

Record Retention Policy

Retention Guidelines for Catholic Parishes

Evaluating records in order to assign a retention period involves assessment of the different values of the record. These values include:

ADMINISTRATIVE (ADMIN) – usefulness of the records for conduct of regular business. (time frame of 1-2 years)

HISTORICAL (HIST) – Documentation of Church's history: policies, programs, key personnel, reports, events, photographs. Records required to retain per Canon Law. (Retain Indefinitely)

FISCAL – Usefulness of records for documenting financial/accounting transactions. (time frame designated in years)

LEGAL – Required in order to comply with civil and canon law or as supporting documentation for litigation. (time frame designated in years)

Retention guidelines appearing in these pages are based on Church (canon) law (CL), the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), state statutes for Louisiana (State), recommendation of diocesan auditor (PM), accepted business practices, and General Records Schedules of the National Archives and Records Administration (GRS).

RETENTION GUIDELINES FOR CATHOLIC CHURCHES

RECORDS DESCRIPTION

RETENTION RECOMMENDATION

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS

ADULT EDUCATION-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
ADULT EDUCATION-GRECO INSTITUTE	ADMIN; RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
ADULT EDUCATION-PARISH PROGRAMS	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISHIONERS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY-HIST
ANNUAL REPORT FOR OFFICIAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY	RETAIN INDEFINITELY-HIST
ANNUAL SPIRITUAL REPORT	RETAIN INDEFINITELY-HIST
APPOINTMENTS LIST (PASTORS & DATES OF APPOINTMENTS)	HIST
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION	LEGAL + HIST
ASBESTOS REPORT	30 YRS. (40CFR763.12)
ASBESTOS-REMOVAL	30 YRS. (40CFR763.12)
AWARDS-DIOCESAN MEDAL OF HONOR	ADMIN + HIST
AWARDS-PAPAL HONORS	ADMIN + HIST
BISHOP'S COMMUNICATIONS-GENERAL	ADMIN + HIST
BISHOP'S PASTORAL LETTERS	ADMIN + HIST

CALENDARS	ADMIN + HIST
CENSUS-ROSTER OF PARISHIONERS	ADMIN + HIST
CORRESPONDENCE-ROUTINE/GENERAL	ADMIN
CORRESPONDENCE-PASTOR	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
CORRESPONDENCE-DIOCESAN OFFICES	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
DIOCESAN SERVICE APPEAL-GEN./ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
DIOCESAN SERVICE APPEAL-MATERIALS & WORKERS	ADMIN
DIOCESAN SERVICE APPEAL-REPORTS	ADMIN + HIST
ENERGY AUDIT	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR LONGER RETENTION
EQUIPMENT-INSTRUCTIONS & WARRANTIES	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED; KEEP CURRENT COPY
EQUIPMENT-SERVICE	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
KNIGHTS OF ST. PETER CLAVER	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
LEGAL COUNSEL	ADMIN + LEGAL
LOUISIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE	ADMIN
MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

MASS RECORD	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED; KEEP CURRENT COPY
POLICIES	ADMIN + HIST
PUBLICATIONS-PARISH HISTORY	HIST
PUBLICATIONS-ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET	HIST
PUBLICATIONS-PARISH BULLETINS	HIST
PUBLICATIONS-PARISH NEWSLETTERS	HIST
PUBLICATIONS-PUBLIC RELATIONS/MEDIA ARTICLES	HIST
ROSTERS-EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 1 YR.
ROSTERS-MINISTERS OF THE WORD	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 1 YR.
ROSTERS-PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 1 YR.
ROSTERS-PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL MEMBERS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 1 YR.
SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
STAFF MEETINGS	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
VEHICLE RECORDS-LICENSES	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
VEHICLE RECORDS-INSURANCE POLICIES	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
VEHICLE RECORDS-CLAIMS/ACCIDENTS	10 YRS. (PM) Revised

