



Records Preservation Centers

CHURCH HISTORY GUIDES

COLLECTING,
PRESERVING,
AND SHARING
CHURCH HISTORY



Records Preservation Centers

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(Left) Records preservation center in Mexico City, Mexico.

Introduction

The Church History Department has a scriptural mandate to preserve records of historical significance for future generations (see Doctrine and Covenants 21:1; 69:3, 8; 85:1–2). This is best accomplished when records are properly cataloged and stored in a safe, secure, and environmentally controlled facility. Since the organization of the Church, records have been gathered to Church headquarters for safekeeping. In 2012, the First Presidency authorized storing historical records at decentralized facilities around the world. These facilities are known as records preservation centers (RPC).

What Is a Records Preservation Center?

An RPC is a place away from Church headquarters where historically significant records can be received, digitized, and preserved in a secure and safe environment.

All records stored in an RPC are Church property and are considered part of the Church History Department's collection. An RPC's purpose is to preserve records and to facilitate online access at history.lds.org so researchers around the world can view them.

Definition of a Record

In the broadest sense, a record is information in a fixed form that documents a person's experiences or recounts the history of a given locality, Church unit, or event. Records can be physical items or digital files. Manuscripts, photographs, video recordings, published books, art, and artifacts are examples of different record types.



The well-established records preservation center in Mexico City, Mexico.

An RPC can be large or small, emerging or well established. An emerging center may begin as a closet or small room, and it may not yet be capable of meeting all the standards listed in this guide. However, within a few years, emerging centers should evolve into established centers. A well-established center has space to process and digitize newly acquired records and includes a physically separate and secure preservation storage room. The records processing space has one or more computers, internet access, digitization equipment, room to store supplies, and a large desk or table where newly acquired records can be spread out during processing. Other equipment, such as a printer and photocopier, will also be needed. Ideally, the preservation storage room will be large, perhaps 20 square meters (approximately 215 square feet) or larger,

with independent environmental controls and perhaps movable shelving. Regardless of the size and type, all centers must have dedicated space capable of safeguarding records to the satisfaction of the Church History Department.

Centers should have signage to identify them as an RPC. Signage should follow established guidelines for Church buildings and can be ordered by the facilities manager. If you have questions, ask your contact at the Church History Department for assistance.

Why Have a Records Preservation Center?

Having an RPC is an important part of an area's record-collecting and sharing strategy. It is easier to ask people to donate records when they know those records will be digitized or preserved within the area. In addition, it is often more efficient for area employees and contractors to access locally stored physical records when creating products and activities.

Establishing and Operating a Records Preservation Center

The decision to establish an RPC in an area is a substantial commitment and must be approved by the Church History Department, the Area Presidency, and the area's director for temporal affairs. The type, size, and number of centers an area may establish depends on need, the area's ability to provide staff and space, and the Church History Department's capacity to provide support.

The area will need to ensure it has an appropriate budget for operating the center. Expenses such as office supplies and equipment, shelving, furnishings, and building maintenance are covered by the area. The Church History Department will cover expenses for approved archival supplies and some specialized equipment (for a Supply Order Form listing available supplies, see history.lds.org/adviser). Work with the area controller to ensure there are adequate funds to cover anticipated expenses.

No RPCs will be established in the United States and Canada; all records collected within the United States and Canada should be sent to the Church History Department in Salt Lake City, Utah, for storage. All digital and audiovisual records, no matter where they are collected, will be sent to the Church History Department in Salt Lake City, where specialized equipment and systems have been developed for preserving these types of records.

Selecting the Location for the Center

The location of an RPC must also be approved by the Church History Department, the Area Presidency, and the area's director for temporal affairs. Ideally, RPCs will be established in Church-owned buildings that are regularly occupied and outside of floodplains. Centers should be secured and located far from harmful or flammable substances.

Centers should be located in safe neighborhoods and be accessible to staff members. Unless combined with a Church history center (see *Church History Guides: Church History Centers*), an RPC does not need to be easily accessible to the general public; however, placing an RPC in a location where Church members frequent, such as near a temple, can facilitate unsolicited record donations.

Strategy for Accessing Church History Records and Relationship to Church History Centers

Online access is the primary method for sharing the Church's historical records. Millions of images are accessible to the public on history.lds.org, with many more images available upon request through individual, temporary online access.

