

## PACKAGING AND CONTAINERS

Archival packaging helps protect archives from potential damage due to light, humidity, pests, water, dust, soot and insect sprays. Where possible items should be placed in acid-free packaging and stored in archival quality boxes.

Packaging that is in direct contact with documents should be of the highest quality.

Terms such as *acid free*, *wood free*, *lignin free*, *alkaline buffered*, *permanent* and *archival* are often used by manufacturers to indicate the quality of a product.

**For paper-based records** — A wide variety of archival quality containers, ranging from simple folders to wallets, standard documents boxes and tailor-made boxes. These are made of high quality material such as acid-free paper, tissue and card, polyester or polypropylene. Avoid packaging made from polyvinyl chloride (PV) because it breaks down over time into a strong acid that damages paper and photographs.

To archive your documents you will need to use:

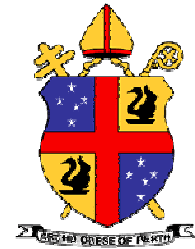
- Archives Boxes (Container Type 1.1) for standard files up to foolscap (grey boxes)
- Acid free manila folders/wallets

The material can be ordered from the Archives or directly from the supplier:

Archival Survival  
Phone: 1300 78 11 99  
[info@archivalsurvival.com.au](mailto:info@archivalsurvival.com.au)  
[www.archivalsurvival.com.au](http://www.archivalsurvival.com.au)

## HOW TO ARCHIVE - TIPS

- Remove all metal paper clips, staples and pins before archiving (they rust!). Use plastic coated paper clips when necessary
- Do not use PVC plastic to store records as it gives off damaging vapours. PVC plastic can be identified by its smell which is like that of the interior of a new car
- Documents with Post-It Notes should be copied on acid-free paper. If covering some text, move the Post-it Note to a blank section of the page
- Do not laminate archival items because lamination cannot be easily removed and will result in the slow deterioration of a document
- Remove sticky tape whenever possible, without damaging the paper
- Use cotton tape to tie up papers. Make sure they are first bundled in a folder or wallet, then use cotton tape
- Photocopy faxes and documents on thermal paper
- Photocopy any document (old photocopies and carbon copies) which are fading
- Photocopy articles that you want to archive from newspaper magazines. Make sure you can identify the article by noting the name of the newspaper, date of the edition and page number
- Label your folders (using sticky labels or writing on pencil). Confidential information needs to be labelled "Restricted" stating whom access is restricted to
- Photos must be stored separately from documents.



## AGENCIES GUIDELINES ON ARCHIVING DOCUMENTS

This brochure has been created by the Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. Its aim is to guide agencies on what and how to archive documents. For further information and resources about archival practices please contact:

**Archives**  
**Phone: (08) 9228 8020**  
**Email: [archives@perthcatholic.org.au](mailto:archives@perthcatholic.org.au)**

# ARCHIVES

1. A GROUP OF RECORDS HELD TOGETHER
2. AN ORGANISATION THAT HOLD HISTORICAL RECORDS
3. THE WHOLE BODY OF RECORDS DOCUMENTING PAST ACTIVITIES
4. A SINGLE RECORD OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

When considering what to archive put yourself in the position of someone wanting to write a history about your particular agency. What would they find of interest or importance? Your archived material needs to demonstrate what your activity and function was as an organisation.

## Common mission of archives

Organisations that hold archives have a common mission: to preserve archival records in the context in which they originated so that they are understandable and accessible to future generations. Archives are the body of records from the business and personal transactions of an organisation and the people that it represents. It is important to maintain information about the context of archival materials, ie the person or organisation that created the records (provenance) and the relationships between records.

## Types of records

An archival collection may contain documents such as letters, reports, minutes of meetings, photographs, newsletters, certificates, journals and books. It might also contain financial records and registers, posters, brochures, maps, flags, CDs and DVDs. The majority of records your office are likely to be paper-based, but electronic records such as emails and electronic media such as CDs and DVDs are increasingly more common.

## What to Archive

- Minutes of all meetings
- Directives from those meetings
- Organisational charts
- Procedures
- Reports on major projects
- Name-based records (eg staff, lists of donors)
- All significant Incoming/Outgoing correspondence (includes email): letters to and from the Archbishop and Bishop, letters to other parishes/agencies, letters of complaint about people/agencies/parishes
- Publications (newsletters, brochures, booklets)
- Documents relating to Special Events such as Ordinations, Workshops: include flyer, master list of guests, invitation, acceptances
- Constitutions
- Financial records: include financial reports, final budget, audit reports, significant expenditure and income. Accounts and all receipts must be kept for 7 years (unless there has been an incident of fraud and therefore these must be kept permanently). After the legal requirement time period, keep the Profit and Loss and Balance Sheets, but you can dispose of the receipts.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE STORAGE SPACE

- Ideally, the storage area for archives will have no windows but, if it does, blinds or curtains will be used on windows to control the amount of natural light entering the room
- Air conditioning is desirable!
- Archives should be stored in a room that can be locked when not in use to protect against theft and vandalism
- It is advisable to store archives in the part of the building that is most environmentally stable. This usually means an area in the centre of the building, away from external walls
- Store archives at least 10cm off the floor to lessen the risk of damage from water, damp, pests and dust. If shelving is not available, avoid ground contact by storing items on pallets or blocks. Do not store them on top of the shelving unit shelving, as they will be too close to ceiling lights and could be damaged by water from sprinklers
- Shelving needs to be robust. Powder-coated steel is the best material for shelving as it is strong and does not contain contaminants likely to damage records. Wooden shelving should be avoided as it can harbour insects and contribute to the spread of fire.