



Diocesan Ordinances and Regulations Regarding Records

The Seventh Handbook (published 1994)

Prior to the modern era, the Acts of Parliament, ordinances and regulations concerning the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney, were published in *The Seventh Handbook* (published by the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat, 1994). The information about archives and records is still current and applicable.

On page 41, 'Section 7: Parish Organisation and Administration' provided guidelines

'The minister is responsible for the safe custody of church registers and records, other than current books of account, but if there is no minister this responsibility rests with the churchwardens. Access to important documents should be limited to authorised personnel only.

The churchwardens must provide the minister with sufficient means for the custody of all church registers and records. Space permitting, the Registrar accepts into the Diocesan Archives documents of historical interest, such as old registers, correspondence, photographs, historical surveys of parishes or other documents of interest.'

Section 7.17: Records and Historical Documents

Information available on the Sydney Diocesan Services Website

Duties and Responsibilities of the Clergy

(d) must cause a register or registers to be maintained in each church in the parochial unit which records the details specified in rule 3.21 of Schedule 1 and rule 3.20 of Schedule 2 of the [Parish Administration Ordinance 2008](#).

Parish Administration Ordinance 2008

Parish Administration (Registers) Amendment Ordinance 2015



The Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 commenced on 1st January 2008. Amongst many other matters, this ordinance sets out the responsibilities of the Minister and Churchwardens as regards the creation of, financial provision for, and care of parish records.

- (1) The minister must cause a register or registers to be maintained in each church
 - (a) he will record or cause to be recorded the following details of each service of public worship conducted in the church –
 - (i) the time, date and place of the service, and
 - (ii) the number of persons attending the service, and
 - (iii) the name of the person, if any, preaching at the service, and
 - (b) he will record or cause to be recorded the following details of each baptism service conducted in the church –
 - (i) the date and place on which the baptism service took place, and
 - (ii) the full name and address of the person baptised, and
 - (iii) the date of birth of the person baptised, and
 - (iv) if the person baptised was an infant, the full name and address of each parent of the person, and (v) the name of the officiating minister, and
 - (c) he will record or cause to be recorded the following details of each confirmation service conducted in the church –
 - (i) the date and place on which the confirmation service took place, and
 - (ii) the full name of each person confirmed, and
 - (iii) the date each person was baptised, and
 - (iv) the name of the officiating bishop, and
 - (d) he will retain or cause to be retained a certificate of marriage in respect of each marriage conducted in the church, and
 - (e) he will record or cause to be recorded the following details of each funeral service conducted in or in association with the church –
 - (i) the date and place of the funeral service, and
 - (ii) the name and address of the deceased, and
 - (iii) the deceased's date of death, and
 - (iv) the name of the officiating minister.



(2) Subject to sub-rule (4) –

- (a) the minister is responsible for the safe custody and preservation of all church registers and records (other than current books of account), and
- (b) the church registers must be kept as bound books or in such other form as accords with any records management and archival requirements approved by or on behalf of the Registrar, and
- (c) the church registers must be kept in a secure place within the church or church office or in such other place as the Archbishop may from time to time appoint in writing.

Part 4 Minister. Division 5 Registers and Records. 3.21 Minister's responsibilities for records
(as amended by the Parish Administration (Registers) Amendment Ordinance 2015)

- (e) to provide the minister with sufficient means for the safe custody of the registers and records of the congregations of the parish.

Part 3 Wardens. Division 1 Financial. 3.9 Financial affairs of parish organisations

- (4) If any such organisation ceases to exist for any reason, its remaining funds and property (not being the subject of any trust) become the property of the church or parish, and its books and records (other than any financial records which must be given to the wardens) must be given to and remain in the custody of the minister.

Part 3 Wardens. Division 1 Financial. 3.9 Financial affairs of parish organisations

- (1) A Regional Archdeacon or an area dean may from time to time visit the minister and wardens of a parish within his region or area for the purpose of being satisfied that –
 - (d) records are being maintained in accordance with these rules and the law of the Church.

Chapter 9 Miscellaneous. 9.10 Parochial visits and information

This does not account for the full range of church and parish records which should be retained as archives. Therefore these clauses should be regarded as merely the **starting point** for the process of administration of



records and archives within churches and parishes. Please read the ordinances in full to understand your parish's obligations.

Privacy

Diocesan documents about privacy, which are relevant to the Sydney Diocesan Archives, include [*Archbishop's Office Privacy Statement*](#), and the [Parish Administration Ordinance 2008](#), excerpted below:

(2) In view of privacy legislation (and in accordance with archival practice), ministers should consider limiting the provision of an extract from a church register under rule 3.21(4) involving a baptism, confirmation or marriage which took place in the last 70 years to the person(s) about whom the information relates. There is generally no such restriction on the release of information about funerals since privacy considerations do not directly apply to deceased persons.

Part 4 Minister. Division 5 Registers and Records. Notes

Any other questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact the Diocesan Archivist for any other advice or information you might require.

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