In addition, a few Church history centers have been established around the world to provide public access to Church history records, to assist researchers, and to receive donations of records (see *Church History Guides: Church History Centers*). Unlike Church history centers, RPCs do not provide public access to records. However, when an RPC is combined with a Church history center, records stored in the RPC will be accessible in a secured records access area within the Church history center. When an RPC is not combined with a Church history center, access to records will be rare. However, monitored access to records may be granted with permission from the center's director (see "Temporarily Removing Records from Their Storage Locations" on page 16.). In these cases, the records should

not be taken outside the center, and visitors should never be left unattended (see the video "Removing a Record from Its Storage Location" found in the Records Preservation Centers section on history.lds.org/adviser for more information).

Organization and Staffing

Under the direction of the Area Presidency, a center director and adequate staff should be called to work at an RPC. The number of staff members needed depends on the amount of activity at the center. However, for security reasons, it is best to have a sufficient number so that at least two people are present whenever records are being accessed.

A center's director typically reports to the area Church history adviser and, ideally, will serve for three or more years. Because of the technical nature of this work, the Church History Department will provide direction, training, and ongoing support. Small centers may not need a director; responsibility to oversee these centers can be assigned to a local Church history specialist. When an RPC is combined with a Church history center, the director of the Church history center oversees the combined organization (see *Church History Guides: Church History Centers*).

With the approval of the Area Presidency, staff members are nominated by the center's director and are called by local stake presidents as Church-service missionaries following the normal process for recruiting and calling such missionaries. Full-time senior missionaries, including couples, might also be used when there is enough work to justify their service. It is recommended that staff members be called in 12-, 18-, or 24-month increments so that the center director can more easily adapt to changing needs and circumstances. Some staff members could be called to serve multiple times if circumstances warrant. Changes in staff should be carefully scheduled in order to avoid losing all experienced people at the same time.



RPC directors should ensure that all staff members are taught their responsibilities.

Staff members should be very comfortable with computers because they will be using computer programs, operating digital scanners and cameras, and sending information over the internet. Previous experience with libraries and archives is helpful but not necessary. Having staff members work a regular schedule will help them gain and maintain skills and knowledge.

Training

The Church History Department will provide ongoing training and support for those who work in RPCs. Training materials can be accessed at history.lds.org/adviser. Area Church history advisers and RPC directors should ensure that all staff members are taught their responsibilities and that they complete the available training.

Contact the Church History Department for Assistance

The standards in this guide are intended to protect the records and resources of the Church; however, these standards may not address every situation. Where this guide does not provide sufficient information or when an exception is desired, contact the Church History Department for additional direction.

Receiving and Processing Records

PROCESSING INCLUDES arranging and describing the records so they can be preserved and accessed in the future. Processing is done under the direction of the Church History Department. It will take time and will involve multiple people at different locations. Processing relies on information gathered when the records are acquired. Records acquired by a Church history specialist and then delivered or shipped to a records preservation center (RPC) should be handled according to the instructions in *Church History Guides: Collecting Records*. These instructions also apply to records being donated at an RPC.

Processing involves establishing intellectual and physical control over the records. The processing work you will do at the RPC may involve digitizing the records, housing them in approved storage containers, labeling the containers, and placing the records in the preservation storage area. Whenever a new donation is received at your center, alert your Church History Department contact and he or she will instruct you on how to proceed. It is important to follow their instructions carefully and to ask questions whenever you are unsure what to do.

It is best to process a donation in a timely manner, generally within a few days of receiving direction from the Church History Department. Do not process more than one donation at a time. Processing one at a time reduces the risk of mixing records from different donations and allows you to incorporate feedback received from the Church History Department.

If you have any questions when processing a donation, consult with the Church History Department. This includes questions about the donation's organization, what to do if you find records in the donation that do not fit within the collection scope, or other similar issues.

Intellectual and Physical Control

To preserve and access records properly, an archive must have intellectual and physical control of its records. Intellectual control helps us understand what the record is and includes information, such as a title, summary note, creator, physical description, and material type. Intellectual control helps people search for and identify records that may be of interest to them.

Physical control helps us understand the physical attributes of the records and where it is at any given time. It includes information such as the size of the record, its storage location, and whether someone has moved it from that location temporarily. For the Church's collection of historical records, intellectual and physical control information is stored in the Church History



To preserve and access records properly, an archive must have intellectual and physical control of its records.

