


# Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## GENERAL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE


Approved: September 2023

## GENERAL SCHEDULE

	RECORDS TITLE	DESCRIPTION	DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS	NOTES
	<b>Abuse involving a minor Records</b>	Records that document any disclosure of or suggestion of abuse involving a minor regardless of when the alleged abuse occurred. <i>Tags: Legal, Risk Management</i>	Retain in office permanently.	Anyone suspecting or having knowledge of a violation must report the violation.
	<b>Advertising, Promotion, and Publicity Records</b>	Records related to promoting and sharing information about an agency or ministry area's activities, mission, or operations. Records may include marketing plans, branding and logos, photographs, video or audio recordings, and other related records. <i>Tags: Communications, Constituent Services</i>	Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.	See Publications for retention of press releases.
	<b>Application Development Records</b>	Records created and used in the development, redesign, or modification of IT applications. Records may include user or functional requirements, system or subsystem specifications, correspondence, project management records, and other related records. <i>Tags: Information Technology</i>	Retain 3 years after sunset of application OR until data is transferred to a new application, whichever is longer, then destroy.	
	<b>Audit Reports</b>	Summary report of internal or external reviews that relate to a fiscal, programmatic, or compliance audit. Records include annual financial reports. Records may also include documentation of actions taken to address issues raised in the audit. <i>Tags: Financial, Risk Management</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.	


\* Records may not be destroyed if audit or litigation involving the records are pending or reasonably anticipated, even if the records have met their minimum retention requirements.

Note: Records with administrative value are generally considered useful or relevant to the execution of the activities that caused the record to be created.

	<b>Budget Records</b>	Records concerning the administration of a ministry area's budget through development, tracking, or execution. Records may include budget code lists, budget reports, correspondence, working documents, and other budget control records. <i>Tags: Financial</i>	Retain 3 years after close of fiscal year, then destroy.* Retain budget codes for 3 years after superseded, then destroy.	See finance and accounting schedule for retention of budget projections and annual budget.
	<b>Calendars and Itineraries</b>	Records concerning day-to-day plans and their corresponding timetables. Records may include invitations, meeting notices, RSVPs, and schedules. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.	
	<b>Committee, Advisory Group, Commission, Task Force, or Working Group Records</b>	Records concerning the work and decisions of governing and other policy-setting bodies, including agency or entity boards, standing committees, special committees/commissions/task forces, and advocacy committees. Records may include agendas, correspondence, membership lists, membership portraits or other photographs, memoranda, minutes and meeting materials, presentations, reports, video or audio recordings, and other related records. <i>Tags: Governance</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.	Extra copies of meeting packets prepared for meeting participants may be destroyed when no longer needed. See Meeting Recordings for retention of video or audio recordings used to support the creation of minutes or to provide audience access to meeting proceedings.
	<b>Contracts, Leases, and Agreement Records</b>	Records documenting agreements about equipment, property, services rendered, or other goods or obligations. Records may include memoranda of understanding (MOU), service-level agreements (SLA), or statements of work (SOW). <i>Tags: Financial, Legal</i>	Retain 6 years after termination, expiration, or terms have been satisfied, then destroy.*	

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	<p><b>Correspondence - Official</b></p>	<p>Messages, especially e-mail, that relate to high-level agency planning. Messages are typically created by upper-level administrative staff but may be from others who are involved in decision-making, policy development, or strategic planning. Records may also originate from individuals whose correspondence has been identified for long-term retention for the purposes of institutional memory and planning. <i>Tags: Governance, Office Management</i></p>	<p>Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.</p>	<p>This item is to help guide the management of e-mail correspondence. Most messages should be retained for the period required of the record type. For example, a receipt or invoice received via email should follow the retention instructions for Financial Transaction Records (Office copy). Similarly, correspondence regarding a grievance should be retained as part of the grievance case file and follow the retention instructions for Grievances.</p>
	<p><b>Correspondence – Non-business</b></p>	<p>Messages, especially e-mail, that are not directly related to PC(USA) business. Messages may include those of a purely personal nature, of a malicious nature (such as phishing scams), spam, or messages that are business adjacent such as non-work email from coworkers or external advertisements from vendors. <i>Tags: Office Management</i></p>	<p>Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.</p>	<p>This item is to help guide the management of e-mail correspondence. Most messages should be retained for the period required of the record type. For example, a receipt or invoice received via email should follow the retention instructions for Financial Transaction Records (Office copy). Similarly, correspondence regarding a grievance should be retained as part of the grievance case file and follow the retention instructions for Grievances.</p>

