

February 2019 – Oklahoma Province OCDS

This statement supplements the 2017 Records Management Policy

Member files and Council records policy

Member files

See the *Records Management Policy* on the provincial website. Communities are expected to use the electronic permanent record form currently provided by the Province.

The Records Manager (RM), under the direction of the Council, keeps the electronic permanent records up to date. Members are responsible to notify the RM regarding any changes to their information. If the local Council chooses, it may keep paper copies as a backup. Normally, these would be kept by the Secretary, but may be kept by the Council.

Members are given a new copy of their permanent record whenever it is updated.

It is important to protect the privacy of the members and the confidentiality of the Council. Councils do not keep permanent copies of definitively professed members' homework, self-evaluations, periodic reviews, or anything else of a personal and private nature. Except in unusual circumstances, Councils should not keep anything in the files of definitively professed members.

Council records

It is vital to have backups in case of an accident. If documents are kept on Cloud storage, at least two persons are to have the user name and password and know how to manage the files.

Council records for individual members are kept in the following situations.

- The local Council keeps copies of any correspondence with members on leave of absence, until the leave is over. (see provincial LOA policy, on the website)
- The Council keeps detailed documentation of circumstances that may lead to a member's dismissal. (Statutes sec IX)
- The Formation Director keeps detailed files for individuals in **initial formation** (up to the Definitive Promise). Discernment documents from the First Promise are kept to aid future Councils in discerning for the Definitive Promise.

The above files are maintained by the Council. They are open only to Council members, the provincial visitator, and legitimate superiors of the Order.

The following may be kept in paper or electronic format.

- Attendance records
- Permanent records of transferred, released, dismissed, and deceased members
- Record of ongoing contact with infirm members
- Record of ongoing contact with Isolates. (Statutes sec VIII.6)
- Meeting and Council minutes
- Financial records

See the Constitutions articles 54 and 55 for Council Secretary and Treasurer duties regarding recordkeeping.

All files and records are handed over to the new Council after elections. (Statutes XVI.8)

Purging files (the permanent record is never destroyed)

After a leave of absence, and once the member is attending meetings again, any correspondence from the person may be returned to him/her. Other documents are removed.

If a definitively professed member decides to leave the Order, he/she normally signs at the appropriate place on the permanent record. If the person instead resigns by letter or email, this is archived with the updated permanent record. No other documents are kept.

All documentation surrounding a dismissal is sealed and kept in case the Provincial Superior asks to see it. This is not to be opened by subsequent Councils. The permanent record is archived.

In the case of previously archived files of members who are no longer with the community, there is no need for the Council to attempt to return the personal documents. They may simply be destroyed along with the other documents, with the exceptions noted above.

Discernment documents

After the Definitive Promise the documents written by the member are returned. All other discernment documents are destroyed.

For persons who are discerned by the Council not to have a vocation, see the provincial readmission norms on the website. The documents written by the member may be returned or destroyed. The other documents are destroyed, and the updated permanent record is archived.

If a person leaves the Order voluntarily before the Definitive Promise, see Statutes sec VIII.9 and the provincial readmission norms on the website. In anticipation of possible readmission, the Formation Director may keep the person's discernment documents for a reasonable period of time determined by the Council, after which the documents are destroyed. The permanent record is archived.

Recommendation, not binding:

It is good practice for individual council members to keep phone logs and copies of private correspondence for their own personal records. Council members normally keep personal copies of community and council meeting minutes for reference.

All members are encouraged to keep copies of any documents they submit to the Council or to their formators.

The online document is the only one to be considered official.