

**ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA**  
**RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE**  
**FOR PAPER AND DIGITAL RECORDS**

RED = GA and Federal Guidelines      BLUE = Canon Law

Revised August 12, 2008

<u>RECORDS</u> <u>RETAIN</u>	<u>Years to RETAIN</u>	<u>RECORDS</u>	<u>Years to</u>
<b><u>General to all Departments &amp; Parishes</u></b>			
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
Agendas	1	Sacramental Records Requests	3
Analysts Presentations, Reports	P	Special Events (Anniversaries, Jubilees, etc)	P
Annual Reports	P	Subject Files, Archbishops	P
Appointment Books, Calendars	2	Subject Files, departmental & personal	OBS
Boards & Committees/Meeting Minutes	P	Supply Requests (office supplies)	CY
Business Plans, Projections	P	Surveys, Studies, Planning Reports	P
Checks and Requests (departmental copies)	1	Telephone Calls (copy books)	CY+1
Computer Manuals	OBS	Vendor Files and Price Lists	OBS
Constitutions, By Laws, Articles of Inc.	P	Voice Mail	C
Correspondence, Executive (ex officio)	P	<i>Refer to the Archdiocesan Records Policy regarding</i>	
Correspondence, Fiscal	5	<i>Boards, Councils &amp; Committees, 2008</i>	
Correspondence, General Office	CY+1	<i>Refer to the Archdiocesan General Records Policy, 2008</i>	
Correspondence, Historical or Significant	P		
Correspondence, Insurance related	3AS	<b><u>Functions of Departments &amp; Parishes</u></b>	
Correspondence, Admin. & Parish Affairs	3	<b>ACCOUNTING &amp; FINANCE</b>	
Curia Files	P	Accounts Payable Invoices	CY+3
Daily Schedule, Archbishop	P	Accounts Receivable Ledgers (Tuition)	CY+2
Directives – Officers of boards, councils	P	Assets – Fixed	5
Disaster Records	5	Audit Reports – See Financial Statements	
Drafts (retain only final documents)	SUP	Balance Sheet, Year End	P
Emails* – See Correspondence.		Bank Deposit Slips, Duplicates	CY
Miscellaneous routine non-records	90 days	Bank Deposit Slips, Originals	CY+1
Empty Inbox, Sent, and Deleted folders.		Bank/Investment Statements, Annual	P
Expenses, Departmental	2	Bank Reconciliations	CY+2
Forms (record copy only)	P	Bank Statements, Periodic	CY+2
History Files (departmental history)	P	Bids, Vendors and Services	CY+1
Invoices (departmental copies)	1	Bingo – Multiple Federal & State Regulations	
General Departmental Information	1	Bonds	5AE
Letter Log, Archbishops	P	Budgets, Departmental copy	CY+2
Memos and Directives (related to		Budgets, Final (record copy)	5
Policies and Procedures)	P	Canceled Checks	CY+2
Memos - General (miscellaneous)	1	Cash Receipts (office copies)	CY+1
Meetings and Conferences	3	Cash Receipts Journals & Detail	CY+3
Operation Manuals (record copy)	P	Cash Disbursements Journal	CY+3
Petty Cash Receipts (office copies)	CY	Cemetery Repairs, Contracts & Quotes	7
Policies and Procedures (record copy)	P	Chart of Accounts	OBS
Programs, Seminars, Workshop Files	P	Check Copies	1
Publications, External (for reference)		Check Register and Check Stubs	CY+3
(Magazines, newspapers, journals)	C	Check Requests, Reimbursements	3
Purchase Orders (departmental copies)	CY	(attach to AP Invoices)	
Reading Files - Reference	OBS	Contracts, Capital Improvements	10AE
Records Destruction Certificates	P	Contracts and Leases, Expired	7AE
Registration Cards for Events	2	Credit Agreements	3AT
Sacred Furnishings & Artwork	P	Credit Cards, Employee	CY+3
Sacramental Records in Parishes**	P (M)	Depreciation Schedules	P
Prior to 1930 – Send originals to Archives		Donation Ledgers or Records	CY+3
		Financial Statements – Certified or Audited	P

