

Records Retention Schedule ELCA Churchwide Office

The ELCA Constitution mandates a records management system and provides for the archives of this church ELCA Constitution [13.41.02.f and g]. The ongoing cooperation of all staff is required to fulfill this constitutional responsibility.

The information that is retained in hard copy or electronic files is the property of the Churchwide Office. Such information is not the property of the staff member to use, remove, retain personally, or to destroy at will. Staff members are the custodians of the documents they retain. [CC89.4.1.111]

For the Churchwide Office of the ELCA, as for all organizations, information is one of the three key assets—together with people and money—necessary for our work, and which commands our stewardship.

The benefits of good records management are:

- Faster retrieval of information for the staff who work with the records,
- Fewer lost or misplaced records,
- Control of the life cycle of records,
- Compliance with legal, fiscal, and administrative requirements,
- Protection for this church's vital and historical records,
- Space saving and reduced expenditure for physical and electronic document storage,
- Selection of appropriate media for active and permanent records.

Most of the information you create or use will fit into one of the

Programmatic Units

following categories. Please observe the time schedule and special instructions for managing your records.

Two Records Retention Schedules are available:

1. The schedule for programmatic records is designed to cover most of the records generated by our programmatic units.
2. The schedule for business records is designed to address the legal, fiscal, and administrative needs of our business offices.

Additional information on how to maintain your active records and how to go about transferring your records to the Archives or the Records Center is contained in the **Records Management Manual for the Churchwide Office**, which is found online at <http://www.elca.org/secretary/>

(Revised 2008)

**Records Retention Schedule
ELCA Churchwide Office**

Programmatic Units

Records Series	Contents	Instructions	Final Disposition
Correspondence	Letters and e-mail	File letters and responses together. Print out significant e-mail, together with your reply. The e-mail kept in GroupWise will be deleted every 41 days.	Send to the Archives after 3 years.
Minutes of boards, advisory, and program committees	Protocol minutes include exhibits, executive committee, conference call, and executive session minutes.	Send one copy of protocol minutes—including exhibits, executive committee, conference call, and executive session minutes—to the Office of the Secretary, ELCA Constitution [13.41.02.a]; retain one copy in the unit.	Upon publication, send one copy to the Archives.
Unit financial records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial reports • budget development working papers 	After the year-end reports are reconciled, The primary value for these records is the development of the next year's budget.	Destroy unit records after 1 year.
Unit personnel records for churchwide office staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applications • resumes • personnel actions • time sheets • performance appraisals 	No records over one year old should be retained in the unit.	Send all personnel records to the Human Resources Office

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Records Series	Contents	Instructions	Final Disposition
Personnel records for persons related to the unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persons employed by the unit 	<p>If the persons are employed or endorsed by the unit, these records are governed by policy set for each unit depending on the content of the files.</p>	<p>Send to the Archives at the termination of employment.</p>
	<p>.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persons employed by other organizations 	<p>No personnel records should be maintained in the unit.</p>	<p>Ever changing mailing lists are not preserved.</p>
Records supporting the development of official statements and documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • original mandate • grant application • minutes of committee, team or task force • drafts • reports of focus groups and hearings • correspondence and responses, including e-mail and Listserv • articles relating to the study • final document 	<p>Send copies of the final version of the document to the Library for cataloging. The electronic version will be linked to the bibliographic record in the Library catalog.</p> <p>Unless essential to the development of the document, resource material from outside sources should be destroyed.</p>	<p>Send the entire project to the Archives within one year after adoption.</p>

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Events, conferences, training programs, and assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mandate for the event • planning material • correspondence, including e-mail • minutes (if applicable) • grant application • promotional and programmatic material • videos, DVD, and photographs • sermons and speeches • Web site presentation 		Send to the Archives within one year following the event
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contracts • insurance policies 	Retain in the unit for 10 years Retain in the unit for 10 years; consult with Legal Office regarding disposition.	Destroy after 10 years.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting history (from the convention center) • hotel room pick-up report (from hotels) 	These may be retained for planning the next similar event and then destroyed.	Destroy after 3 years.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation questionnaires of the event • registrations • ballots • invoices 	Evaluation "reports" may become part of the archival record.	Destroy within one year following the event.

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<p>Relationship with organizations, including but not limited to, synods, congregations, agencies, associations, schools, camps, and global partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correspondence, including e-mail, with responses • governing documents • minutes of governing boards or councils • consultations • statistical reports and trend analysis • property related documents • insurance policies • training materials • organization program and promotional material • newsletters and news articles • documents for special events • budgets, annual financial statements, and audit reports 	<p>Do not include personnel records in these organizational files.</p> <p>Program area directors must help maintain the central file, and they should destroy the duplicates in their possession when they are no longer of current use.</p>	<p>Send the central file to the Archives at 4-year intervals.</p>

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Relationship with ecumenical partners and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • governing documents • correspondence, including e-mail • travel itinerary and briefings • dialogues and consultations <p>.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretive material • histories • worship materials • sermons and speeches • videotapes and photographs <p>.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial records 	<p>Applies to all units in ecumenical conversations.</p>	<p>Send to the Archives at 4-year intervals.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Send copies of the programmatic material to the Archives as produced.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Destroy after 2 years.</p>
Grants given to individuals, agencies, or organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy documents • applications accepted/denied • reports and evaluations • correspondence, including e-mail with responses • contracts • interpretive material • committee minutes • final financial accounting <p>.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly financial reports 	<p>(See personnel guidelines regarding student records for scholarship recipients.)</p>	<p>Send to the Archives at 4-year intervals.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Destroy monthly financial reports after 2 years.</p>

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Databases	Types of databases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveys • statistical • financial • personnel <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registrations • mailing lists 	Consult with the Department for Research and Evaluation to determine the long term value of the data and appropriate format for retention. Work with the Department for Information Technology to document the structure of the database. Be prepared to migrate data to newer generations of software and hardware, or to retain it in ASCII, XML, SGML or other cross platform format on CD-ROM.	After consultation with the Archives, print out annual reports from specified databases. <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> There is no need to preserve data in constantly changing name and address databases.
Documents of a legally sensitive nature relating to persons or institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documents related to persons • documents related to institutions 	Always maintain these in a separate, restricted file, and destroy copies after the matter is concluded.	If action is taken, the copy of record resides with the General Counsel for the time deemed appropriate.
Journals, newsletters, news releases prepared by the program area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • print journals • electronic journals 	May be retained in the unit until it has ceased publication or been superseded.	Send to the Archives as issued. Print out copies of electronic journals for the Archives.

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<p>Topical resource material, reports, and professional journals from outside sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newsletters • journals • reports • conference publications • pamphlets • training materials 	<p>This dated material is of temporary value.</p>	<p>Once each year, clean these files and dispose of material that is over 4 years old.</p>