Catalog. Since RPC staff cannot see all of the information stored in the Church History Catalog, each RPC will also maintain an inventory control list (see page 16 for further details). For more information, see the video "The Importance of Cataloging" found on history.lds.org/adviser.

All newly acquired records will go through a process of establishing intellectual and physical control. During this process, the Church History Department will assign a call number. A call number is a unique combination of letters and numbers used to identify an item and to facilitate storage and retrieval. Each RPC is assigned a unique identifier by the Church History Department, and most records stored at that center will be assigned a call number beginning with this identifier. For example, most records stored at the first RPC in Argentina will all have call numbers beginning with AR-01. To complete the call number, a unique sequential number will follow the prefix (for example, AR-01-00001, AR-01-00002, and so on).

When processing records, the newly assigned call number is written on the folders that house the records. Tags are inserted or attached to records that cannot be placed in folders. The call number



Using a colored folder for your case files will help avoid confusion with archival folders. Do not store case files in the same box as the archival records.

is also written on the outside of the storage box to identify the records that are stored inside. All records stored at an RPC should be housed and labeled properly (see “Ensuring That All Records Are Housed and Labeled Properly” on page 14 of this guide for further details).

Case Files

All paperwork related to a donation should be stored in a case file. This paperwork includes documentation such as the signed donation agreement, notes, correspondence, and so on. Each donation should have its own case file. The case file will eventually be stored in the facility where the donated records are preserved.

Donations submitted by Church history specialists to an RPC should be sent with a prepared case file. Donations made directly to the RPC should have a case file created by an RPC staff member. Use a colored office folder when creating a case file so it will not be confused with an archival record. Label the case file with the donor’s name, leaving room to add the call number later. The call number will be provided by the Church History Department.

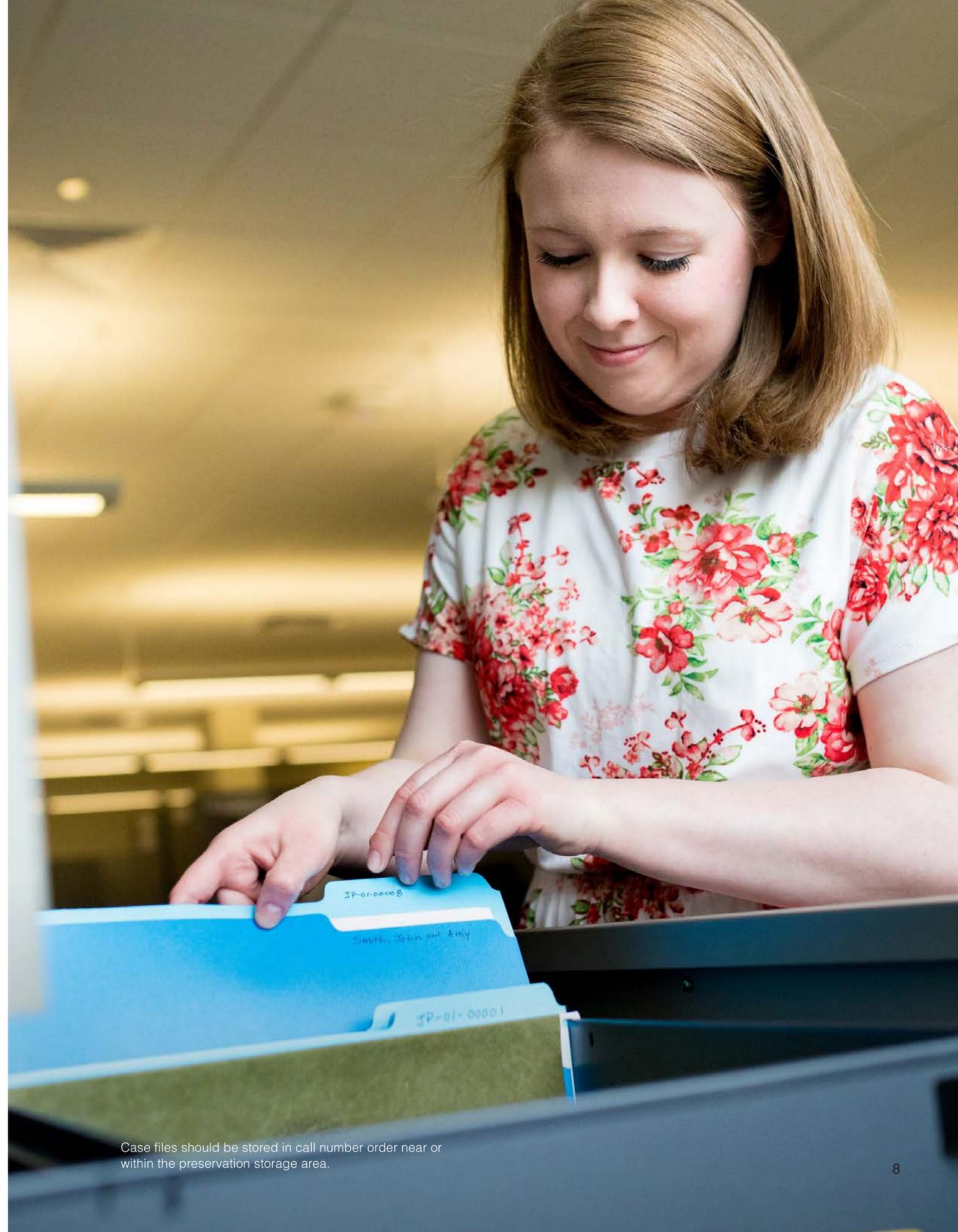
Records acquired in hard copy should have a hard-copy case file, which will be delivered or shipped along with the physical records to a records preservation center or the Church

