



**Archdiocese  
Of Indianapolis**

*The Church in  
Central and Southern  
Indiana*

**RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS**

**1996**

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# Records Management Policy

## Archdiocese of Indianapolis

### *INTRODUCTION*

Records Management is an attempt at organizing the paper that crosses one's desk during the normal events of a day. This policy will help in organizing these papers and determining which ones should be kept and for what length of time.

### *AUTHORITY*

Code of Canon Law, 1983; Canon 486

1. All diocesan and parochial documents must be protected with the greatest of care.
2. In every curia, there is to be established in a safe place a diocesan archive or store-room in which the instruments and writings which refer to both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the diocese, properly arranged and diligently secured, are to be safeguarded.
3. There is to be an inventory or catalog of the documents contained in the archive, with a brief synopsis of the contents of each one.  
(See also Canons 487, 488, 489, 490 & 491)

### *DEFINITION OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT*

There are probably many ways to define *records management* but basically it is an effort to organize papers to best serve the needs of your office and the Catholic Center. Records management involves arranging the papers in your office into files that you can access readily and with a minimum of effort. Records management involves reviewing these files or records periodically to be sure that the proper records are being kept for the efficiency of your office and for the Catholic Center. Records will need to be reviewed for administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical ramifications on a yearly basis and a timeframe determined as to the length that the document will be kept. In our records management program, we hope to give you guidelines that will help you follow through on maintaining good records for your office and the Catholic Center.

### *FILING GUIDELINES*

Many filing options are available, depending on the type of documents to be kept. The best filing system is the one that you can access easily and find documents easily. Some offices prefer the alphabetical system, others file by subject, and still others use a numerical system. Whatever system you determine to be the best for your office, remember to be consistent in your filing. If you need information or ideas, please contact the records assistant for assistance. Many guides are available to help you determine the best method for your office.

How to store records is a major concern. One item to remember is to try to keep documents created at the 8 1/2" by 11" size. Legal-size documents take up much more space and are difficult to store. This is a major concern, especially when the documents must be kept permanently.

## *STORAGE*

When records and files no longer need to be kept in a current file in your agency or office, they can be placed into storage. At the time they are placed into storage, the records will need to be clearly identified and marked with a destruction date and/or a date for archival review. It is best to keep all records in the 8 1/2" by 11" size because files are more easily stored and take up less space. When placing these records in storage or in the archives, it is best to use the smaller storage boxes. Purchasing has record of the boxes recommended (SPARCO, SPR01651). Please contact the records assistant for assistance (ext. 1538) when preparing items for storage. Identification of the records stored should be placed on the outside of the storage box, along with a review date.

When the destruction and/or archival date become current, your office will be contacted to confirm your instructions. At the same time, the office will be asked to sign a verification form attesting to the destruction of the records.

If the records are to be moved to the archives, the records assistant will review the records and place them in the archives for permanent storage. You will also be consulted at this time.

## *ELECTRONIC RECORDS*

Many records now can be stored electronically versus a paper format. The retention guidelines should be followed for whatever format is used for storage of the data.

## *ARCHIVE REVIEW*

Archive review will involve reviewing records for possible permanent storage in the archives. The records assistant will assist in this review with office staff.

## *CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS*

Not all records should be placed in permanent storage due to the confidential nature of those files. Other arrangements will be made to ensure restricted access of confidential records. Please contact the records assistant if this requirement is necessary.

## *REFERENCE FOR PARISH RECORDS*

A good guide for retention of parish records can be found with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Please check the following website for information on retention for parish records:

<http://www.usccb.org/bishops/dfi/retention.htm> A brief addendum for parish records is added to the end of this retention schedule.

Please feel free to contact the records assistant for further information and direction.

## RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

Each year, every file should be reviewed to determine if it is still an active file and needs to be kept in your office; or if the file can be moved either to storage or to the archives. Some records will need to be kept permanently while others should be stored for a specific number of years but do not need to be kept in an active file. The following guidelines are meant to help you determine the length that some records should be kept. At the end of the retention period, the file should be reviewed for disposition. This could include but is not limited to, destruction, permanent retention, and further retention. This schedule is offered as a guide to each office and can be used for most administrative records. Those offices working with specific Church records will need to determine their schedules based upon those guidelines. Please contact the records assistant for assistance in completing these schedules.

