

Catholic Archdiocese of Perth



Vital Records Policy

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INTRODUCTION

Vital records are critical to the continuing operations of the Archdiocese. They are the records which enable the ongoing business of the Archdiocese, and without which it could not continue to function effectively. Vital records are needed to re-establish the Archdiocese in the event of a disaster.

Management of the Archdiocese's vital records is integral to its business continuity planning and its disaster recovery plan. Refer to the Archdiocese's Business Recovery Plan.

This vital records policy is to assist staff in identifying those records without which the Archdiocese could not continue to function effectively. It presents information about and requirements for the identification, management, protection, storage and disposal of the Archdiocese's vital records.

OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to:

- Assist and advise staff in the identification, management, protection, storage and disposal of the Archdiocese's vital records;
- Assist with protecting the rights and interests of the Archdiocese, its staff and its community; and
- Provide a complement to business continuity planning.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff (paid and unpaid), including contractors, consultants and volunteers associated with the Archdiocese and all Archdiocesan-owned agencies, organisations and parishes belonging to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth Corporation Sole (the Archdiocese), who create, capture, store and use records in the Archdiocese.

All records, irrespective of medium or format, must be subject to this policy. For example, hardcopy and digital records, including, but not limited to, emails and websites, and records in all business systems, mobile devices, databases, social media and voicemail.

For the purposes of this policy, vital records are those that are required to:

- Establish and protect the rights and interests of the organisation and its clients;
- Reinstate business operations during or following a disaster; and
- Continue to communicate with, and service the needs of, staff following a disaster.¹

Please note that records may be considered as vital indefinitely or over the short term.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Archdiocese will identify, manage and protect those records that are vital to its continuing operations.

¹ State Records Office of Western Australia, https://www.sro.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/information_sheet_-_vital_records_-_final_-_jan2017_-_edited_aug_2020_0.pdf.

All vital records will be designated as such in the official records management system. Where possible, hardcopy vital records should be scanned and captured in the official records management system.

The Archdiocese will develop and maintain a vital records register. All vital records must be recorded in the register and maintained in the approved records management system. The register will be maintained by the Archives Office.

The location and format of all vital records must be determined and maintained in the register.

The Archdiocese will retain all vital records in accordance with its retention and disposal schedule.

Appropriate custodians will be appointed to oversee the management, currency, condition and storage of vital records. Contact details for the custodians will be maintained in the register.

All staff will be involved in identifying and protecting vital records.

Procedures and protocols will be developed and implemented to protect hardcopy vital records from deterioration, unauthorised access and physical harm or damage.

Appropriate security measures will be employed to assist in protecting digital vital records in order to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal of records.

Digital vital records must contain appropriate metadata.

When a disaster or emergency event occurs, vital information should be the main priority for recovery and salvage efforts.

SUPPORTING GUIDELINES

Refer to the Information Management Implementation Plan.

SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Refer to the Information Management Implementation Plan.

RELATED POLICIES

Archives Management Policy

Disaster Management Policy

Retention and Disposal Policy

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Not Applicable

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Archivist and Director of the Archives Office

Tel: 6104 3626