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Chapter 1: Introduction

In carrying out its ecclesial mission of ordering divine worship, and overseeing and exercising the works of the sacred apostolate including education, catechesis, social concerns and charity, especially toward the needy, and the caring for and decent support of the clergy and other ministers, the Church must engage in the administration of temporal goods. As part of the responsible administration of these goods, those who minister in the Church produce and receive a number of documents that, by law, must be protected with reasonable care. Indeed, the Code of Canon Law states, “In every curia there is to be erected in a safe place a diocesan archive, or record storage area, in which instruments and written documents which pertain to the spiritual and temporal affairs of the diocese are to be safeguarded after being properly filed and diligently secured.” (CIC, c. 486 § 2).

The Archdiocese of Washington requires that different types of records be retained for specific periods of time, and that records be destroyed in an appropriate time and manner. Various provisions of state and federal law also require the Archdiocese to maintain certain types of records, usually for a specified period of time. Failure to follow this policy can cause significant harm to the Archdiocese and its workers.

Archdiocesan records are, therefore, important patrimony. The Archdiocese is committed to effective record retention to meet legal standards, minimize the cost of record retention, optimize the use of space, and ensure that outdated and useless records are destroyed. This policy applies to all records, whether maintained in hard (paper) copy, electronically, or in some other fashion. These guidelines pertain to all records generated or received by employees and staff of the Archdiocese of Washington and its parishes and schools.



Chapter 2: The Records Retention Policy

The Record Retention Policy serves as a framework for the Archdiocese's record retention program. Each parish should consult the policy as a guideline while implementing a record storage system and procedures that address the specific needs of their office. The Policy is included as an appendix to this manual.

Retention and Maintenance of Records

The Archdiocese of Washington requires that different types of records be retained for specific periods of time in accordance with federal, state, and local record retention mandates. The retention period for each kind of record is established in the Archdiocese of Washington's Records Retention Schedule, which is incorporated into this manual.

Adherence to these guidelines allows the Archdiocese to (1) meet legal standards for protection, storage, and retrieval; (2) optimize space; (3) minimize cost; (4) protect the privacy of our priests and other religious, our staff, and our parishioners; and (5) preserve the Archdiocese's history.

Personnel

Pastors or principle may wish to designate a member of their staff to serve as Records Coordinator, or to assign certain duties to parish staff members in order to facilitate the parish's compliance with this policy.

Each Records Coordinator shall:

1. Implement the appropriate records retention and disposition schedule annually.
2. Ensure that the active records of the parish or school are maintained and managed in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
3. Consult with the Director of the Archives on records management or archival issues.

Procedure for Parishes

All parishes will destroy disposable records annually. Parish staff will prepare a Parish Records Disposition Form identifying the records to be destroyed, the quantity of the records, and their date span. The pastor or administrator will sign the form and then retain it permanently in the parish files.

The pastor or administrator will ensure that the records are promptly destroyed. No records may be destroyed unless their retention period has passed and the records are listed on the disposition form.

If the disposable records contain confidential information, they must be destroyed in such a way to prevent unauthorized disclosure of the information. In most instances, this will mean shredding or burning. Disposable records not containing confidential information (and shredded records) may be recycled.



Maintenance and Destruction of Records Containing Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information

Many records subject to record retention requirements contain sensitive personally identifiable information, or “PII” – information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact, or locate a single person, or to identify an individual in context. Examples of PII include dates of birth, social security numbers, driver’s license identification numbers, passport identification numbers, credit card or bank account numbers, citizenship or immigration status, medical information, mother’s maiden name, or criminal history. These records may be protected by federal, state, and local statutes. The production, use, retention, and destruction of records containing PII must be consistent with archdiocesan policy and applicable law. Any Records Coordinator with questions about legal requirements regarding records containing PII or other highly sensitive information should contact the Office of General Counsel for guidance.

Notwithstanding any retention period established by the Records Retention Schedule, records containing unredacted PII must be destroyed within a year after the Records Coordinator in possession of them determines that there is no longer a reasonable likelihood of their use. If the Records Coordinator in possession of such a record identifies a reason to retain an inactive record containing PII, the Records Coordinator will redact the PII from the record. The Director of Archives may assist to ensure that redaction of information is properly carried out.

When records containing PII or other confidential information are destroyed, they must be destroyed in such a way to prevent unauthorized disclosure of the information. In most instances, this will mean shredding or burning. The Records Coordinator shall arrange for the appropriate method of destruction in consultation with the Director of Archives. Disposable records not containing PII or other confidential information (and shredded records) may be recycled.