History Department. When shipping donations to the Church History Department, such as audiovisual materials, place the case file folder in the same shipping box as the records. Case files remaining in the RPC should be stored in call number order in a safe location near or within the preservation storage area in a filing cabinet or box.

Records acquired in digital format should have a digital case file that will be transmitted with the digital records to the Church History Department. You may need to scan or photograph the donation agreement, capturing both front and back and perhaps some of the other case file documents to create a comprehensive digital case file. Original donation agreements must be stored at the RPC for legal purposes. The name of each document in the digital case file should include the donor’s name and a brief description that communicates what the file contains, as shown below:

Santos, Marta_agreement.pdf

Santos, Marta_notes.docx



Case files should be stored in call number order near or within the preservation storage area.

Preservation Storage Areas

THE PRESERVATION STORAGE AREA is used to store records of enduring historical value. Access to the preservation storage area should be limited to authorized individuals. When possible, two people should be present whenever the preservation storage area is accessed. Custodians or maintenance workers should not have unmonitored access. Food and drink should never be taken inside a preservation storage area. Doors and windows in the preservation storage area must be secured with locks that are keyed differently from the other doors in the building. Keys should be carefully controlled and given to as few people as possible. Records should never be left unattended in nonsecure areas.

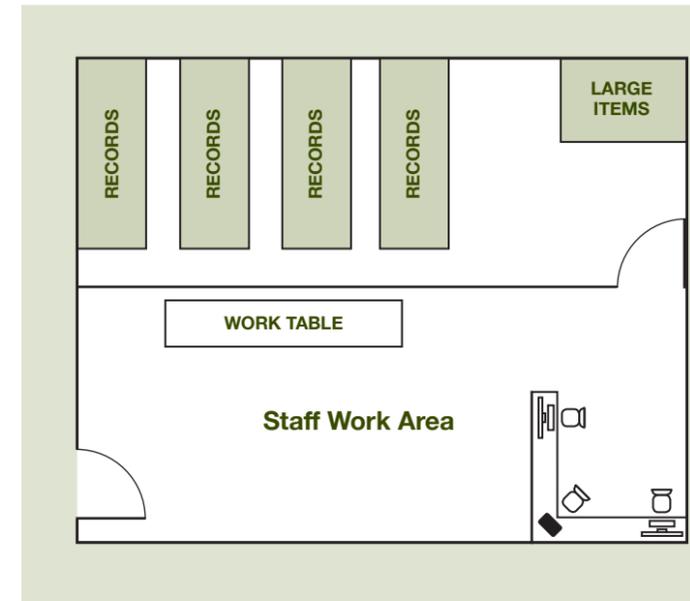
Organizing Preservation Areas

Within the preservation area, designate a space for storing regular-size records. Generally, most records will be stored in this space. Items that will not fit into a standard archival box but will fit into larger boxes should be stored in a section for oversize items. Additional storage locations, such as cabinets, map cases, or art bins, may also be needed. Books should be stored in archival boxes within the regular-size or oversize sections and should not be kept out on shelves. Consult with the Church History Department when organizing your preservation area.

