

## Why Have an Institutional Records Center?

Having an institutional records center:

- Aligns with Church policy
  - Vital records (as defined in *General Conference Working Policy* BA 70) are protected.
  - Records that need protection (private, confidential, privileged, etc.) receive an appropriate level of protection in an institutional records center.
- Facilitates transparency
  - Responsibility for various records are clearly delineated.
  - Compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements are demonstrated, helping to avoid costly fine or penalties.
  - Records generated or managed by the institution would have a reasonable guarantee of authenticity and reliability.
- Improves efficiency and increases effectiveness
  - Records would be maintained in a way that allows for timely and accurate retrieval.
  - Records are reliably retained for appropriate amounts of time.
  - Retention schedules allow for secure and appropriate disposition of records, including the destruction of non-permanent records; these can be pointed to when documents are requested. ‘This has been destroyed in accordance with our retention schedule’ is better than ‘We don’t know where that is’.

Certain permanent records, if centrally held and organized, could be used for:

- Marketing and recruitment
- Social media
- Alumni relations
- Fundraising
- Strategic planning
- Faculty research
- Student learning
- Community outreach

*Good records management facilitates the best way to ensure maintaining the unique history and heritage that an institution’s records comprise.*

## Useful Records Management Terms

### Active records

n. ~ 1. Records that continue to be used with sufficient frequency to justify keeping them in the office of creation; current records. - 2. Computing · Information stored on computer systems that can be readily accessed by the operating system or software without a need to reload media, undelete the information, or reconstruct it from other sources.

### Inactive records

n. ~ Records that are no longer used in the day-to-day course of business, but which may be preserved and occasionally used for legal, historical, or operational purposes.

### Records center

A location used for storage of inactive and semi-current records before those records are destroyed or transferred to an archives.

### Records management

The systematic and administrative control of records throughout their life cycle to ensure efficiency and economy in their creation, use, handling, control, maintenance, and disposition.

### Retention schedule

(also disposal schedule, records schedule, records retention schedule, transfer schedule), n. ~ A document that identifies and describes an organization's records, usually at the series level, provides instructions for the disposition of records throughout their life cycle.

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The above terms have been taken and adapted from *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Society of American Archivists, 2005).

To read more about principles of records management, see: *Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles*®  
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