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	<p><b>Correspondence - Routine</b></p>	<p>Messages, especially e-mail, that relate to the exchange of routine information. Messages may include those involving requests for information, announcements or memos intended for information sharing, or messages related to logistical arrangements.</p> <p><i>Tags: Constituent Services, Office Management</i></p>	<p>Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.</p>	<p>This item is to help guide the management of e-mail correspondence. Most messages should be retained for the period required of the record type. For example, a receipt or invoice received via email should follow the retention instructions for Financial Transaction Records (Office copy). Similarly, correspondence regarding a grievance should be retained as part of the grievance case file and follow the retention instructions for Grievances.</p>
	<p><b>Financial Transaction Records (Office copy)</b></p>	<p>Records related to financial transactions that document funds either received or expended. Records may include account request forms, accounts payable records, accounts receivable records, deposited checks, expense reports, general ledger reports, invoices, pay authorizations, purchase orders, receipts, reconciliations, requisitions (including shipping requisitions), statements, travel authorizations or travel requests, vouchers, and other related records.</p> <p><i>Tags: Financial</i></p>	<p>Retain 3 years after close of fiscal year, then destroy.*</p>	

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	<b>Grants – Funded</b>	Records that document application for and approval of grant funds. Records may include applications, supporting documentation, budget information, contracts or agreements, correspondence, record of financial disbursement, reports, supporting photographs, supporting video or audio recordings, and other related records. <i>Tags: Financial</i>	Retain final reports or record of deliverables permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends. Retain all other records related to the administration of the grant 3 years, OR until no longer needed, whichever is longer, then destroy.*	
	<b>Grants – Not Funded</b>	Records that document application for and denial of grant funds. Records may include applications, supporting documentation, budget information, correspondence, and other related records. <i>Tags: Financial</i>	Retain 2 years, then destroy.	
	<b>Grievances (Office copy)</b>	Complaints regarding employment-related actions or decisions that have not been reported as discrimination or harassment and that may be handled through informal or formal internal processes rather than through litigation. Records may include correspondence, petitions, and other related records. <i>Tags: Legal, Personnel</i>	Retain 5 years after resolution, then destroy.*	Description has been adapted from Employee Handbook. Record copy may be held by Human Resources.



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	<b>Hiring Process Records (Office copy)</b>	Records documenting the decision-making process and criteria used to select a candidate to fill a position. Records may include correspondence, interview schedules or itineraries, interview questions, notes or other evaluations, and other related records. <i>Tags: Personnel</i>	Retain 3 years after search is concluded, then destroy.*	
	<b>Inventory and List Records</b>	Records used to manage or track information, and which may be updated on an ongoing basis. Records may include property or equipment lists, contact lists (e.g. directories, distribution lists, or mailing lists), or other indices and inventories. <i>Tags: Asset and Information Management</i>	Retain until superseded, then destroy.	
	<b>Meeting and Event Arrangement Records</b>	Records documenting meeting or event preparations. Records may include proposals, venue information, task lists, reservations, and other related records. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain 3 years after meeting or event, then destroy.	See Financial Records (Office copy) for retention of financial records related to event planning.
	<b>Meeting and Event Registration Records</b>	Records documenting individuals who register to attend a meeting or event. Data may include addresses or other contact information, logistical information like flights or accommodations, names, roles, and other related data. <i>Tags: Legal, Office Management</i>	Retain registration records of meetings or events for which no minors registered 3 years, then destroy. Retain registration data of meetings or events for which minor/s registered, until the youngest registered individual reaches the age of majority plus 3 years, then destroy.	For data that is held online and that must be retained longer than 5 years, contact the records manager and Technology to explore whether moving the data offline is practicable.

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	<b>Meeting Recordings</b>	Audio or video recordings of meetings used to support the creation of minutes or to provide audience access to meeting proceedings. <i>Tags: Governance, Office Management</i>	Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.	
	<b>Ministry Area Records</b>	Records related to the management of a ministry area. Files may be associated with the director, coordinator, or associate of that ministry. Records may include memoranda, policies, procedures, reports, subject files, and other resources. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives for appraisal when administrative value ends.	
	<b>Minutes – staff</b>	Minutes of internal staff meetings and non-policy-setting bodies. These types of meetings generally reflect the inner workings of a unit. They may be used to clarify procedures or develop ideas, but do not set policy. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain 3 years, then destroy.	
	<b>Minutes – Executive or Leadership Teams</b>	Minutes of agency-level or department-level senior staff. These are decision-making and planning bodies that guide operations and strategic directions. Although they may clarify procedures or develop ideas, they do not set policy. <i>Tags: Governance, Office Management</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.	
	<b>Personnel Records (Office/Supervisor copy)</b>	Records documenting an employee’s work history. Records may include biographical information or resumes, appointments or agreements, correspondence, goal setting, performance management, and other related records. <i>Tags: Personnel</i>	Retain 6 years after employee separates, then destroy.*	