Records of Historical Value

For any record, regardless of its retention period on the Records Retention Schedule, which may be of significant historical value to the Archdiocese, the parish in possession of the record should consult with the Director of the Archives on how to best preserve the record. The Director may request its immediate transfer to the Archives.



Chapter 3: The Records Hold

On October 23, 2018, the Associate General Secretary and General Counsel of the USCCB circulated a “Request to Preserve Documents” from the U.S. Attorney from the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The categories of records included in the hold were reviewed by the staff in the Office of the General Counsel and the Office of Archives. In cooperation with the Office of Information Technology we have prepared a list of records that need to be held for the foreseeable future. They are listed below. Further reference also appears throughout this manual.

1. All records related to allegations of alleged sexual abuse, misconduct or pornography by Archdiocesan staff, teachers or clergy. This includes all reports, settlement agreements, payments, correspondence, memos, emails, and notes.
2. All personnel files for parish staff, teachers, etc.
3. All correspondence in paper or in email discussing reports for sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by all Archdiocesan staff, teachers or clergy. All calls to law enforcement and/or child protection services must be documented in writing.
4. All records related to liability insurance. This includes all documents, applications, invoices, forms, reports, policies, correspondence, payments, and claims against all Archdiocesan staff, teachers or clergy. Documentation related to liability insurance claims can be kept by the parishes and schools.
5. Public statements, press releases, and other communications related to sexual abuse, misconduct or pornography by all Archdiocesan staff, teachers or clergy. Some parishes have put out statements related to these issues. Parishes should be keeping at least one copy of their weekly bulletins and bulletin inserts as per their retention schedule. Copies of any other correspondence sent by Pastor to parishioners related to the issue should also be retained in paper or electronic form, whatever its original format is.
6. Records related to the transfer of money between the Archdiocese and its parishes, schools, and affiliate corporations. All documents, memos, files, bank and financial statements. Also all records of property sales and the dispersal of funds related to the sale of property. Some record of these transactions is kept permanently within Connect Now/Parish Soft. At this time, all other records related to these transactions should be retained indefinitely.



Chapter 4: Computer and Information Technology Security

The following guidance is provided for retention of electronic documents and records.

1. **Regular Back Up.** Backup all desktops, laptops, servers, and other computers regularly and if possible, nightly. Retain these backups. Discontinue all electronic data destruction and backup recycling policies, and do not overwrite any previously existing backups.
2. **Emails.** Do not delete any emails. All internal and external emails relating to parish or school business, sent or received, are to be retained. All employees must use only one email for school or parish business, and may not use a personal email address for school or parish business. No more than one employee may use the same email account or address.
 - a. If you have an @adw.org email address, use only your @adw.org email for parish or school business, and immediately discontinue forwarding from your @adw.org email address to any outside email address.
 - b. If you have a parish or school email address, suspend any filtering, forwarding, automatic deletion or other activity that may result in the destruction or alteration of any email relating to the school or parish, and recover any archived emails.
3. **Remote Files.** All remote files, including cloud/internet data stored on remote servers, must be backed up on local computers or network servers.
4. **Security.** Ensure that all devices used for parish or school business, including personal cell phones, are password protected, and where possible, encrypted.
 - a. All Pastors should maintain a list of passwords used for all hardware, software, social media accounts within their Parish.
5. **Further Guidance.** For further guidance on implementing these steps, e.g., how to back up your computers, please consult the Archdiocese of Washington *Information Systems Security Best Practices for Parishes and Schools*, which is included as an Appendix to this manual.



Chapter 5: General Administrative Records

The section on General Administrative Records provides guidance on general office correspondence and records that need to be kept by pastors and parish administrators. Some of the categories are repeated below in other sections but are offered in this section for general reference. Below is a listing of the types of general administrative records that parishes may have. It includes information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record. It also provides specific information about the Records Hold.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Official parish correspondence	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	This category includes official statements to parishioners from the Pastor, the Archbishop, or the Archdiocese on issues and events within in the parish.
Routine correspondence	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	<i>Hold all Emails. Please see information on the Record Hold in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 No. 2.</i>
Official Archdiocesan correspondence; communications from the Archbishop or Moderator of the Curia regarding a parish or school	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	If there is an issue within the parish or school that required consultation or intervention by the Archdiocese all records related to these events should be kept.
General office files	Biennial review	Paper	Shred	Staff members keep working office files for their own use. These files should be periodically reviewed and inactive or old files disposed of.
Insurance policies, active and canceled	Permanent	Paper	None	<i>Hold all records related to liability insurance. Please see information of the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 4</i>
Certificates of Occupancy	Permanent	Paper	None	Should be posted inside church or other parish or school buildings



