CDBF RETENTION GUIDELINES

The following retention guidelines give suggested minimum periods for keeping various type of diocesan record. If you are in any doubt, please seek advice from the Data Protection Officer.

Key:

Destroy: Ephemeral material which can be discarded once its purpose has been served. Do not destroy if there is any possibility that the document may be required as evidence.

Department: Safeguarding

Please note that any records which may be relevant to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse should **NOT BE DESTROYED AND MUST BE RETAINED.**

Please note that some of the retention periods in this guidance note may differ from the guidance in previous record management toolkits to Parishes, Diocese and Cathedrals. They reflect the changing requirements in the light of non-current abuse cases and plans are progressing to update and align them.

Safeguarding will hold files for:
Clergy

- Readers
- Lay People
- Parish Employees
- Parish Officers
- Volunteers
- Ordinands/Ordination Candidates/Sponsored Candidates
- Any Individuals (including all in this Safeguarding business function) with Safeguarding concerns or who are involved in a safeguarding case/inquiry including advice where threshold of safeguarding is being considered
- Elected members

Records held by Safeguarding may include:

- Contact details
- Date of Birth
- Criminal record information/Police information
- Local Authority information i.e. LADO/Children and Adult Safeguarding
- Emergency contacts
- Details about dependants/household members
- DBS Check ID documentation
- Confidential declaration information
- Emergency contacts
- Professional memberships
- Religious affiliation (where GoR)
- UK Visa details / Right to Work in UK
- Sexual Orientation
- Racial and Ethnic Origin
- Details relating to disability or additional needs
- References
- Medical Information
- DBS Application Form
- SAR information
- Safeguarding complaints

See National Church of England guidance for Safeguarding record retention specific to the use of the National Safeguarding Case Management System.

SUBJECT OF THE RECORDS	RETENTION PERIOD	DISPOSAL METHOD/ACTION	STATUTORY AUTHORITY/ RETENTION SOURCE
Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) disclosures obtained as part of a vetting and/or employment process	Within 6 months of the recruitment decision being made	Destroy DBS certificate is not allowed to be retained for longer than 6 months, it is permissible to keep a record of the date of the check; the name of the person; the type of certificate requested and its reference number; the position for which the certificate was requested; and the actions taken. If such records are stored on a central register a cross reference must be held on the file of the individual concerned.	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) verification form for ID	Within 6 months of the DBS completion	Destroy DBS verification form is not allowed to be retained for longer than 6 months, it is permissible to retain the Applicants name, Parish, Verifiers name and date verified. If such records are stored securely.	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Records of child or adult protection incident or concerns within a Parish/Diocese/Cathedral etc. or family where the church either reports concerns or is involved in supporting and monitoring a child adults or families . This includes risk assessments and 'agreements'	70 years after last contact with the individual concerned.	It is essential that a record of any safeguarding allegations and concerns, and how these are handled-how the information was followed up; actions taken; decisions reached and eventual outcomes - should be kept.	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Records that relate to safeguarding concerns/allegations about Church Officers (paid or unpaid (excluding clergy)- including details of how these are handled, followed up, actions taken, decisions reached and eventual outcome	75 years after employment ceases	Records that relate to safeguarding concerns/allegations about Church Officers (paid or unpaid (excluding clergy)- including details of how these are handled, followed up, actions taken, decisions reached and eventual outcome	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Records of any children's activities, Sunday school/junior church/youth club/choirs and related safety risk assessment	50 years after the activity ceases		Church of England - Records and Information Management

Clergy personnel records –where there are no safeguarding allegations and investigations	Current guidance states 20 years from the date of the cleric's death. In the light of recent noncurrent abuse cases longer retention periods maybe advised	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013[1]	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Clergy Personal records where there are safeguarding allegations and investigations regardless of the findings	Current guidance states 50 years from the date of the cleric's death. In the light of recent noncurrent abuse cases longer retention periods maybe advised	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England - Records and Information Management
Personnel records relating to lay workers who do not work with children and vulnerable adults	6 years after employment ceases	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	
Personnel records relating to lay workers whose role involves contact with children and vulnerable adults including applications, references, disciplinary matters, job descriptions, training and termination documentation. It should include all documentation concerning allegations, investigations and risk assessments regardless of the findings	75 years after employment	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy
Record of a Cleric's criminal record check history	70 years from the date of the Church Officer's death	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy
Evidence of clergy personal file being independently scrutinised under the Past Cases Review Protocol – including a note of any action resulting	70 years from the date of the cleric's death	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy
Record of Clergy Current Status Letters	70 years from the date of the cleric's death	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy
Safeguarding referrals and reports to statutory agencies (e.g., police, local authority children/adult safeguarding) and associated correspondence	Align with the relevant safeguarding case file: 70 years after last contact with the individual concerned (or longer if advised).	Retain with the safeguarding case record; do not destroy if relevant to any inquiry or litigation.	Church of England - Records and Information Management (safeguarding case records)

[1] For full details of all records in this context please see HoB guidance.

Safeguarding training records (non-clergy): attendance, completion certificates, refresher dates (including parish officers and volunteers)	For the duration of role + 6 years (or align with safeguarding allegation/concern record where training is relevant to a case).	Destroy after retention period unless required as evidence (e.g., in a case/inquiry), in which case retain with the relevant safeguarding file.	Good practice (evidence of compliance/training); align with safeguarding retention approach in this schedule
Safer recruitment / role-suitability records held by Safeguarding (e.g., confidential declarations, risk assessments, role restrictions/agreements, decisions and rationale) where not already captured in a safeguarding case file	If any safeguarding concern/allegation is present, retain with the safeguarding concern record (e.g., 75 years after employment ceases or 70 years after last contact as applicable). Otherwise: duration of role + 6 years.	Destroy after retention period (only where appropriate and not relevant to a case/inquiry); otherwise retain with safeguarding file.	Church of England - Records and Information Management (safeguarding/safer recruitment materials)
Safeguarding advice/triage records where threshold is being considered (including consultations, signposting, and decision-making notes) even where no formal case is opened	If it relates to an identifiable individual and safeguarding concern: align with safeguarding concern record (e.g., 70 years after last contact). If genuinely general advice with no personal data: retain 6 years.	Retain with safeguarding records where personal data/safeguarding concern exists; otherwise destroy after 6 years.	DBF Data Protection Policy; safeguarding retention approach in this schedule
Record of Clergy Discipline Measure complaint including copies of the complaint, report on preliminary scrutiny, respondent's answer, supporting evidence, letter recording bishop's decision	Current guidance states 20 years from date of cleric's death. In the light of recent non-current abuse cases longer retention periods maybe advised	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	
Copies of records relating to safeguarding allegations and concerns (this refers to papers being retained in a diocese following the movement of the cleric to another diocese)	70 years from the date of the cleric's death	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy
Record of a cleric's safeguarding training – including the nature of the training, the date of the training and who provided the training	70 years from the date of the cleric's death	See Guidance from the House of Bishops dated 13 March 2013	Church of England – Personal Files Relating to Clergy