<b>GENERAL OFFICE RECORDS</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Administrative Files	Active File: 1 Year; Inactive 2 Years
Agency Budget (Office Working Copy)	3 Years
Annual Year-End Reports	Permanent
Appointment Calendar Books	2 years; Archbishop's and other Secretariat Heads and Vicars: Permanent
Blueprints	Permanent
Board Minutes	Permanent
Construction Specifications	Permanent
Contracts	6 Years after completion of terms
Correspondence Files	5 Years
Grant Records	Follow grant requirements; Otherwise, five years after final expenditure report
Newsletters	Permanent
Operations Manuals	Permanent
Paid Invoices (Office Copy; Original sent to Accounting)	3 Years
Program and Project Files	3 Years from end of project
Property Deeds	Permanent
Speeches, Articles	2 Years
Subject Files	1 Year
Telephone Message Book	6 Months to 1 Year
Vendor Files (Catalogs, etc)	6 Months to 1 Year

<b>ACCOUNTING</b>	
<b>Accounts Payable Records</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Accounts payable invoices/ledgers	Current Year + 4 Years
Bills/Invoices	Current Year + 4 Years
Cash Disbursements	Current Year + 4 Years
Donations	Current Year + 4 Years
Expense Reports	Current Year + 4 Years
Petty Cash Records	Current Year + 4 Years

Property Taxes	Current Year + 4 Years
Purchase Requisitions	Current Year + 4 Years
Travel Expenses/Employee Expenses	Current Year + 4 Years
Unemployment Insurance Payments	Current Year + 4 Years
Workers Comp Ins Payments	Current Year + 4 Years
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Accounts Receivable/Ledgers	Current Year + 4 Years
Cash books/journals/receipts/sales slips	Current Year + 4 Years
<b>Capital Property</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Acquisitions	Active + 4 Years
Depreciation Records	3 Years after end of contract
Fixed Assets	Active + 5 Years
Real Estate Transactions	Permanent
<b>General</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Account Ledgers	Current Year + 4 Years
Balance Sheets	Current Year + 4 Years
Book of Accounts	Current Year + 4 Years
General Ledger, annual	Permanent
General Ledger, monthly	1 Year
Journals/Journal Entries	Current Year + 4 Years
Ledgers/Registers	Current Year + 4 Years
Trial Balances	Current Year + 4 Years
<b>Payroll</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Payroll Checks/Cancelled	Current Year + 4 Years
Payroll History	Current Year + 4 Years
Payroll Journal	Current Year + 4 Years
Payroll Records	Current Year + 4 Years
Payroll Registers	Current Year + 4 Years
Terminated Employee Files	Permanent
Time Cards/Time Sheets	Current Year + 4 Years
Tuition Records	Current Year + 4 Years
W2's	Permanent

<b>FINANCE</b>	
<b>Banking</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Bank Deposits	Current Year + 4 Years
Bank Reconciliation	Current Year + 4 Years
Bank Statements	Current Year + 4 Years
Canceled Checks	Current Year + 4 Years
Check Registers	Current Year + 4 Years
Deposit Slips	Current Year + 4 Years

<b>General</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Audit Reports	Permanent
Charity Gaming Financial Records	4 Years
Budget Work Papers	2 Years
Finalized Budgets	Current year plus 5 years
Financial Reports/Statements, Annual	Permanent
Financial Reports/Statements, Monthly	3 Years
Parish Annual Reports	Permanent
School Annual Reports	Permanent
<b>Stewardship And Development</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Capital Campaign Pledge Cards	5 years from end of campaign
Capital Campaign Donation/Contribution Records	7 years from end of campaign
Capital Campaign Year-End Contribution Reports	Permanent
Consultants Annual Performance Report	Permanent
Investment Statements	6 years after last activity
United Catholic Appeal Pledge Cards	5 years from end of campaign
United Catholic Appeal Contribution/Donation Records	7 years from end of campaign
United Catholic Appeal Contribution/Donation Records Year End Reports	Permanent
Wills, Bequests, Charitable Trusts	Permanent

