

# *Policy on Access to Parish and Diocesan Records*



## Scope

This policy addresses access to parish and Diocesan records held in the Diocesan Archives.

## Introduction

The Diocesan Archives/Records Centre houses current and historical records of both parishes/congregations in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto and the Diocese itself.

## Definitions

**Current** records are defined as those dated within 25 years of the request for access to records; **historical** records are dated before that time.

Personal information for the purpose of this policy means information about an identifiable individual, but does not include the name, title, business address or business telephone number of an employee of an organization. Personal information includes information in any form, such as home address and home phone number, age, marital status, family members' names, employee files, identification numbers, ethnic origin, evaluations, disciplinary actions, the existence of a dispute, opinions, comments, social status, income, credit records, donation information, loan records or medical records.

## Statement of Access

### **Current Records**

Current records of the Diocese are available only to the bishops and diocesan staff, and only as permitted by staff policy. Access to the current records of a parish or congregation is permitted to the Incumbent or Churchwardens of the parish or congregation, or those vestry members who have the express written permission of the Churchwardens to have access to specified records. Access to the current records of a parish or congregation is also permitted to the bishops, the Chancellor, the Executive Director, Secretary of Synod, and other Officers as appropriate.

### **Parishes under administration**

Parishes or congregations which are under the oversight of a diocesan appointed administrator in accordance with Canon 24 of the Diocese, have a special canonical status. Requests to access the current records of a parish or congregation under administration are permitted to the parish administrator appointed by Diocesan Council and to those members of the parish or congregation to whom the parish administrator has given express written permission to access specific records

for a specified period of time. Access to the current records of a parish or congregation under administration is also permitted to the bishops, the Chancellor, the Executive Director, Secretary of Synod and other Officers as appropriate. Any other requests for access will be permitted with the consent of the Executive Director and Diocesan Bishop.

## Historical Records

Historical records in the Archives are open unless restricted. Some records may be restricted due to age, condition or the personal information they contain. The researcher will be advised of these restrictions.

Specific restrictions include the following:

1. Personnel and payroll records of employees of the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto or any of its parishes or congregations, are not and will not be open to public inquiry regardless of the age of the document or record.
2. Any information provided to or created by a bishop, cleric, employee, volunteer or canon pastor of the diocese in connection with the sexual misconduct policy of the diocese are not and will not be open to public inquiry regardless of the age of the document or record.

## Further Clarification and Guidance

For requests to access individual baptism, confirmation, marriage and burial records refer to

<http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/parish-administration/archives/information-for-researchers/>

## Appeals

Any appeals of access decisions made by Archives staff under this policy will be adjudicated by the Executive Director & Secretary of Synod.