To reduce the risk of fire, all equipment in the preservation storage area should be turned off when not in use.

Fill each shelf, drawer, and bin within a preservation storage area following a logical sequence and in call number order. Do not overpack a location, and do not try to store records according to subject or geography. Our simple storage method is efficient and utilizes space well. Do not create an alternative method for storing records, even when your center is small.

Records are stored in call number order within each section of the preservation storage area. Since most centers will have multiple storage sections (an oversize item section as well as a regular-size item section, for example), some call numbers or items tied to a call number may appear to be missing from a specific section. To avoid misunderstanding, staff members should create an inventory control list or location register (see page 16 for more information regarding inventory control lists).



Well-organized RPCs have designated space for a staff work area and a separate storage area.

Environmental Conditions

Proper environmental conditions are critical for collection care and long-term preservation. When records are stored in unfit environments, the chance of loss or deterioration greatly increases. Undesirable conditions promote mold, insect and rodent infestations, adverse chemical reactions, and other potentially harmful situations. When records are properly cared for as described in this section, they should last for many years.

The center director should work carefully with the facilities manager and the Church History Department to ensure that the standards described in this section are met. In the case of power outages, equipment failures, or other disruptions lasting longer than 72 hours, consult the Church History Department as soon as possible. If a center cannot maintain the acceptable environmental standards, all or some of the records may need to be transferred to another location.

(Left) Following the instructions in this guide will result in a well-organized and efficient preservation storage area.

CONDITION	ESTABLISHED CENTERS	NEW AND EMERGING CENTERS
Harmful substances	<p>Food and drinks are not allowed in the preservation or work areas. Spilled food or drinks may attract insects or damage records. Live animals and plants are also not allowed, as they may invite insects and vermin, which are very harmful to records.</p> <p>Records should not be stored where they could be exposed to moisture or other harmful elements. Dispose of garbage and unnecessary flammable materials daily.</p>	Same standard.
Air quality	<p>The air in preservation storage areas should be filtered and free from contaminants. This is best achieved by using a quality heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Work with the facilities manager to ensure that your system is properly maintained and operated, including the appropriate replacement of filters. We recommend a filter with a MERV 11 rating (Minimum Efficiency Rating Value—an industry standard for communicating how well a filter captures and holds dirt and dust).</p> <p>Avoid sources of contamination, such as dust, paint, construction, parking garages, kitchens, and proximity to chemicals. Processing newly acquired records can also introduce contamination and should not be done in the preservation storage area.</p>	Air quality standards acceptable for other Church buildings in the vicinity are generally permissible in the short term.
Airflow	Fresh air should be regularly circulating in and out of the preservation storage area. The movement of fresh air can help deter the growth of mold and can partially offset the dangers of high temperatures and high relative humidity. Stagnant air, warm temperatures, and high humidity can cause mold to develop within 72 hours.	Same standard.
Light	Both natural and artificial light should be kept to a minimum in the preservation storage areas, because light causes records to fade and can accelerate chemical deterioration. It is best to store records in complete darkness. Lighting systems should be turned off whenever the area is unoccupied. An automatic turn-off switch is recommended. Avoid storing records near windows. If this is unavoidable, use UV filters and window coverings to reduce the UV levels to less than 75 $\mu\text{W}/\text{l}$. Do not store records directly under a light source.	Same standard.



Environmental monitors should be used to measure temperature and humidity over time.

