

MANAGING ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS

INTRODUCTION

Records are information that has been fixed on some medium; that has content, context, and structure; and that are used as an extension of human memory or to demonstrate accountability.¹ Records exist in many formats, including:

- physical/paper formats (letter, memorandum, report, meeting minutes),
- audiovisual formats (photograph, recording, video tape, film), and
- digital formats (emails, documents, websites, photographs, social media).

The administrative records of the Evangelical Covenant Church and North Park University are everyone's responsibility. Information retained in records is necessary for our own work, for larger administrative reasons including fiscal and legal reasons, and for the future of these institutions. Records (whether physical or digital) produced and retained while in the service and employment of the Evangelical Covenant Church or North Park University should be managed appropriately.

Records management is the system by which organizations manage records through their creation, use, and disposal. This is based on the idea of a record lifecycle that includes the following phases:

1. Creation: the time at which a record is created or received and is of immediate use to the office.
2. Active: used in the office.
3. Inactive: records have ongoing value and use but are no longer referred to on a regular basis. (These are usually stored where they would be readily accessible as needed).
4. Final disposition: the last phase is the point at which records have no further operational value to the office, and are disposed of either by destroying them, or transferring them to the Archives.

All of the above can be managed by setting up "records schedules" which identify each type of record and guide you in what to do with them. The Evangelical Covenant Church and North Park University do not have official records management policies or institution-wide records retention schedules at this time. In the absence of these policies, we are relying on the good sense and discretion of staff to ensure that records of lasting historical value will be available in the future.

This document and guidelines are recommendations from the F.M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections, North Park University. This document was created in May of 2009 and revised in June of 2020.

¹ <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/record.html>, definition 2.



RECORDS MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

Communicate with each other, department to department, to determine what department and person is responsible for each record type. The best practice is that the office, person, or entity that created the record should maintain the official records. For example, the Human Resources department should be the only one department maintaining personnel records.

Label, date, and describe documents that you produce. Specifically,

- Use meaningful file names and embed descriptive metadata in the file themselves.
- Be consistent in how the files are organized and following existing patterns (if files are organized alphabetically, continue to organize alphabetically)
- Be clear, accurate, and concise. Think about future users when devising filing systems.

ARCHIVAL RECORDS AND TRANSFERS

In the absence of an official records management plan, the following list should be understood as general guidance.

Archival Records

The mission of the Archives is to serve as the official repository of “historically significant records.” Historically significant administrative records might include:

- Office Files such as correspondence, memoranda, and subject files concerning projects, activities, and functions.
- Meeting minutes and reports.
- Files documenting policies, decisions, committees, and task forces.
- Publications: one copy of all newsletters, journals, brochures, programs, posters, and announcements produced by your office.
- Audiovisual materials: photographs, films, and sound and video recordings.

Non-Archival Records

The following record types are, in general, less historically significant and therefore should not be sent to the Archives.

- Records of financial transactions.
- Routine letters of transmittal and acknowledgment.
- Non-personally addressed correspondence.
- All unused printed or duplicated materials.
- Papers, reports, and data which have been published or appear in final form elsewhere.

Transfers

Offices and departments of the Evangelical Covenant Church and North Park University should transfer administrative records to the Archives from time to time. Please contact the Archives before transferring material and complete the “Record Transfer Form” available online or via email.



TRANSFER OF RECORDS FORM

Institution Requesting Transfer: _____

Department / Office: _____

Person Authorizing Transfer: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Description of Records:

Dates of Records: _____

Estimated Volume: _____

Notes Concerning Disposition: _____

Restrictions on Access (Any restriction must be accepted by the archivist and have an end date):

Archives Staff Receiving Records (Name and Title): _____

Date: _____

Processing Notes: _____

Accession Number: _____

Related Record Series: _____



FORMULARIO DE TRANSFERENCIA DE RECORDS TRANSFER OF RECORDS FORM

Institución Pidiendo la Transferencia [Institution Requesting Transfer]: _____

Departamento / Oficina [Department / Office]: _____

Persona Autorizando la Transferencia [Person Authorizing Transfer]: _____

Dirección [Address]: _____

Teléfono [Phone]: _____ Email: _____

Firma [Signature]: _____ Fecha [Date]: _____

Descripción de los Records
[Description of Records]:

Lapso de las Fechas de los Records [Dates of Records]: _____

Volumen o Cantidad Estimado [Estimated Volume]: _____

Notas Referente a la Disposición [Notes Concerning Disposition]: _____

Restricciones Referente al Acceso y Uso (Cualquier restricción debe ser aceptada por el archivero)
[Restrictions on Access (Any restriction must be accepted by the archivist)]

Archives Staff Receiving Records (Name and Title): _____

Date _____ Processing Notes: _____

Accession Number _____ Related Record Series: _____