

Diocese of Paterson
Office of Child & Youth Protection

Title: Record Retention & Disposal Policy

Effective Date: January 20, 2018

Scope: Electronic and paper Child Protection records and documents at all parishes, schools and other Diocesan Institutions.

Policy: Each location shall retain all volunteer/employee child protection records/documents, including:

1. Child Protection records/documents.
2. All criminal history background checks.
3. Certificates of Attendance of "Protecting God's Children" training.
4. Signed acknowledgments of the "Pastoral Code of Conduct."
5. Signed FCRA disclosure forms (when background checks were manually processed).

Electronic Records: Effective February 1, 2018, all records shall be captured and stored electronically within the Virtus Online Tracking system and Fastrax Background Check System.

Procedure: The applicant will enter his/her own background check information via the VirtusOnline.org website.

1. Paper records are no longer required when an applicant has entered his/her own information in Virtus (the records are stored electronically in the Virtus database).
2. However, in cases where the background check information was not entered by the applicant directly:
 - a. The local youth coordinator will be responsible to obtain and **retain** a FCRA disclosure form.
 - b. The local youth coordinator will enter the date of the background clearance and Code of Conduct acknowledgment into the Virtus database.

Record disposal: All parishes, schools and other Diocesan Institutions shall destroy hard copies of paper child protection records/documents after a period of seven (7) years after the volunteer/employee has separated from ministry or employment. The preferred method of destruction is shredding since these records contain personal information.

Please note: All records pertaining to Priests shall be kept indefinitely.

Note: In accordance with the Safe Environment Policy, anyone separated from Ministry/Employment for more than three (3) years is required to complete a new Code of Conduct acknowledgement and have a new background check performed.