Financial Statements – Department copy	CY
General Ledger	CY+3
Health Insurance Billing Statements	3
Insurance Policies, Expired	7AE
Internal Audits	CY+3
Invoices	CY+3
Journal Entries	CY+3
Parish Annual Budget	5
Parish Envelopes & Count Sheets	18 mos.
Purchase Orders (attach to Invoices)	CY+3
Signature Authorizations	SUP
Tuition Agreements & Contracts	3AT
Tuition Receipts	3
<i>Refer to Archdiocesan Best Practices for Parish and School Accounting, 2007-02-06</i>	

## COMPUTER & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Backups	SUP+1
Computer Inventories	4AT
Computer Manuals	OBS
Computer System Documentation, after migration to new systems	5
Equipment Records	4
Licensing Files	3
Passwords and Security	4AT
System Architecture and Wiring Schemas	OBS+3
Usage Policies and Procedures	SUP+4
<i>Refer to the Communication Systems Policy, 2003</i>	

## CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY

Appraisals	SUP
Architect Files for each project	C
Bids	CY+1
Blueprints, Specifications, As-built (1 copy)	P
Blueprints, Specifications, Never built	3
Building Permits	P
Closing Documents, signed originals (one)	P
Closing Documents, copies (one only)	CY+2
Contractor Files for each project	C
Contracts & Insurance – See ACCOUNTING	
Drawings, originals	P (M)
Drawings, copies in Parishes (1 copy)	P
Engineering Files for each project	C
Environmental Tests	P
Government Files – active till property sold	C
Hazardous Materials Incident Reports	P
Inspections, Annual	SUP
Maps and Plats, copies	OBS
Owner Files – active till property sold	C
Project Close-out Binders	P
Properties Sold Records (send to Archives)	P
Real Estate – See LEGAL	
Real Estate Inventories and Database	SUP
Surveys, Deeds, Titles	P
Utility File – active till property is sold	C

## EDUCATION (Parochial & Religious)

Absentee Notes	CY
Accidents, Student or Visitor	5
Accreditation	P
After School Programs	1
Annual Reports- NCEA/Archdiocesan	P
Athletic Program Files	5
Attendance Records	P
Catechists Certifications	2AT
Catechetical Class Lists	OBS
Class Lists (Rolls), Parochial	5
Class Schedules	SUP
Clinic Records (Visits/Medications)	3
Closed Schools P Records – Send to Archives	
Cumulative Card	P
Curriculum (record copy)	P
Drop Out Reports	5
Emails* – See ADMINISTRATION	90 days
Empty mailboxes at the end of each semester, including Inbox, Sent, and Deleted folders.	
Enrollment Data/Registers	P
Family Record, general info	OBS
Field Trip Permission Slips, if no incident	3
Field Trip Permission Slips with incident	6AS
Grade Books, electronically recorded	P
Grade Reports	5
Graduate and Class Ranking Lists	P
Guidance Counselor Student Files	AG
Handbooks	P
Health Cards	P
Immunizations	P
Inventories, general	SUP
Inventories, Federal Program Materials	P
Lesson Plans	CY
Operational Records, Elem. Schools	CY+3 or AA
Pre-School Programs by Parish	6
Parents Notes	CY
Parish PSR Sheets	CY
Psychology Tests and Reports	5AG
Program Files (camps, vocational, seasonal)	5
Quality Assurance Reports	P
Religious Education Annual Report	P
Religious Education, general files	SUP
Statistics (Enrollment, grades)	P
Student Achievement Tests	P
Student Class Tests	CY
Student Evaluations	5AG
Student Lunch Reduction Records	CY+3 or AA
Student Permanent Files	P
Student Religious Education Files	P
Student Transfers	P
Teacher Education? Stipends	7
Teacher Employment Contracts or Surrogate Record of Employment History	50AT
Teacher Personnel Files	7AT
Testing – PSAT, SAT/AP	P
Transcripts/Grades	P
Tuition Billing, School record	5