Temperature	<p>Temperatures in preservation areas should be set and stabilized between 12°C (55°F) and 21°C (70°F). Once you establish a constant temperature set point, your temperature should not vary more than $\pm 3^\circ\text{C}$ ($\pm 5^\circ\text{F}$). Generally, the cooler the environment, the longer a record will last, but maintaining a stable temperature within the specified range is more crucial than inconsistently hitting lower temperatures.</p>	Same standard, if possible. However, stable temperature levels higher than those required for an established center may be temporarily acceptable if offset by adequate airflow.
Humidity	<p>Relative humidity between 30% and 55% should be maintained. Humidity levels below 30% will cause organic materials such as paper and leather to shrink, wrinkle, and become brittle. Humidity levels above 55% will promote the growth of mold. Humidity should not vary more than $\pm 5\%$ in any 24-hour period.</p> <p>It may be necessary to use humidifiers, dehumidifiers, or desiccants (products that remove moisture from the air) to maintain proper humidity levels.</p>	Same standard, if possible. However, stable humidity levels higher than those required for an established center may be temporarily acceptable if offset by adequate airflow.

Collection Care and Conservation Work

COLLECTION CARE and conservation work are separate efforts that are both critical to record preservation. Collection care functions are preventative in nature and when followed, will help reduce the risk of harm to the records. Conservation work is the repair or stabilization of records to ensure that they survive in their original forms for as long as possible. Conservation work can be very expensive and must be done by trained professionals. Well-intended but untrained people making repairs (particularly using tapes and glues) can cause irreparable damage.

Collection Care

Collection care tasks include:

- Ensuring that all records are housed and labeled properly.
- Managing the collection to ensure that all items are accounted for and present.
- Handling records properly.
- Monitoring environmental conditions such as temperature, humidity, and light exposure.
- Looking for signs of trouble and seeking help from the Church History Department.

Ensuring That All Records Are Housed and Labeled Properly

Storage Containers

Properly housing records using archival-quality containers reduces the risk of harm to the records. Therefore, most records should be stored in archival-quality containers, such as acid-free folders or boxes and plastic sleeves for photographs. Some large records may not fit into an available storage container. Consult with the Church History Department to resolve these situations. Archival-quality storage containers are available from the Church History Department. A reasonable supply of storage containers should be kept at the records preservation center (RPC) so newly acquired records can be processed without delay.

Storage Cabinets and Shelving

The cabinets and shelving holding the storage containers should be made of steel with either a baked-enamel coating or a powder coating. They should have smooth, nonabrasive surfaces free of sharp edges and potentially harmful protrusions. Wood, especially manufactured wood, should be avoided, as it produces gases that can harm records. Cabinets and shelving should be anchored to the floor and ceiling to prevent wobbling or tipping. The lowest surface where a storage container can be placed is 10–15 centimeters (4–6 inches) above the floor to protect records from water damage in case of a flood.

Cabinets are a good choice for storing artifacts that are too large to fit in a box. A map case (sometimes called a flat file) is a good option for storing large quantities of maps, drawings, posters, oversize documents, or similar items. Cabinets should allow adequate air circulation; tight seals may create microclimates within the cabinet that cause harm to records. Cabinets used outside a secure storage area should be equipped with a secure locking mechanism (keyed lock), such as a double-bar system.

Filing cabinets are not recommended for archival storage because their moving parts may damage documents.

Boxes and records should not overhang the edge of a shelf. The shelf should match the size of the storage containers it will hold. Generally, shelves should be a minimum of 40 centimeters (16 inches) deep and 105 centimeters (42 inches) wide.



Properly housing records using archival-quality containers reduces the risk of harm to them.

(Left) Conservation work should be done by trained professionals.

However, in an area designated for oversized items, it is useful to have shelving that is approximately 90 centimeters (36 inches) deep and 90 centimeters (36 inches) wide to handle these larger items. The height of each row should be approximately 5 centimeters (2 inches) higher than the tallest item stored on it.

Art Rack or Bin

Centers that have a substantial amount of framed art should construct or purchase a storage unit where art can be stored vertically. Art bins may be made of wood if they are painted with a water-based polyurethane paint and given 1–2 months to dry and off-gas. For more information, go to history.lds.org/adviser, and watch the video “Preservation Housing for Paintings.”



Artifacts that are too large to fit into archival boxes may be stored on a shelf or in a cabinet.



Stamp each folder, book flag, and tag with the Church History Department stamp.

