
DOSA Records Management Standards: Paper Files

Storage Guidelines

Each office will have a combination of non-permanent and permanent records.

- Ensure that permanent and non-permanent records are stored separately to reduce the risk of destroying records that should be maintained permanently.
- For non-permanent records, it is more efficient to store records of the same classification and destruction date together. This will limit the amount of time destruction will take.
- All DOSA records should be stored at least 6" off the ground. Boxes, papers and files sitting on the ground run the risk of damage due to minor floods (like a leaky or broken pipe), the most common cause of paper loss
- Use Diocesan approved vendors or locations for storing non-permanent records. Do not store items in garages, sheds, or attics, as these spaces are prone to infestation and climates that damage paper.
- Permanent records should be transferred to the Archives (either the Diocesan Archives or permanent archives at your institution) and housed in a controlled climate, ideally between 35°F and 55°F and 30-50% relative humidity. Photos and other media are best preserved in colder climates with lower humidity.

Filing Guidelines

Filing paper documents in a consistent and neat manner aids in quick retrieval and efficient removal for storage or destruction.

- Use hanging folders in addition to file folders, not "instead of" or sitting in a stack on your desk or in a drawer. If you can't see it, how do you know what is where?
- Avoid interfiling non-records (reference information or copies) in file folders with records. When files eventually require weeding, the process becomes laborious and inefficient.
- If your office or institution relies heavily on paper files, set up a new filing system at the beginning of each Fiscal Year or Calendar year, storing only one year's worth of records in a folder. Empty folders can be relabeled the following year. Filled files can easily be pulled for temporary or permanent storage.
- Ensure all file folders are labeled consistently answering the questions "who" (which office created it) "what" (classification listed in file plan) and "when" (date).

Sample File Folder Label

<p>Canonical Coronation, 2021 Events & Program Files [A] <i>Archives & Records Management Office</i></p>