## **FACILITIES & SERVICES**

Asbestos Abatement Files	P
Accidents, non-hazardous materials	5
Contracts - Service & Vendor	7AE
Drivers Bills	2
Emergency Plans	SUP+5
Equipment Logs, Utility Charts	5AD
Equipment Leasing	7AE
Equipment, Vehicle Purchases	5AD
Floor Plans	P
Fuel Receipts and Reports	3
Hazardous Materials Incident Reports	P
Inventories – Equipment	5AD
Mail Services (Fed Express, UPS, etc)	3AA
Maintenance and Repair - Machinery	5
Maintenance and Repair - Buildings	7
Maintenance Requests (Work Orders)	5
Requisitions - Supplies	1
Requisitions - Furniture	3
Security, Safety	5
Shipping and Freight Bills	6
Space Allocations	5
Supplies	3
Telephone Requests	1
Phone Directory, (record copy)	P
Utility Bills	3
Vehicles (operating and maintenance)	3AD
Vehicle Accident Reports	5

## **FUNDRAISING**

Annual Appeal, Second Collections	5
Applications for Funding	5
Capital Campaigns	P
Development Files	OBS
Donor Files (ParishSoft)	OBS+5
Federal & State Grant Project Files, Non-Education Agencies	3AT
Federal & State Grant Project Files, Education Agencies	5AT
Federal & State Final Grant Reports	P
Fundraising Activities Files	3
Planning Studies	P
Statistics	P
Stewardship Files	OBS+5

## **LEGAL (Canonical & Civil)**

Acquisitions	P
Adoptions	P
Annulments – Full Case, paper	1
Annulments – Full Case, digital copy	P (M)
Annulments – Acts of Case, paper	P (M)
Annulments – Confirmation Decree, paper	P (M)
Annulments – Final Decision, paper	P (M)
Annulments – Final Decree, paper	P (M)
Annulments – Votum of the Defender of the Bond, paper	P (M)
Annual Reports	P
Bankruptcy	6AS
Baptismal Registers	P (M)

Cemetery Interment Registers	P (M)	
Cemetery Ownership Plot Records	P (M)	
Cemetery Remains Removal	P (M)	
Charters, Constitutions, By Laws	P	
Claims, Workmen’s Compensation	5AS	
Confirmation Registers	P (M)	
Contracts and Agreements	7AE	
Contracts, Capital Improvements	10AE	
Copyrights	P	
Deeds, Abstracts, Titles	P	
Demand Letters (No action)	2AS	
Dispositions	P	
Due Diligence	P	
First Communion Registers	P	
Funeral Registers	P (M)	
Labor and Employment	P	
Legal Cases	P	
Leases and Rental Agreements	7AE	
Environmental	P	
Government Investigations		10AS
Incorporation Records	P	
Licenses - Federal, State, Local	2AT	
Litigation	6AS	
Litigation, if precedential	25	
Loss of Clerical State	P	
Marriage Records	P (M)	
Minute Books	P	
Political Contributions	P	
Parental Consent Forms, with no incident	3	
Parental Consent Forms, with incident	6AS	
Parish Establishment Decrees	P (M)	
Patents and Related Data	P	
Preuptial Questionnaires	50	
Real Estate – Leases	7AT	
Real Estate - Archdiocesan owned Property (includes signed Closing Documents of Properties bought and sold)	P	
Records Accessions (Archives)	P	
Records Destruction Forms in departments	P	
Records Inventories and Catalog (Archives)	P	
Records Retention Schedules (record copy)	P	
Records Transmittals (transfers)	5AD	
Sacramental Records in Parishes** Prior to 1930 – Send originals to Archives	P (M)	
Sacramental Registers Inventory in Parishes	P (M)	
Secret Archives (Restricted)	P	
Surveys, Deeds, Titles	P	

## **PAYROLL**

Deduction Authorizations, copies	C
Deduction Reports	4
Direct Deposit Records	1
Employee Salary Adjustments, copies only	P
Garnishments, copy only	1AE
Payroll Check Reconciliations	4
Payroll Documentation	4
Payroll Register, copies (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	5
Payroll Taxes, copies (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	4ATX
Tax Reports, Periodic copies	2
Salary and Wage Reports, copies (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	2