VEHICLE RECORDS-MAINTENANCE

ADMIN

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

ALTAR SOCIETY-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE

ADMIN

ALTAR SOCIETY-MEETING MINUTES

ADMIN + HIST

EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEE

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

GREETERS/USHERS SOCIETY

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

HOSPITAL/NURSING HOME MINISTRY

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

LITURGY COMMITTEE-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE

ADMIN

LITURGY COMMITTEE-AGENDAS & MINUTES

ADMIN + HIST

LITURGY COMMITTEE-SPECIAL CEREMONIES

ADMIN + HIST

MEN'S CLUB

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

MUSIC MINISTRY (CHOIR, ORGANIST)

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

PRAYER GROUP

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

PRISON MINISTRY

ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE

PRO-LIFE COMMITTEE	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
VOCATIONS COMMITTEE	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
YOUTH GROUP-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
YOUTH GROUP-ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
YOUTH GROUP-NET TEAM	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION (CCD)-GEN.CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION –CALENDAR	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION -CLASS LISTS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED. KEEP CURRENT COPY
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-FAMILY REC./SACRAMENTAL INFO.	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-LESSON PLANS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-REGISTRATION FORMS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 1 YR.
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-REPORTS	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-STUDENT FILES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-TEACHER/SUBSTITUTE LISTS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-TEXTBOOK LISTS	ADMIN

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION-TUITION RECORD	7 YRS. (PM)
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-AGENDAS/MINUTES	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-MEMBERSHIP	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-MISSION STATEMENT	HIST
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL-PASTORAL PLAN	HIST
PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL-GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL-AGENDAS/MINUTES	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL-MEMBERSHIP	ADMIN + HIST
PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL-TRUSTEES	ADMIN + HIST
<u>FINANCIAL RECORDS</u>	
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND RECEIVABLE LEDGERS	6 YRS. (PM) FOR SUBSIDIARY LEDGERS Revised
AUDITS-GENERAL/CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
AUDITS-REPORTS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
BANK DEPOSIT REGISTER	10 YRS.

BANK DEPOSIT SLIPS	3 YRS. (PM) Revised
BANK RECONCILEMENTS AND STATEMENTS	3 YRS. (PM) Revised
BUDGET-APPROVED	5 YRS. (PM)
BUDGET-WORKING PAPERS	ADMIN
CANCELED CHECKS & CHECK STUBS	8 YRS. (PM) Revised
CHARITABLE GAMING RECORDS-GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE	3 YRS. (STATE; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE)
CHARITABLE GAMING-BANK STATEMENTS	10 YRS. (PM)
CHARITABLE GAMING-TAX RETURNS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (PM)
CHARITABLE GAMING-LEDGERS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (PM)
CHARITABLE GAMING-DEPOSIT SLIPS	3 YRS. (PM) Revised
CHARITABLE GAMING-CANCELED CHECKS & CHECK STUBS	8 YRS. (PM) Revised
CHARITABLE GAMING-PERMITS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED + 3 YRS. (STATE)
CHARITABLE GAMING-BINGO RECORDS	3 YRS. (STATE)
CHARITABLE GAMING-RAFFLES	3 YRS. (STATE)
CHECK REGISTER	10 YRS. (PM)
CORRESPONDENCE-ACCOUNTING	ADMIN

CORRESPONDENCE-PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS	5 YRS. (PM)
CONTRIBUTIONS/COLLECTIONS RECORD	7 YRS. (26 CFR 301.6511 (d)-11)
EXPENSE REPORTS	6 YRS. (PM) Revised
FINANCIAL REPORTS TO DIOCESAN OFFICES	5 YRS. (PM)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	5 YRS. (PM)
GENERAL LEDGERS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (PM)
LOAN FILES PAYOFF=HIST	5 YRS. AFTER PAYOFF(PM); COPY OF
PAID/UNPAID BILLS	3 YRS. SALES INVOICES; 8 YRS. PAYMENT VOUCHERS (PM) Revised
PAYROLL RECORDS-GENERAL/CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
PAYROLL RECORDS-FEDERAL WITHHOLDING RECEIPTS	8 YRS. (PM)
PAYROLL RECORDS-SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS	8 YRS. (PM)
PAYROLL RECORDS-TAX/WAGE INFORMATION (W-4)	8 YRS. (PM)
PAYROLL REGISTER	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (PM)
PAYROLL-TIMECARDS	3 YRS. (PM)
PETTY CASH RECORDS	5 YRS. (PM)

