



ARCHDIOCESE of HARTFORD

Office of the Archdiocesan Archives

ACCESS & USE POLICY

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Archdiocesan Archives (AOH Archives) functions as the central records repository for the official and ancillary records of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford. As such, it is a private corporate and religious records repository, not a public records office nor a public research facility. The holdings of the AOH Archives are private and/or sacred in nature and not created as public records for public use.
- Access and use of said holdings is governed by Canon Law, AOH policy, AOH Archives departmental policies, and applicable civil laws. Additionally, the AOH Archives adheres to professional archives standards and current “best practices” and current USCCB and/or AOH issued records retention schedules.
- The Code of Canon Law mandates that an archives be kept on the diocesan level.
 - Canon 486.2 states that *“there is to be established in a safe place a diocesan archive...in which the instruments and writings which refer to both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the diocese, properly arranged and diligently secured, are to be safeguarded.”*
- Pursuant to Canon 482, the holdings of the archives are the direct responsibility of the Chancellor, but are managed and administered by the Archivist, who is granted canonical faculties to fulfill this mandate. Since 2001, the Archdiocese of Hartford has committed to operating a professionally managed Archives.

- The Chancellor and/or Archivist may grant and/or deny access and use of said holdings (at their discretion) for any viable reason in accordance with Canon Law; AOH policy; AOH Archives departmental policies; professional archives standards and practices; applicable civil laws; noted restrictions in duly executed donor agreements and/or AOH Archives finding aids; and at the direction of the Archbishop and/or Vicar General/ Moderator of the Curia.
- Anyone accessing & using any AOH Archives records/ materials (internal/ external) is subject to the **Rules of the Archives** and the **Guide to Handling Archival Records/ Materials**.
- Preservation protocols - All accessed, used, and otherwise handled records/ materials maintained by the AOH Archives will be placed in quarantine for a specified period upon completion of use and/or return to the AOH Archives (includes all new accessions).

SERVICE PRIORITIES

- The AOH Archives first priority is providing service to the Archbishop and assistance to the daily operations of the AOH central administrative offices.
- As a secondary service, it provides administrative assistance to the AOH parish, school, and affiliate administration; AOH clergy; other Catholic Church officials; and related authorized persons/ entities engaged in official Church business (spiritual and temporal) pertaining to the Archdiocese.
- As a courtesy, if/when time permits, the AOH Archives provides limited assistance to qualified researchers, engaging approved scholarly research, and other external researchers/ users in accordance with departmental policies.

AUTHORIZED USERS

- Approval of the Archivist as well as proper identification and relevant research documentation (as applicable) are required for access and use of AOH Archives holdings. Additionally, permission of the Chancellor may be required.
 - Records/ materials may or may not be available for access and use pending noted restrictions, current classification, preservation issues, etc.

- As a private archives and records repository, the holdings of the AOH Archives are primarily for access and use by the Archbishop; AOH central administrative offices; AOH parish, school, and affiliate administrations; AOH clergy; other Catholic Church officials; and related authorized persons/ entities engaged in official Church business (spiritual and temporal) for reasons of fulfilling official administrative, fiscal, legal, and religious affairs of the Archdiocese.
 - Access and use of the AOH Archives Records Center (apart from the AOH Archives proper) is only available to the AOH central administrative offices.
 - Contact the Archivist directly for information and assistance.
- External (public) researchers/ users may be permitted limited access and use of the AOH Archives and its holdings for purposes of approved scholarly research and other permissible reasons - as a courtesy, if/when time permits.
 - Internal AOH personnel wishing to engage personal research/ projects may apply as external (public) researchers/ users.
 - Individuals preparing parish or school histories, etc., are considered external (public) researchers/ users.
 - A nominal user fee applies.

REQUESTS

- For general questions/ inquiries, please call or write the AOH Archives.
- All internal and external requests must be submitted in writing.
 - **Internal users.**
 - Please submit requests via internal email or inter-office mail. Requests will be answered in order of receipt and/or by prevailing priority.
 - *Please allow 02-03 weeks for a response.*
 - **External users.**
 - Other Catholic Church officials and related authorized persons/ entities please submit requests via postal mail or through a related internal AOH office.
 - *Please allow 03-04 weeks for a response.*

- External (public) researchers/ users please complete and submit the Research Request Form (fees apply) by postal mail. (External requests are answered as a courtesy, if/when time permits.)

➤ *Please allow 04-06 months for a response.*

- Requests will be answered in order received and/or in order of pending priority (internal requests supersede external requests). Urgent requests from the Archbishop, Vicar General/ Moderator of the Curia, Chancellor, Vicar for Clergy, and Judicial Vicar supersede all requests.

APPOINTMENTS

- The AOH Archives is open by appointment only. Appointments are required and scheduled at the discretion of the Archivist pending the nature of the request classification of the records, preservation issues, staff availability, open workspace, and other prevailing matters.
 - Please follow the steps in the **Requests section** above to contact the AOH Archives regarding an appointment. (The Archivist will determine if an appointment is required and schedule accordingly.) Fees may apply.
 - Onsite appointments are only available to current AOH personnel, clergy, and related officials engaged in official Church business pertaining to the Archdiocese.
 - Appointments are not readily available to external (public) researchers/ users but, may be arranged as applicable.
- The AOH Archives is closed for all scheduled AOH administrative holy days/ holidays, inclement weather closures, and as otherwise required.

CLASSIFICATIONS

Classifications

- Records/ materials are classified as Open, Closed, and/or Restricted.
- All records/ materials containing information, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy or breach of confidentiality, are classified “closed” or “restricted” depending upon their particular content and use.
- All records/ materials placed in quarantine are classified as “closed” and “restricted” until the quarantine period is concluded.
- Records/ materials less than 30 years old are closed to external (public) researchers/ users.
- With special permission of the Chancellor and approval of the Archivist, “closed” and/or “restricted” records/ materials may be made available to persons conducting approved research for purposes related solely to the specified research.
 - The Archivist will initiate requests for special permissions (as applicable).
 - Permission granted by the Chancellor will be communicated to the Archivist directly by the Chancellor in a specified written or verbal format.
- Urgent access to “closed” and/or “restricted” records/ materials for official Church business (spiritual or temporal) pertaining to the Archdiocese is at the discretion of the Archivist and/or Chancellor (pending applicable canonical and civil laws and AOH policy).

Open Records/ Materials:

- Records/ Materials that are readily available to all researchers (internal and external) and not otherwise “closed” or “restricted.”

Closed Records/ Materials:

- Records/ Materials that are “closed” to all researchers/ users for a specified period of time.
 - Example – records/ materials that have not been fully processed are deemed “closed” and unavailable for access and use until fully processed.

- Example – a Donor Agreement stipulates a holding period on certain files or items at the request of the donor who has provided a collection of records/ materials to the Archives.

Restricted Records/ Materials:

- Records/ Materials that are permanently or temporarily “closed” to researchers/ users and/or have imposed stipulations on access and use.
 - Such records are often restricted due to their confidential and/or sensitive nature; fragility; rarity; valuation; hazardous nature; etc