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Title abstracts, deeds, and land and property records	Permanent	Paper	None	
Inventories of property and equipment	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Each parish should keep an updated list of property and equipment that you own.
Parish Annual Reports	Permanent	Paper	None	In addition to sending a copy to the Archdiocese, parishes and schools should also keep a copy.
Articles of Incorporation (of the church corporation, school or agency)	Permanent	Paper	None	Some schools and agencies are separately incorporated
Constitution and Bylaws	Until Dissolved	Paper	None	Separately incorporated schools and agencies may these in addition to their articles of incorporation
Minutes of advisory councils/consultive bodies	Permanent	Paper	None	Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council.
Pastoral Council Constitutions	Until Superseded	Paper or Electronic*	Shred	The Parish office should always keep copies of all documents related to the Parish Council even if such documents are kept by the Council members.
Sacramental records	Permanent	Paper	None	All Sacramental Records must be kept in register books. Records may be digitized or entered into Parishsoft <u>in addition</u> to keeping paper registers.



Chapter 6: Pastor's Office

Pastors keep a variety of records much of which involves contact with parishioners and staff. Pastors should evaluate their correspondence based on the following categories. The below categories include information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
General correspondence	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	This category includes official statements to parishioners from the Pastor, the Archbishop, or the Archdiocese on issues and events within in the parish. <i>Hold all Emails. Please see information on the Record Hold in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 No. 2.</i>
Official Archdiocesan correspondence; communications from the Archbishop or Moderator of the Curia regarding a parish or school	Permanent	Paper or Electronic	None	If there is an issue within the parish or school that required consultation or intervention by the Archdiocese all records related to these events should be kept.
Official parish correspondence	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	This category includes official statements to parishioners from the Pastor, the Archbishop, or the Archdiocese on issues and events within in the parish.
Routine correspondence	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	<i>Hold all Emails. Please see information on the Record Hold in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 No. 2.</i>
Pastoral Council Minutes	Permanent	Paper	None	
Finance Council Minutes	Permanent	Paper	None	
Special event files	Until Superseded	Paper or Electronic	None	These are records of liturgical or parish wide celebrations that happen periodically. Files related to celebration should be kept until superseded. Some files may also be kept for historical reasons if the event is important to parish history.



Chapter 7: Pastoral Planning and Parishioner records

Parishes submit several types of reports to the Archdiocese. The October headcount and the annual statistical reports are both retained permanently by the Archdiocese. Parishes should keep these records for their own planning and informational purposes but they are not required to retain them. Some parishes also went through the larger planning process that came out of the 2014 Archdiocesan Synod. Below is a listing of the types of records related to pastoral planning. It includes information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
October Headcount	to CPA	Paper or Electronic	Shred or Delete	Copies of these reports can be kept for informational purposes by the parish but are not required to be retained as the Archdiocese retains them permanently.
Statistical Report	to CPA	Paper or Electronic	Shred or Delete	Copies of these reports can be kept for informational purposes by the parish but are not required to be retained as the Archdiocese retains them permanently.
Long-range Parish plans or Parish Indicators of Vitality.	Until superseded	Electronic	Delete	Some parishes went through the planning process related to the 2014 Synod. These plans should be retained until the end of the planning period or until superseded by another planning vehicle.
New Parishioner Registration forms	Destroy once entered into Connect Now/Family Suite	Paper or Electronic	Shred or Delete	If the parish is not using the Family Suite section, then the forms should be retained as part of the family's paper file.



Chapter 8: Sacramental Records

The Archdiocesan policy for keeping Sacramental records is included in the 2010 Liturgical Norms, Chapter 1: General Principles, Section 12. It is reproduced here for reference.

Parish Registers and Sacramental Records in General

1. Sacramental records are both private and public in nature. They are private in that they are created in circumstances presumed to be personal and confidential, and the registers are never to be made available for public viewing. They are public in that, canonically, they have to do with the status of persons in the Church and their rights and responsibilities, and legally, they may stand as valid, authentic evidence when an appropriate civil record does not exist.
2. While electronic records and databases may be maintained together with the parish registers to make it easier to find and use the information contained in them, only the parish registers themselves are official Church records, and they must always be carefully maintained.
3. The following parish registers are mandated by universal law or the particular law of the Archdiocese of Washington:
 - a. Register of Catechumens;¹
 - b. Book of the Elect;²
 - c. Register of Baptisms;³
 - d. Register of First Holy Communions;⁴
 - e. Register of Confirmations;⁵
 - f. Register of Marriages;⁶ and
 - g. Register of Deaths.⁷

While it is not required, it is recommended that a Register of Sick Calls be maintained so that this important ministry can be carried out in the most pastorally effective ways.

