember and recognize, and are more difficult to transmit in emails as they often 'break'. However, also avoid using initials, abbreviations and codes that are not commonly understood. Some words add length to a file name but do not contribute towards the meaning, for example words like "the", "a", and "and". Where the remaining file name is still meaningful within the context of the file directory these elements can be removed. Sometimes words have standard abbreviations that can be used or The Corporation may create an approved list of abbreviations;

- (b) The City of Dryden EDRMS has the capability to capture and search metadata which means the names of documents can be considerably shorter. For example, since the document author and business unit can be captured on the profile form, the naming convention might contain only the following elements: Title, Subject/Description and Date;
- (c) Avoid repetition or redundancy in file names and file paths. Unnecessary repetition increases the length which also increases the likelihood of error;
- (d) It is important to use a standard separator between words such as capital letters to differentiate between words. Avoid using spaces and underscores in file names. Some software packages have difficulty recognizing file names that include spaces. This can be a particularly difficult for files when they are published on an external website so it is best to avoid spaces. Using underscores also increases length and should be avoided. Remember file names cannot include any of the following characters: Forward slash (/), backward slash (\), greater than (>), less than (<), asterisk (*), question mark (?), quotation mark ("), pipe symbol (|), colon (:), or semicolon (;);
- (e) When including a number in a file name always give it as a two-digit number, unless it is a year, as file names are displayed in alphanumeric order. To maintain the numeric order on file names that include numbers, it is important to include a zero for numbers 0-9 (01,02,03,04, etc). This helps to retrieve the latest record number;
- (f) If using a date in the file name, always state the date 'back to front', and use four digit years, two digit months and two digit days: YYYYMMDD or YYYYMM or YYYY or YYYY-YYYY. Using the dates back to front ensures that the chronological order of the records is maintained when the file names are listed in the file directory or on a search result. This helps when trying to retrieve the latest dated record;
- (g) When including a personal name in a file name give the surname first followed by the initial(s). It may be appropriate to include within a file name the name of an individual, usually when the record is a piece of correspondence. However, it is not usually appropriate to name records after the record owner or author, i.e. avoid naming records after yourself. When including a personal name, the reason to use the surname first followed by initials is that it is most likely that the record will be retrieved according to the surname of the individual;

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- (h) Avoid using descriptive names or common words such as 'draft' or 'letter' or 'final' at the start of file names, or all of those records will appear together in the file directory, making it more difficult to retrieve the records you are looking for. The file directory will list files in alphanumeric order. This means that all records with file names starting "Draft" will be listed together. When retrieving files it will be more useful to find the draft budget report next to the previous year's budget, rather than next to an unrelated draft record;
 - (i) Include and order the elements in a file name according to the way in which the record will be retrieved. If the records are retrieved according to their date, the date element should appear first. If the records are retrieved according to their description, the description element should appear first;
 - (j) The file names of records relating to recurring events should include the date, event name and a description of the event, (e.g. meeting minutes, weekly, monthly or annual reports, event management and budget planning documents) so that the record can be identified when retrieved. When deciding the order of the elements consider (h) and (i) above. Date first will usually be appropriate for events that are time specific and recurring. Event first will usually appropriate for events that are infrequent, but regularly recurring; and,
 - (k) The version number of a record should be indicated in its file name by the inclusion of 'V' followed by a two digit number and, where applicable, 'Draft' or 'Final'. Some records go through a number of versions, for example they start out as working drafts, become consultation drafts and finish with a final draft, which may then be reviewed and updated at a later date. It is important to be able to differentiate between these various drafts by giving them each their own number. Where a version number is applicable, it should always appear in the file name of the record so that the most recent version can be easily identified and retrieved.
- 4.2 Each department within The Corporation may determine its own file naming procedure for documents specific to that department as long as it is applied consistently, approved by the Clerk and meets the intent of this protocol.

5.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The City Clerk has the overall responsibility for management of all information in The Corporation of The City of Dryden including the document naming protocol.
- 5.2 The Corporate Records Management Coordinator is responsible for administering the Document Naming Protocol and for assigning a naming protocol to new document types prior to use.
- 5.3 The Senior Management Team and Department Managers will be responsible for becoming familiar with the naming protocols and ensuring all their staff is aware of their responsibilities. Managers will ensure compliance with this protocol and address non-compliance.
- 5.4 Departmental Champions will be responsible for assisting staff in the naming of documents to ensure consistency across The Corporation.
- 5.5 Employees will familiarize themselves and comply with the document naming protocol when filing documents into the EDRMS to ensure efficient storage and retrieval of documents and records.

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS / SYSTEMS:

- 6.1 Documents related to the Document Naming Protocol/Procedure:
- (a) Corporate Records and Information Management Policy
 - (b) Naming Conventions for Document Types in EDRMS

History			
Draft Date:	Nov. 2011		
Approval Date:	July 16, 2012	Approved by:	By-law 3979-2012
Amendment Date:		Approved by:	
Amendment Date:		Approved by:	

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