

## Records Retention Guidelines

### Parish Records Retention Guidelines

Categorize the records in a parish as:

- Parish Registers (baptism, confirmation, marriage and burial registers)
- Financial and business
- Parochial operations

Where the parish has a cemetery, organize documents in a similar fashion.

The retention of these records depends on government legislation, parish needs and archival and historical needs. Records that need to be kept permanently are 'archival' records and should be transferred to the diocesan archives.

Any documentation relating to an ongoing investigation, court case or audit must not be destroyed, regardless of previously agreed retention schedules.

### General Guideline for Retention of Records

Individual parishes may wish to extend retention periods, or add certain types of record to the list, as is appropriate to the parish.

Record Type	Retention Period	Comments
Parish Registers	Permanent	All registers baptism, confirmation, marriage and burial when complete shall be sent to the Diocesan Archivist at Cathedral Place.
Vestry (Service) Registers	Permanent	These are records of services held at the church, attendance and offerings and shall be permanently retained.
<b>Financial Records</b>		
Auditor's Report	Permanent	This shall be part of the annual financial statement included in the vestry report.
Balance Sheet	Permanent	This shall be part of the annual financial statement included in the vestry report.
Bank Deposit Slip	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Bank Draft	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Bank Reconciliation	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Bank Statement	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Cash Book	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Cheque Register	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Cheque (Cancelled)	7 years	To be retained at the parish
Giving Envelopes	2 years	To be retained at the parish

<b>Record Type</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Financial Statement (Monthly)	7 years	To be retained at the parish
General Ledger	Permanent	This shall be part of the annual financial statement included in the vestry report.
Insurance Records	Permanent	Policies are usually on an annual basis and cover parish assets (buildings, contents, and auto) and liability exposure.
Receipts	7 years	To be retained at the parish.
Duplicate Official Receipts	3 years	The same retention applies to any records necessary to verify these receipts.
Tax Return	7 years	To be retained at the parish and the same retention applies to any records necessary to verify the tax return.
<b>Documents relating to Building and Equipment</b>		
Building Plans, Surveys and Valuation Reports	Permanent	A copy should be sent to the Archives.
Deeds	Permanent	Copies shall be sent to the Archives.
Licenses (use of space, etc.)	Life of agreement plus 6 years	A copy of the license shall also be sent to the archives for the property file.
Bishop's Advisory Committee on Church Buildings	As long as the building is owned or in use	To be retained at the parish with copy of report to be sent to Diocesan Archivist.
Equipment Service Contracts	As long as the equipment is owned or in use.	To be retained at the parish.
<b>Personnel Files</b>		
Payroll Records (T4's, CPP and EI deductions etc.)	7 years	To be retained by the parish.
Personnel Files (incl. Screening Files, Performance Reviews etc.)	Permanent	Contact Director of Human Resources.
<b>Parochial Operations</b>		
All Policies and Bylaws	Permanent	Policies that have been superseded by later versions shall be permanently retained.
Vestry Report	Permanent	Shall be forwarded annually to the Diocese as part of the parochial returns package and must include annual financial statements, and the auditor's report.

<b>Record Type</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Minutes of Meetings	Permanent	Includes vestry, advisory boards, ACW and any other groups or organizations within the church.
Parish Profiles	Permanent	These documents are compiled when the parish is seeking a new incumbent, are an excellent 'snapshot' of a parish.
Pew bulletins/leaflets	Permanent or selective retention	Can be a valuable historic resource. Select samples and/or special events if space is limited.
Pictures	Permanent or selective retention	Shall be labeled and include names and dates, where appropriate.
Parish Newsletters	Permanent	Complete sets are a valuable resource.
Parish Histories, Anniversary Booklets, Directories	Permanent	An anniversary is a good opportunity to transfer files to the Archives!
Bibles, Prayer Books, etc.	As long as they are in use. Copy any relevant notations	These are not 'records' and cannot be accepted by the archives unless they are unique in some way directly pertaining to the Anglican Diocese of Niagara.

In summary, the following records are of an historical nature and should be deposited in the diocesan archives for permanent retention.

#### **Parish Registers**

- All baptism, confirmation, marriage, burial and service registers.

#### **Financial/Business**

- Annual reports to vestry, including annual financial statements
- A copy of the title deed for parish property
- A copy of the plan of survey
- A copy of the building plans

#### **Parochial Operations**

- Policies and bylaws
- Minutes of Vestry, wardens, parish groups and organizations
- Pew bulletins/leaflets
- Parish profiles, newsletters, histories and anniversary booklets
- Pictures, if well labeled with dates and names

**Please Note:** In the event of the **disestablishment** of a parish all the aforementioned documents should be sent to the Diocesan Archivist and each box carefully labeled as to contents. Please refer to Canon 4.5 for all other matters in this regard.

When depositing all records to the archives, a **detailed list of file titles/items is mandatory.**