4. Records of ordinations, even if they take place in a parish church, are maintained in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Washington, and are not a parish responsibility.⁸

¹ CIC can. 788 §1; RCIA 46.

² RCIA 113, 132, 539, 553.

³ CIC can. 535 §§1-2, 877 §1

⁴ This is particular law of the Archdiocese of Washington, cf. CIC can. 535 §1.

⁵ CIC can. 895; cf. can. 535 §2. This is particular law of the Archdiocese of Washington, cf. CIC can 535 §1. While a Register of First Holy Communions is not required by universal law, such a record has to do with the juridical status of persons as recipients of one of the sacraments of initiation.

⁶ CIC can. 535 §1, 1081, 1121 §§1, 3, 1122 §§1-2, 1123, 1685, 1706.

⁷ CIC can. 535 §1, 1182.

⁸ CIC can. 1053 §1; cf. 535 §2.



5. The law is silent with regard to registers for first penance. Parishes may give certificates for participation in liturgical services that are connected with the celebration of first penance.
6. Pastors are to see to it that parish registers are accurately inscribed and carefully preserved.⁹ The registers should be books made specifically for the purpose, with acid-free paper and strong, durable bindings. They are to be clearly identifiable. With regard to the inscription of the records, the information should be written clearly. Black ink should be used, to facilitate later photography or digitization which may be done to preserve the records. The ink should be permanent, such as india ink or the oil-based inks used in ball-point pens. Water-soluble inks used in fountain, roller-ball, or felt-tip pens make records liable to destruction if the registers get wet.
7. If, after a record has been created in a parish register, an error is found which must be corrected, a single black line is to be drawn through the original entry and a new record on a new line is to be created. A notation is to be made along with the date and signature of the person authorizing the change. "White out," erasures, or other cosmetic changes must never be made.
8. Records in sacramental registers are not to be altered for any reason other than to correct an error. Inasmuch as they are records of events, giving the places, dates, other particulars, and the names of the recipients of a sacrament and other participants in the celebration, subsequent events in the life of a person cannot alter that history. Records may be supplemented, as when the reception of first Holy Communion is recorded in a baptismal register, but they cannot be changed, for example, to substitute a divorced and remarried person's "new spouse" for someone who was actually present at the event.¹⁰
9. Sacramental preparation forms are not permanent records and should be destroyed after the information is entered in the parish register, since they contain personal information.

⁹ CIC can. 535 §1, 555 §§1, 3; ADW, Handbook for Deans, 2006.

¹⁰ With regard to whether a baptismal record may be altered to reflect a so-called "sex change operation," the CDF has communicated that "official parish books may not be altered for any reason, except to correct errors of transcription. Therefore, in cases of such operations, the records are not to be altered. Specifically, the altered condition of a member of the faithful under civil law does not change one's canonical condition which is male or female and is determined at the moment of birth. However, should a situation rise in which some sort of notation is determined to be necessary, it is possible, in the margin of the entry for baptism, to note the altered status of the person under civil law. In such a case, the date and relevant protocol number of the civil juridic act or document should be included along with, where possible, a copy of the documentation itself at that page of the Baptismal Registry." RRAA 2003, 18-19.



10. Certificates for sacraments pertain to the canonical status of persons and are to be signed by the pastor or his delegate and sealed with the parish seal.¹¹

The signatures on certificates are to be original, and not stamped. Certificates are to be well designed and printed on paper that is appropriate to the dignity of the sacrament. They must include places for notations and for the parish seal. Certificates must duplicate information as it appears in the register. If the information in the register is not complete, this should be indicated by the words “not given” or with a dash, rather than a blank space.

11. In each parish there is to be a storage area or archive in which the parochial registers are protected along with letters of bishops and other documents which are to be preserved for reason of necessity or advantage. The pastor is to take care that all of these things, which are to be inspected by the Archbishop or his delegate at the time of visitation or at some other opportune time, do not come into the hands of outsiders.¹²
12. The ownership and copyrights of all Roman Catholic sacramental records for parishes, agencies or institutions within the jurisdiction of the Archbishop reside with the Archbishop and his successors in office.
13. Old parish registers that are no longer needed for routine requests for records may be given to the Archives of the Archdiocese of Washington, where they will be carefully preserved, and where historical and genealogical research requests can be addressed.¹³

¹¹ CIC can. 535 §3.

¹² CIC can. 535 §4.

¹³ CIC can. 535 §5.



