

Church Record Keeping Table

There are different requirements regarding managing information, and it is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how long to keep records. Ideally, records should be kept for as long as possible, but this is to be balanced with the church's resources. ACNC policy requires that financial and operational records be kept for at least 7 years, but some records need to be kept permanently (see table below). It is strongly recommended that records also be kept electronically for ease of accessibility, but it is imperative to ensure that paper copies of important documents are retained/created (ACNC recommendation).

The table below details records for individual churches to manage. In addition, Churches of Christ in Qld also requests certain documents to be emailed to the Church Support Hotline regularly in order to keep a record of important church events. These documents include:

- **Annual Reports (including Senior Pastor's Report, Elder's Report etc)**
- **Records, including photos of induction services, of changes in ministry/staffing changes**
- **Records of any other significant changes within the church**
- **Any historical recollections about the church (written or oral)**

Documents and information should be emailed to churchsupport@cofcqld.com.au.

Church Record Keeping Responsibilities

Type of Report/Information/Document	Time to be Kept
Annual reports	Permanently
Artefacts	A separate policy exists regarding the donation of artefacts to the Historical Resource Centre. Churches can contact the Historical Resource Centre if they would like to pass historically significant items on to the centre for archival storage/display.
Building plans	Permanently
Complaints/Grievances	7 years, unless the complaint has set precedence, in which case keep permanently
Correspondence	7 years, unless it is significant in telling the story of the congregation or relates to major issues, buildings etc, in which case keep permanently
Financial records	7 years (records of unclaimed monies should be kept permanently)

Type of Report/Information/Document	Time to be Kept
Incident reports	7 years, or longer for serious incidents
Insurance information and claims	Permanently
Legal documents: constitutions, property titles, employment contracts, ordinations, lease agreements	Permanently
Membership lists	Permanently
Memorabilia of historic significance	Permanently (may be able to be stored at the Historical Resource Centre)
Minutes and reports of the Governance group	Permanently
Minutes of organisational and congregational meetings	Permanently
Newsletters (regular/monthly/quarterly etc)	Permanently
Obituaries of significant church members	Permanently (digital copies can be sent to the Historical Resource Centre)
Other HR info (e.g. time and wages)	7 years
Photographs and audio-visual material	Permanently Digital copies can be sent to the Historical Resource Centre. Physical copies may be able to be stored at the Historical Resource Centre. Physical photos should be labelled with identifying information (on the back in soft pencil/or place photo in an envelope with a label/or copied and labelled on the back of the copy)
Publications: histories, anniversaries, special occasions, brochures, service orders for special occasions	Permanently (may be able to be stored at the Historical Resource Centre)
Records of historically significant church furnishings e.g. organs, stained glass windows	Permanently (may be able to be stored at the Historical Resource Centre)
Registers of baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials	Permanently
Reports of Abuse or Criminal Matters	Permanently
Safe Church Records	Permanently
Sunday School and Youth Group attendance rolls	Permanently
Workplace Health and Safety reports	7 years, or longer for serious incidents
Visitors' books	Permanently