Time Sheets, Cards, originals (attendance)	CY+4
Vacation, Sick, Leave Y-T-D Reports	CY+4
W-2 Forms and Earnings	4
W-4 and G-4 Forms, copies only	2

## PERSONNEL (Lay & Religious)

Abuse & Neglect of Minors Statements	P
Accidents, non-hazardous materials	5
Applications and Resumes, hired	2AT
Applications and Resumes, non-hires	2
Background Checks & Consent Forms PDFs	50
Background Checks & Consents, originals	1AT
Benefit Plan Summary List of Employees or 6 years after last employee is terminated	75
Benefit Plan Worksheet, Employees	4
Bulletins, Health and Safety (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	P
Catechist Personnel File	6AT
Child Safety	P
Code of Conduct Policy Signed PFD copy	50
Contracts, Employment (non-teacher)	7AE
Contracts, Employment (Teachers) or Surrogate Record of Employment History	50AT
Deacon Personnel Files	P
Deduction Authorizations, original copy	CY+5
Disability Records, Employee	P
E.P.A. Records (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	3
Earnings Records	3AT
Earnings Records, Annual	50ATX
Education Reimbursement	3
EEOC and GEOC Complaints	2AS
EEOC Compliance Reports	3
Employee Assistance (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	6AC
Employee Contracts – See Contracts	
Employee Files, Individual, original in HR	7AT
Employee Files in agencies (copies)	2AT
Employee Grievances	2
Employee Retirement Plan-active & inactive	P
Employee Retirement Records, individual	7AT
Employee Salary Adjustments, originals	P
Employee Salary & Wage Reports (3 <sup>rd</sup> Party)	CY+4
Employee Security Access Badges	5AT
Employee Work and Salary History	7AT
Family Medical Leave	3
Garnishments, originals	4AE
Hazardous Exposure Medical Records	30AT
Health Plan Enrollee Lists	3
Health Plan Enrollment Forms	4AT
Holy Orders Registers – Suggested but not required by Canon Law	P
1-9 Form (employee eligibility verification) or 3 years after hire if longer	1AT
Insurance, Group - Employee	10AE
Insurance - Disability, Life, Workers Comp	10AT
Insurance - Health	10AT
Interviews	1
Job Descriptions (record copy)	SUP+2
Job Descriptions, Individual – See Employee Files	
Ministerial Standards Signed originals	1AT
Ministerial Standards Signed PDF copy	50
Ordination Files	P

Organizational Charts (record copy)	P
O.S.H.A Logs	6
Parish Time & Talent Forms	CY
Pension Files, retirees – 6 years after distribution of account balance; other Plan records	6AE
Personnel Files – See Employee Files	
Personnel Database Reports	6
Priests Personnel Files	P
Resumes, non-hires	1
Retirement and Pension Plans (record copy)	P
Retirement Reports – See Pension Files, retirees	
Rosters, Employees & Volunteers	P
Safe Environments, compliance & audit	P
Safe Environments original documents	1AT
Safe Environments PDF documents	50
Safety Records	5
Seminarian Files	P
Separation, Termination Letters	P
Sexual Abuse Policy Signed originals	1AT
Sexual Abuse Policy Signed PDF copy	50
Staff Evaluations (in Employee File)	7AT
Teacher Personnel Files	7AT
Training Manuals, Handbooks (record copy)	P
Volunteer Statistical Report, annual	P
Volunteers Individual Records, originals	1AT
Volunteers Individual Records PDF copy	50
Volunteers, Parish Time & Talent Forms	CY
Volunteers, Rejected	P
Volunteers with Client or Child contact	P
W-4 and G-4 Forms, originals	4
Worker's Compensation Claims	4AS
Workshop Files	CY+2
Years of Service Record	P
<i>Refer to the Personnel Policy Manual, 1999</i>	