Chapter 9: Legal – Contracts

Parishes engage a variety of outside contractors. Some of these relationships are formalized with short-term contracts. Other contracts for heating, ventilation and, air conditioning, a new roof, or other construction work have warranties included and so should be retained for longer periods of time. Below is a listing of the types of legal records. It includes information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Standard Contracts with all documents, RFP, SOW, correspondence, and payment records	Expiration of contract + 5 years	Paper	Shred	Examples of standard contacts include cleaning, printer and copier maintenance, etc.
Long-term Contracts with warranties with all documents, RFP, SOW, correspondence, and payment records	Permanent	Paper	Shred	Examples of long-term contracts include building and construction, new roof, new HVAC, etc.
Contracts under seal with all documents, RFP, SOW, correspondence, and payment records	Expiration of contract + 12 years	Paper	Shred	Special contract designation under the laws of the State of Maryland, i.e. you will know if it is this type or not.



Chapter 10: Canonical Services - Marriage Tribunal

Below is a listing of the canonical records that should be kept by parishes. It included only the pre-nuptial files prepared when couples go through marriage preparation. It includes information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Prenuptial Files	Permanent	Paper	None	Should be kept at the parish of marriage



Chapter 11: Communications/Social Media/Outreach

Parishes are involved in a variety of communications and social media activities. Pastors should always keep a listing of passwords to all social media accounts. Below is a listing of the types of communication records that parishes should keep. It includes information on the type of record, the retention period, the format in which it may be kept, and comments providing further instructions or information of note related to the record.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Website	Permanent	Electronic	None	Websites should be periodically backed up. Your vendor may do this but you should check the frequency.
Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, YouTube	Permanent	Electronic	None	Parishes should download and save all content from social media accounts or retain a service to do it for them.
Event photos posted	Permanent	Electronic	None	
Parish Bulletins/School Newsletter	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	One copy of each week's bulletin should be retained.

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Chapter 12: Finance

Financial Records are the most common within a parish. This includes payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable among others. Many records are recorded electronically in Parish Soft and so are retained in the software. These are the records most likely to already be involved in a retention process in the parish.

General Financial Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Parish Finance Council Minutes	Permanent	Paper	None	
Conflict of Interest Forms	Permanent	Paper	None	
Annual Budgets approved by Finance Council, including any revisions	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Monthly Financial Reports	1 year	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Internal Financial Statements, annual	Permanent	Paper	None	
Parish Accounting Manual	Until superseded	Paper or Electronic*	None	
Parish Annual Reports	Permanent	Pape	None	
Parish Internal Audit Report and Pastor Response	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	
Letters exempting parishes from assessments	Expiration +3 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Employee Expense reports	3 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	
General ledger, annual	Permanent	Paper	None	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period

Accounting Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Accounts payable, invoices	7 years	Paper	Shred	
Accounts payable, ledgers	3 years	Paper	Shred	
Accounts receivable, ledgers	3 years	Paper	Shred	
Accounts receivable invoices	3 years unless open	Paper	Shred	
Accounts receivable aging detail	7 years	Paper	Shred	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Credit card statements/charge slips	7 years	Paper	Shred	
Invoices and paid bills, major building construction	Permanent	Paper	None	Kept with contracts and other documents
Invoices and paid bills, general accounts	7 years	Paper	Shred	



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Cash Count Sheets	3 years	Paper	Shred	These records should be kept until the final report of the Triannual Financial Review has been completed.
Chart of accounts	Permanent	Electronic	None	Every parish should keep a list of all accounts
Journal Entries & Supporting Documentation	7 years	Paper	Shred	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Lock box deposits slips	3 years	Paper	Shred	These records should be kept until the final report of the Triannual Financial Review has been completed.

Banking Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Bank deposits	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	
Bank statements	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Bank reconciliations	3 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	These records should be kept until the final report of the Triannual Financial Review has been completed.; In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Cancelled checks	7 years	Paper or Electronic or CD*	Shred or delete	
Manual Check book/registers/stubs	7 years	Paper	Shred	
Remote Deposit Checks	6 months after end of FY	Paper	Shred	Banks may recommends that paper checks be retained for shorter periods as electronic copies are available. It is acceptable to follow the recommendations of your bank.
Deposit Register	7 years	Paper or Electronic	Shred or Delete	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Check Register	7 years	Paper or Electronic	Shred or Delete	In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period

Payroll

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
1099s Tax Forms	Filing + 7 years	Paper	Shred	Only if applicable
Commission Reports	Filing + 7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Employee deduction authorization	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee Garnishment Notices	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee salary schedules	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Employment Taxes (<i>Contributions and payments including withholding & FICA</i>)	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Payroll Registers - Annual Summary Reports	Permanent	Paper	None	Several different type of reports are printed including bi-weekly, monthly, and quarterly. Only the annual summary needs to be kept. In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period
Bi-weekly, Monthly or Quarterly Payroll Registers	Filing + 7 years	Paper	Shred	Several different type of reports are printed including bi-weekly, monthly, and quarterly. Only the annual summary needs to be kept. In addition to the data in Parish Soft, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
State tax withholding forms	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Time Cards	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
W-2 years Forms	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2