PURCHASE ORDERS REGISTER	3 YRS. (PM) Revised
TAX RECORDS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY AFTER WEEDING MISC.
TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT	6 YRS. (PM) Revised
TRIAL BALANCE SHEETS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (PM)
TRUST FUNDS/ENDOWMENTS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (CL)
UTILITY RECORDS-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
UTILITY RECORDS-TELEPHONE	5 YRS. (PM)
UTILITY RECORDS-ELECTRICITY	5 YRS. (PM)
UTILITY RECORDS-GAS	5 YRS. (PM)
UTILITY RECORDS-WATER	5 YRS. (PM)
 <u>CEMETERY RECORDS</u>	
ANNUAL REPORT	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (STATE) + HIST
BOARD MINUTES/MEMBERSHIP	ADMIN + HIST
BURIAL RECORDS	ADMIN + HIST (STATE)
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (STATE)
CONTRACTS	ADMIN + HIST

CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN; EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
CEMETERY MAP	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (STATE) + HIST
RECORD OF LOT OWNERSHIP	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (STATE)
REGULATORY CHARGES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY (STATE)
RULES/REGULATIONS	RETAIN CURRENT COPY (STATE)
<u>PERSONNEL RECORDS</u>	
EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS	10 YRS. AFTER EMPLOYMENT ENDS (CFR)
CONTRACTS	10 YRS. AFTER EMPLOYMENT ENDS (29CFR1602.31)
EARNINGS RECORDS	8 YRS. (PM)
HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION-GEN. CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
HEALTH INSURANCE-ENROLLMENT	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDES + 1 YR.
HEALTH INSURANCE-CLAIMS	10 YRS. (PM) Revised
JOB APPLICATIONS	1-2 'IRS. FOR THOSE NOT HIRED
JOB DESCRIPTIONS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEPED;EVALUATE FOR ADMIN
PAYROLL RECORDS AFTER TERMINATION	8 YRS. (PM) TIMECARDS 3 'IRS. (PM)

PENSION PLAN-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
PENSION PLAN-APPLICATIONS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
PENSION PLAN-CLAIMS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
PERSONNEL FOLDERS (ONE PER INDIVIDUAL)	10 YRS. AFTER EMPLOYMENT ENDS (20CFR404.1225) IT IS RECOMMENDED TO KEEP A PERMANENT LISTING OF ALL WHO WORKED AT FACILITY AND YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECKS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
DOCUMENTATION OF ATTENDANCE AT SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING/AWARENESS SESSIONS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY

PROPERTY RECORDS

APPRAISALS	RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED.KEEP CURRENT COPY
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS/SPECIFICATIONS	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
CONSTRUCTION FILES-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN;EVALUATE FOR HISTORICAL VALUE
CONSTRUCTION FILES-CONTRACTS	HIST

CONSTRUCTION FILES-SPECIFICATIONS; CHANGE ORDERS	HIST
DEEDS, TITLES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
INSURANCE RECORDS-GENERAL/ROUTINE CORRESPONDENCE	ADMIN
INSURANCE-CLAIMS FOR PROPERTY DAMAGE	10 YRS. (PM) Revised
LEASES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
MAINTENANCE & REPAIR OF PROPERTY	3 YRS. (GRS)
PROPERTY SALES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY
PROPERTY TAXES	RETAIN INDEFINITELY

TO CREATE A NEW FOLDER

1. In Windows Explorer, click the drive where you want to create the new folder.
2. On the FILE menu, point to NEW, and then click FOLDER. The new folder appears with a temporary name.
3. Type a name for the new folder and press ENTER.
4. To create a folder within another folder, click the main folder, then follow steps #2 and #3.

SAMPLE COMPUTER FILING SCHEME