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Annual Reports (record copy)	P
Art, original	P
Awards, Archdiocesan	P
Biographies, Employees	P
Clippings File	P
Charitable Contributions	P
Community Organizations	2
Distribution Lists (record copy)	P
Event Schedules (Calendar)	2
Exhibitions	2
Photographs, Slides & Negatives, Identified	P
Posters & Brochures	P
Press Kits (record copy)	P
Press Releases (record copy)	P
Publications, Archdiocesan (record copy)	P
Research and Analysis	P
Statistics, Archdiocesan (record copy)	P
Speeches, Homilies, Presentations (Archbishops and executives)	P
Special Events Administrative Files	P
3-D Mementoes of Events (Artifacts)	P
Videos and Recordings	P
Printing Services	1AS
<i>Refer to the Media Communication Policy, 2007</i>	

## PUBLISHING

Advertising Files – Display	CY+1
Articles, Speeches, Pastoral Letters	P
AV/Recordings; Podcasts	P
Awards	P
Biographical Information	P
Books – Published by Archdiocese	P
Newsletters, Annuals, Yearbooks	P
Newspapers – Bound Annuals, PDFs	P (M)
Newspapers – Loose Sheets, 2 paper copies	P
Parish and School Bulletins & Directories	P
Photographs, Slides & Negatives, Identified	P
Press Releases	P
Programs of Special Events, Athletics	P

## SOCIAL SERVICES

Accreditations	P
Adoptions	P
Agency Certification Applications	10
Applications for Funding	5
Case Management	7
Certification Applications & Self-Studies	10
Children's Health Services (Age 21+)	6
Contracts for Service Provision	P
Counseling (of clients)	7
Child Welfare Files, Custodial Care	P
Client Files, Disabilities	P
Client Case Files (Restricted)	7AE
Client Case Financial Files	1AA
Client Information Form	P
Emergency Relief Records	P
Foster Home Placement	P
Immigration, Summary Card Information	P
Licenses/Certifications (originals)	P
Requests for Access	7
Volunteers with Client & Child Contact	P

*Refer to Catholic Charities Records Policies, 2007*

## TAX

Depreciation Schedules	4
Audit Working Papers	4ATX
State & Federal Income Tax Return, Signed	P
State & Federal Income Tax Files (backup)	4ATX
Paid Tax Bill Receipts	3
Personal Property Returns	7
Tax Exemption	P

## WORSHIP

Chapel Blessings	P
Church Dedications	P
Mass Intention Books	C
Parish/Pulpit Announcements	P
Parish/Liturgical Ministries Schedules	CY
Petitions to the Holy See	P
Records of Anointing	P
Reservations of the Blessed Sacrament	P
Sacramental Records** – See LEGAL	
Saint Canonizations	P
Special Liturgy Booklets (record copy)	P

### Legend for Retention Periods:

AA – After Final Audit
AC – After Completion
AD – After Disposal
AE – After Expiration
AG – After Graduation
AS – After Settlement
AT – After Termination
ATX – After Tax Filing
C – Current, while useful
CY – Current Year
OBS – When Obsolete
P – Permanent
P (M) – Microfilm/Scan/Copy; Contact the Archives
SUP – When Superseded

**The schedule applies to all records regardless of physical form or characteristic, unless otherwise noted. Records may be maintained in any format on any medium.**

**Retention periods are finite and absolute, except when legally halted by official notice. They are not minimum guidelines.**

**\*Email** – Move important messages into separate folders. Delete all other folders, including the Deleted Items folder.

**\*\*Sacramental Records** – While information is maintained in ParishSoft for easy access, the official record is the paper copy and must be properly maintained and preserved. Send registers prior to 1930 to Archives.

### Transferring Digital Records to Archives

Standards for the transfer of media ensure that physical deterioration will not prematurely render electronic records unrecoverable. 4.7” (12cm) CD-Recordable discs are the only acceptable transfer medium. The Archives can not accept business card CD-R, mini CD-R, or non-standard shaped media, nor is CD-Rewritable (CD-RW) discs acceptable. Transferring records on archival quality CD-R media featuring a gold reflective surface and a phthalocyanine dye layer is ideal. Digital records also may be emailed to the Archives, preferably in a PDF attachment.

Digital, scanned files never survive by accident. File formats, hardware and software change often. CDs themselves have a short lifespan.

### GOOD RECORDS MAKE GOOD ARCHIVES!

For more information call  
**The Office of Archives and Records**  
**404-978-0796 or 404-978-2772**