Records of Loans or Line of Credit

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Mortgage records	Permanent	Paper	Shred	Only if applicable
Letters of credit	Life +7 years	Paper	Shred	Only if applicable
Lines of credit	Life +7 years	Paper	Shred	Only if applicable

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Records of loans from the Archdiocese	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	None	Hold all records related to transfer of funds to the Archdiocese. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 6

Investments

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Stock or Securities sales	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Certificates of Deposit	Redemption +3 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Agreements with investment advisors	Term plus 3 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Investment reconciliations	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Monthly statements	7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Tax Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
IRS exemption determination letters	Permanent	Paper	None	Only if applicable
IRS correspondence	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Only if applicable
Quarterly Form 941s	Filing + 7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Annual Form W-3 and W-2s	Hold	Paper or Electronic*	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Form 1099 and 1096	Filing + 7 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable
Lottery Board Reports	5 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or delete	Only if applicable

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Chapter 13: Donors and Fundraising

Parishes raise money in a variety of ways including through weekly collections, bequests, and solicitations from friends. Some of these records need to be retained simply to facilitate later fundraising efforts such as donor mailing lists. Others like the documentation related to bequests need to be kept so that the parish maintains documentation of all major donations for auditing and legal purposes.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Bequest and estate information/papers	Permanent	Paper	None	Legal documents related to bequests including correspondence copy of will, orders from court, etc.
Donor/Alumni lists	Permanent	Electronic	None	In addition to the data in Parish Soft or other database, please keep a paper or PDF copy of this record for the full retention period.
Fundraising licenses and permits	5 years	Paper	Shred	Any licenses or permits sought from local government
Donor Letter documenting funds permanently restricted	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Only if applicable
Donor Letter documenting funds for temporarily restricted	7 years after restrictions end	Paper or Electronic*	Shred	Only if applicable
Acknowledgement of donation in excess of \$250	5 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred	Letters to parishioners or friends documenting gifts for tax purposes.
Endowment Fund Board meeting minutes	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Only if applicable
Endowment donation	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	Shred	Only if applicable
Parishioner donation envelopes	1 year	Paper	Shred	Dispose of envelopes at the end of the calendar year or if donations are logged in Connect Now/Parish Soft



Chapter 14: Human Resources

Parishes and Schools are responsible for their own Human Resources and personnel files for lay staff. Most of these records are kept in paper form. The Archdiocese has some copies of some documents but the Parish or School is the only entity with the complete personnel file for its lay staff. These files do contain personnel information and must be stored in a secure location.

General Human Resources Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Employee Policy Manual	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	
Job Descriptions	Permanent	Electronic	None	
I-9 years Audit	Termination + 1 year or 3 years after hire, whichever is longer	Electronic	Delete	Only if applicable
Rejected Applications/Resumes	1 year	Paper	Shred	

Personnel Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Employee Application	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Resume	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee Appointment/Offer Letters	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Salary Information	Permanent	Electronic	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Attendance Records (Jury, PTO, STD, LTD, FMLA, Bereavement)	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Eligibility Verification Form I-9 years	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Performance Reviews	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Annual Continuation Letter	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Write Ups	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Promotions/Transfers	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee medical complaints	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee medical records	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Policy Acknowledgement Forms	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2

Benefit Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Open Enrollment	Hold	Electronic	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
New Hire	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Life Event	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Continuation of Benefits	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Term of Benefits	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Worker's Compensation materials	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
403(b) Retirement Plan (enrollment & beneficiary forms, distribution requests)	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Life Insurance Policies	Hold	Electronic	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Life Insurance (Benefit forms & claims)	Hold	Electronic	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Benefit Plan Description	Rollout + 4 years	Electronic	Delete	These documents show plan offerings and are updated regularly with each roll out.
Lay Employee Pension Plan (application for benefits, election forms, beneficiary forms, etc.)	Permanent	Paper	None	All employee pension plan records should be kept.