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	<p><b>Photographs</b></p>	<p>Identified images produced by or for an agency or ministry area that document events, people, programs, or agency history. <i>Tags: Communications</i></p>	<p>Retain photographs of significant building projects, events, people, programs, or histories permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends. Retain photographs of agency staff or routine building projects or programs (such as chapel, office celebrations, retirements, or travel) until no longer needed, then destroy. Destroy unidentified photographs.</p>	<p>See Advertising, Promotion, and Publicity Records; Committee, Advisory Group, Commission, Task Force, or Working Group Records; and Training and Workshop Records for retention of photographs that fall under these items.  See World Mission schedule for retention of Mission Co-Worker images.</p>
	<p><b>Policies and Procedures</b></p>	<p>Key documents that guide organizational practices, operations, and decisions as well as records relating to the development, implementation, and interpretation of those key documents. Records may include handbooks, manuals, organizational charts, policies, procedures, strategic plans, and other related records. <i>Tags: Governance, Office Management</i></p>	<p>Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.</p>	

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	<b>Publications</b>	Publications created by an agency or ministry area. Records may include brochures, devotionals, journals, magazines, newsletters, press releases, programs or order of worship, promotional materials, published reports, and individual articles or stories. <i>Tags: Communications, Constituent Services</i>	Transfer one copy of final publication to the Archives. Retain working documents, drafts, and other records regarding creation of the publication for 5 years, then destroy.	
	<b>Records Management Records (Office/Unit copy)</b>	Documentation concerning the management of records throughout their lifecycle, including especially the final disposition of records or data. May include transfer forms and destruction logs. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain permanently in creating office.	
	<b>Reference Materials</b>	Records used for informational purposes, often organized by areas of interest. May include announcements, articles or news clippings, external publications, notes, and white papers. May also include reference copies of documents or publications for which another individual or ministry area is responsible for maintaining the record copy. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain until no longer needed, then destroy.	
	<b>Reports – Annual or Summary</b>	Reports concerning the performance of an agency, ministry area, office, program, or project, as well as reports created for planning purposes or as a reference for policy or programmatic recommendations. These may be prepared at regular or irregular intervals and may be self-studies or prepared by external consultants. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.	


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	<b>Reports – Periodic or Routine</b>	A synopsis of activities that often serve as supporting documentation for an annual or summary report or that documents the ongoing results of a program or initiative. Records may cover services rendered, time studies, workload measurements, or other metrics. <i>Tags: Office Management</i>	Retain until annual or summary reports are complete and until no longer needed, then destroy. If annual or summary report is not created, retain 3 years, then destroy.	
	<b>Request for Proposal/Bid records</b>	Records related to the procurement of goods, services, or equipment through a proposal process. Records include invitations for bid (IFB) or requests for proposals (RFP). <i>Tags: Financial</i>	Retain successful bids for 6 years after termination, expiration, or satisfaction, then destroy.* Retain unsuccessful bids for 1 year, then destroy. Retain notices, evaluations, and other related records until no longer needed, then destroy.	
	<b>Research Data</b>	Data gathered on behalf of or by a ministry area. Records may include evaluations, surveys, and other related records. <i>Tags: Constituent Services</i>	Retain until summary or analysis is complete and until no longer needed, then destroy. If summary or analysis is not created, retain 5 years, then destroy.	



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	<b>Sermons, Speeches, Statements, and Interviews</b>	Sermons, speeches, statements, or interviews made by agency or ministry area officials. Records are typically created by upper-level administrative staff in connection with official duties. Records may include presentations, transcripts, video or audio recordings and other related records. <i>Tags: Communications</i>	Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.	
	<b>Templates and Forms</b>	Standardized materials used by an agency or ministry area. Records may include blank forms, style sheets, templates, letterhead, or other materials used to establish branding. Also includes records related to the development or maintenance of these items. <i>Tags: Constituent Services, Office Management</i>	Retain until superseded, then destroy.	
	<b>Training and Workshop Records</b>	Records related to training internal or external audiences. Records may include agendas, handouts, photographs of the training event or attendees, presentations, video or audio recordings, and other related records. <i>Tags: Constituent Services, Education, Office Management</i>	Retain until superseded, then destroy.	See General Assembly functions schedule for retention of General Assembly and constitutional interpretation-related training.

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	<b>Video and Audio Recordings</b>	<p>Video or audio recordings produced by or for an agency or ministry area that document significant issues, events, programs, or agency history. Also includes projects such as podcasts or documentaries.</p> <p><i>Tags: Communications</i></p>	<p>Retain permanently; transfer to Archives when administrative value ends.</p>	<p>See Advertising, Promotion, and Publicity Records; Committee, Advisory Group, Commission, Task Force, or Working Group Records; Meeting Recordings; Sermons, Speeches, Statements, and Interviews; and Training and Workshop Records for audio or video recordings that fall under these items.</p> <p>See OGA schedule for retention of General Assembly recordings.</p>
	<b>Websites and Website Management</b>	<p>Web sites that have been identified for long-term preservation for the purpose of institutional memory and planning. Also includes records regarding the design and implementation of an agency or ministry area's website.</p> <p><i>Tags: Information Technology, Communications, Constituent Services</i></p>	<p>Retain web site design and implementation records until superseded, then destroy.</p> <p>Notify Archives for website appraisal; Archives will crawl sites identified for long-term preservation.</p>	

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