

They are NOT your records!

Definition of Archdiocesan Records

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Definition of Archdiocesan Records

Archdiocesan records are documentary materials, regardless of physical form, that are:

- 1) made or received by an employee in connection with the transaction of business, and
- 2) preserved or appropriate for preservation as evidence of archdiocesan activities or because of the value of the information contained within.

All correspondence, memoranda, meeting minutes, files, photographic materials, architectural drawings, marketing materials, artwork, tape recordings, computer tapes and disks in the custody of every employee must be measured against the above definition to determine whether or not they qualify as archdiocesan records. The essential qualifying characteristics relate to evidence and information, not physical form or format or location.

Most documentary materials of an official nature in an office or department meet the definition of an archdiocesan record. Such materials are the property of the Archdiocese, not the property of the creator, or keeper of the record, no matter where they may be created or kept (in or out of the office) or whose computers were used, and must remain in the possession of the Archdiocese. When an employee leaves the Archdiocese, either voluntarily or involuntarily, all records of that office will be retained. Inactive records may be transferred to storage or to the Archives if they have permanent value. No employee is permitted to destroy or dispose of records in any format without permission from the Chancellor.

Definition of Personal Papers

Some documentary materials accumulated by employees do not qualify as archdiocesan records. These materials may be considered personal papers (and private property) if they relate to an individual's personal affairs and do not affect the conduct of archdiocesan business and activities.

Personal papers are excluded from the definition of archdiocesan records and are not owned by the Archdiocese. Examples include:

- 1) papers accumulated by an employee before joining the Archdiocese.
- 2) materials relating solely to an individual's private affairs, such as outside business or professional pursuits, professional affiliations, or private political associations.
- 3) diaries, journals, personal correspondence, or other personal notes that are not prepared or received in the process of transacting business.

If employees wish to maintain personal files in their offices, such files should be separated from archdiocesan records. When both private matters and business appear in the same document, extract or copy the part relating to business and treat the extraction or copy as a company record.

Materials labeled "personal," "confidential," "private," or similarly designated, and used in the transaction of archdiocesan business or activities are archdiocesan records. The use of a label such as "personal" is not sufficient to determine the status of documentary materials and ownership.

Personal papers may not be transferred to the archdiocesan off-storage facility. In certain situations, at the discretion of the Chancellor, personal papers may be acquired by the Office of Archives and Records, such as Archbishops papers from another institution or a collection directly related to the history of a school.

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