Education Personnel/Teachers Records

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Certificates and Licenses	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Employee Service Record including wage & salary	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Official Teacher Service Record	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Official Transcripts	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Appointment Letters	Permanent	Paper	None	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Grievance Records (not EEOC)	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Training and Educational Attainment Records	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Substitute Teacher Records	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2
Individual Deficiency Removal Plans/Verification	Hold	Paper	Hold	Hold all personnel information and files. Please see information on the Records Hold Chapter 3 No. 2



Chapter 15: Facilities Management

Records of construction, improvement, and renovation of parish and school buildings should always be kept as they will be needed when more construction is done. Contracts that relate to construction and design services should also be kept long-term (See Chapter 9 Legal – Contracts). If you lack space to store these records the Archives can accept oversized items, particularly building plans. One modern set should be kept at the parish or school but the Archives can accept all historical drawings and blueprints.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Packets of information prepared for the College of Consultors	Until project completed	Paper or Electronic*	Shred/Delete	Documents prepared for submission to the College of Consultors should be kept until the project is complete. This should be done even if the project is put on hold.
Architectural records, blueprints, building designs, specifications	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Parishes should keep one set but others can be sent to the Archives.
Architectural drawings	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	Parishes should keep one set but others can be sent to the Archives.
Deeds, easements ,and all other recorded property documents	Permanent	Paper	None	Copies of these should be sent to the Archives
Mortgage documents	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable
Property appraisals	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	If applicable
Real estate surveys/plot plans	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable
Title search papers and certificates	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	If applicable
Property or Ground Leases	Expiration + 50 years	Paper	Shred	This includes all leases or Parish or School facilities
<i>For information on the retention of all Contracts please see Chapter 9 - Legal</i>				

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Chapter 16: Risk Management

Some records generated relate to certain types of risk. Some locations may have these records; others may not. If your location has these records they need to be kept permanently.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Environmental test records/reports	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable
Hazardous exposure records	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable
Toxic Substance inspection reports (Asbestos, lead paint, etc.)	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable
Tests of underground storage tanks	Permanent	Paper	None	If applicable



Chapter 17: Parish Faith Formation and RCIA

Records are collected related to children and adults who participate in catechesis and sacramental preparation in parishes. Some of these records are for the overall program, some relate to the individual students and some to volunteer catechists and aides. Records of the individual student may need to be shared with another parish if the participant moves.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Catechetical Participant Database	Permanent	Electronic		Every Parish should keep a database of all participants in religious Ed/RCIA. Entries related to those who are fully initiated can be archived.
Registration Records	after High School Graduation/Full Initiation	Paper	Shred	
Attendance Records	After Full Initiation	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	These records may need to be shared with another parish or school if the family moves.
Progress Reports	After Full Initiation	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	These records may need to be shared with another parish or school if the family moves.
Course Evaluations	3 years	Paper	Shred	
Handbooks and Manuals	3 years or until updated	Paper or Electronic*	Recycle or Delete	
Copies of baptismal records	After Full Initiation	Paper	Shred	
Parish Annual Catechetical Survey	10 years	Paper	Shred	
Signed Safe Environment Report	5 years	Paper or Electronic*	Shred or Delete	After submission to the Archdiocese, parishes should keep five years of these reports on hand for reference.
<i>For retention of volunteer applications please see Chapter 19: Child Protection and Safe Environment</i>				

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Chapter 18: Youth Ministry

For youth under 18 participating in activities offered through parish youth ministry, the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), or parish youth activities, certain documents and permissions are normally collected. If applicable these forms should be signed each year that the child is involved in youth ministry or parish youth activities. After 5 years, if the youth has not been involved in a documented and reported incident the forms can be disposed of. If there was an incident involving the youth then the forms should become part of the incident file and retained.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Waiver of liability forms	Evaluate at 5 years	Paper	Shred	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely.
Medical release forms	Evaluate at 5 years	Paper	Shred	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely.
Code of Conduct forms	Evaluate at 5 Years	Paper	Shred	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely.
Photo release form	Evaluate at 5 years	Paper	Shred	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely.
Incident report forms, correspondence, emails, etc.	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	After submitting the report to appropriate civil authorities and the ADW office of CPSF, please retains copies of all reports and documentation surrounding the incident.
<i>For retention of volunteer applications please see Chapter 19: Child Protection and Safe Environment</i>				



Chapter 19: Child Protection and Safe Environment

Every staff member and volunteer, whether clergy or lay, at an archdiocesan entity who works with minors or vulnerable adults needs to be VIRTUS compliant. The process of training and criminal background checks generates several different types of documents all of which must be retained permanently. All original documents must be kept permanently in a secure locked location as all they contain personal information.

Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Volunteer Applications	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely.
Original Signed Policy Acknowledgement form	Permanent	Paper	None	All original forms must be retained.
Incident report forms, correspondence, emails, etc.	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	After submitting the report to appropriate civil authorities and the ADW office of CPSF and the CSO, please retains copies of all reports and documentation surrounding the incident.
Conversation notes, letters, documentation, or emails reporting incidents	Permanent	Paper or Electronic*	None	After submitting the report to appropriate civil authorities and the ADW office of CPSF and the CSO, please retains copies of all reports and documentation surrounding the incident.
Background check and fingerprinting records	Permanent	Paper	None	These documents contain personal information and need to be kept securely. <i>If Parishes hold fingerprint or background check files because they served as a remote fingerprinting site, these files can be transferred to the Archdiocesan Archives.</i>
Electronic fingerprinting records	Delete every 60 days	Electronic	Delete	For remote electronic fingerprinting, all fingerprint files should be deleted every 60 days.

*If the original document is paper it should be retained in that form. Only retain electronic documents if that is the original form.



Chapter 20: Catholic Schools

Permanent Record Cards for all students are to be retained permanently by the Elementary School and/or Parish if school closes.

When a child completes the eighth grade, the elementary School should send the requested records from the child's permanent record and health file to the High School. The elementary school then retains a copy of the full file for 5 years or the required retention period, whichever is longer.

Records that can be included in a Student's Permanent File

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Student Permanent Record Cards includes final grades and attendance	Permanent	Paper	None	Permanent Record Card
Basic Student Identification Information	Permanent	Paper	None	On Permanent Record Card
Enrollment, Withdrawal, Graduation Dates	Permanent	Paper	None	On Permanent Record Card
Academic Transcripts	Permanent	Paper	None	
Standardized Testing Scores	5 Years Post School	Paper	Shred	Sticker attached to Permanent folder; CSO keeps electronic copies for required state retention period.
HSPT Testing	5 Years post school attendance	Paper	Shred	
High School Testing (SAT, ACT)	5 Years by High School	Electronic	Delete	

RECORDS RETENTION MANUAL



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Scantron Standardized Testing Scores	5 Years Post School Attendance	Electronic	Delete	Scores kept by vendor online accessible by school and CSO.
Student Disciplinary Records	5 Years Post School	Paper	Shred	
Special Education Records (ICEP, CAP, etc) and assessment reports	6 years	Paper	Shred	
Emergency Contact Information	1 year, updated annually	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	

A copy of the Student Health Record is to be kept by the elementary school for 5 years past admission to High School. The original record is to be sent to the High School where it is retained for 5 years or age 21 whichever is later

Records that can be included in Student's Health File

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Requests for immunization exemptions	1 year	Paper	Shred	
Immunization Records /Records of Exemption	5 years post school	Paper	Shred	
Cumulative Health Record	5 years post school	Electronic	Shred	
Psychological Reports	5 years post school	Paper	Shred	
Health Care Plans, Medical Administration Plans	1 year, updated annually	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	
Student Physicals for Extra-Curricular Activities (Sports)	5 Years Post High School	Paper	Shred	
Injury Reports	5 years post school	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	



General Retention Schedule

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
ADW Schools Census Data/Family Survey	1 year	Paper	Shred	CSO keeps for 10 years in online system
MSDE and OSSE Schools Approval to Operate Documentation	until suspended	Paper	Shred	
Incident Reports	Permanent	Paper/Electronic	None	
After care logs	evaluate at 5 years	Paper	Shred	
Nursing "Clinic" Log	5 Years	Paper	Shred	
ACE Program Partnership Documents	Term + 4 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	
Opportunity Scholarship Program	10 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Applies to all older paper records and any newer records sent exclusively in paper. All electronic records to remain in OPS system.
BOOST Scholarship Program	10 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Applies to all older paper records and any newer records sent exclusively in paper. All electronic records to remain in BOOST system.
Teacher Lesson Plans	1 year	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Plans should be updated annually
Textbook Inventories	1 year	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Inventories should be updated annually

RECORDS RETENTION MANUAL



Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Yearbooks	Permanent	Paper	None	
Student Handbooks	1 year	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Handbooks should be updated annually
Faculty Handbooks	1 year	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Handbooks should be updated annually
School Club, Honor Society By-Laws and Minutes	2 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Review by-laws annually
School Safety Reports/Drill Log	1 year	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Logs are given to the State Annually
Marketing Plans	3 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	
Technology Plans	2 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Plans should be updated annually
Technology Inventories	2 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	Inventories should be updated annually

Home & School Association and School Advisory Board

Type of Record	Retention Period	Format	Disposal Method	Comments
Accounting Records	7 years	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	
Meeting agenda, minutes and attendance	Permanent	Paper/Electronic		
By-laws and policies	Until superseded	Paper/Electronic	Shred/Delete	
Membership records with terms and committee assignment	Permanent	Paper/Electronic		