<b>CORPORATE RECORDS—Chancery Office</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Articles of Incorporation	Permanent
Bylaws	Permanent
Capital stock and bonds record	Permanent
Contracts and agreements	6 years after expiration
Copyrights and trademark registration	Permanent
Deacon Records	Permanent
Decrees of the Archbishop: Appointment letters, suppression of parishes, etc.	Permanent
Legal correspondence	4 years
Management Council Minutes	Permanent
Marriage dispensations/permissions	Permanent
Priest records	Permanent
Reports	
Quinquennial Report	Permanent
Annual Report to Rome	Permanent
Ordo Report	Permanent
Official Catholic Directory	Permanent
Seminarian Records	Permanent

<b>INSURANCE</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Accident reports	6 years after file is closed
Fire inspection reports	6 years
Group disability records	6 years
Insurance policies	Permanent
Safety records	6 years
Settled insurance claims	3 years after termination
<b>TAXES</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Payroll tax returns	4 years
Pension/Retirement	5 years
Informational returns	5 years
Real estate exemptions	Permanent
Sales and use tax returns	5 years
Tax returns and canceled checks (Federal, state and local)	5 years

<b>HUMAN RESOURCE (PERSONNEL) RECORDS</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	
Employee Benefits	6 Years
Pension Plans/Agreements	Permanent
Retirement Plans	Permanent
<b>General</b>	
Attendance Records	3 Years
Employee Manuals	Active plus 10 years
Job Descriptions	Active plus 10 years
<b>Health and Safety</b>	
Accident Reports	Current Year + 5 years
Elevator Certificates	Active
Emergency Action Plans	Active
Health and Safety Bulletins	Current Year + 5 Years
Injury Reports	Current Year + 5 Years
<b>Personnel Actions</b>	
Applications	One year
Employee Evaluations	Three years
Job announcements	One year
Personnel Files	Permanent

<b>PURCHASING</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Bids, accepted	Active + 6 years
Bids, rejected	1 year
Catalogs	Active
Price Lists	Active
Purchase Orders	Current Year + 4 Years
Receiving Documents	1 year
Vendor Literature	Active

<b>CATHOLIC CHARITIES</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Client Files or Case Files	7 years after end of services
<b>ST. MARY'S CHILD CENTER</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Client Files or Case Files	Permanent

### ***METROPOLITAN TRIBUNAL***

Any written documentation that pertains to a church marriage case must be retained indefinitely. The original documentation must be retained for 10 years after the case in question is closed either by the final decision of a church tribunal, by renunciation, which has been accepted by the Judge, or by abatement decreed by the Judge. Examples of documents pertinent to a church marriage case would be the following: petition; marriage, divorce and baptismal documents; testimonies of petitioner, respondent and witnesses; procedural decrees; briefs of advocate and defender of the bond; sentences and decrees which decide a case and any petitions for appeal.

## Parish Records Addendum

<b>PARISH RECORDS*</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
<b>Sacramental Records</b>	
Baptism Register	Permanent
First Communion Register	Permanent
Confirmation Register	Permanent
Marriage Register and Case Files	Permanent
Death Register	Permanent
Burial Cards/Record	Permanent
<b>Publications</b>	
Anniversary/History Books	Permanent
Annual Reports (Diocesan and Parish)	Permanent
Parish Bulletins/Newsletters	Permanent
<b>Administrative Records</b>	
Annual Reports to Chancery	Permanent
Census Records/Roster of Parishioners	Permanent
Parish Council Minutes	Permanent
Finance Council Minutes	Permanent
<b>Financial Records</b>	
Contribution Envelopes	3 Years
<b>Other</b>	
Cemetery Lot Maps	Permanent

\*Source: See [www.usccb.org/bishops/dfi/retention.htm](http://www.usccb.org/bishops/dfi/retention.htm)