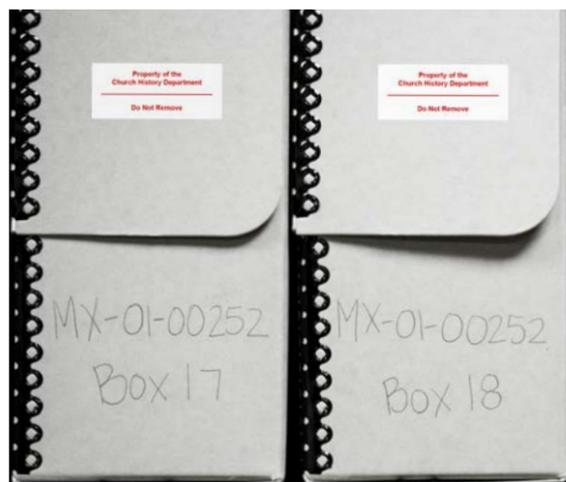
Labeling Records

The call numbers for every donation stored within an archival box should be written on the outside of that box. This will make it easier to identify where call numbers are located. Do not include additional information on the outside of the box, as doing so will make it harder to identify the call numbers.

To safeguard the records in the center and to maintain an understanding of ownership, the Church History Department provides a property stamp. Stamp each folder by placing the stamp in the center of the outside of the folder. If possible, stamp each book flag and tag with the stamp. Do not stamp the actual records.

A property sticker, also supplied by the Church History Department, should be placed on the outside of all archival boxes. Stickers are used on boxes, while stamps are used on folders. Place the sticker on the outside of the lid on the top flap or in a similar location. Be sure the sticker can be seen when the box is stored on a shelf.

A property sticker and a call number should be placed on the outside of all archival boxes.



Managing the Collection to Ensure That All Items Are Accounted For and Present

Every record in the center should be cataloged and stored properly. Since records are stored sequentially, once you know a call number you can generally find the record associated with it. However, because oversized items are stored separately from regular-size items, locating records in centers with large and diverse collections can be challenging. Therefore, maintaining an up-to-date inventory control list of the records in the center will be helpful.

Inventory Control List

An inventory control list, also called a location register, should contain at least the following information for every record stored in the RPC:

- **RPC call number:** the record’s call number as assigned by the Church History Department.
- **Storage location:** where the record is stored in the RPC, such as a shelf or range number, cabinet, or room. Some collections, such as those with oversized materials, may be stored in multiple locations.
- **Donor:** the individual or organization that gave the record to the Church History Department.
- **Title (original language of record):** the title of the record in the language of the record.
- **Translated title (English):** where necessary, an English translation of the record’s title.
- **Notes:** any other useful information that the RPC staff wants to record.

Annual Audit

Conduct an audit at least annually to ensure that all the center’s records are accounted for and in their proper locations. The Church History Department will verify that every donation listed on your inventory control list has been properly cataloged. You will verify that every donation listed on your inventory control list is in its proper location within the center. During the audit, look for signs of insect, rodent, or mold activity (see page 19 for more information). Problems

Call Number	Title	Location	Creator	Date	Material Type	Notes
MX-01-00252
MX-01-00253
MX-01-00254
MX-01-00255
MX-01-00256
MX-01-00257
MX-01-00258
MX-01-00259
MX-01-00260
MX-01-00261
MX-01-00262
MX-01-00263
MX-01-00264
MX-01-00265
MX-01-00266
MX-01-00267
MX-01-00268
MX-01-00269
MX-01-00270
MX-01-00271
MX-01-00272
MX-01-00273
MX-01-00274
MX-01-00275
MX-01-00276
MX-01-00277
MX-01-00278
MX-01-00279
MX-01-00280
MX-01-00281
MX-01-00282
MX-01-00283
MX-01-00284
MX-01-00285
MX-01-00286
MX-01-00287
MX-01-00288
MX-01-00289
MX-01-00290
MX-01-00291
MX-01-00292
MX-01-00293
MX-01-00294
MX-01-00295
MX-01-00296
MX-01-00297
MX-01-00298
MX-01-00299
MX-01-00300

Seek direction from the Church History Department when creating an inventory control list.

identified in the audit should be corrected with the assistance of the Church History Department.

Temporarily Removing Records from Their Storage Locations

Records should not be removed from a center. However, the center’s director may authorize individuals working on Church business to have supervised access to the records. Examples include the area’s publishing services manager, a Church member writing a story for the area website, or an employee from the Real Estate Department. In these cases, the records should not be taken outside the center. Visitors should never be left unattended (see the video “Removing a Record from Its Storage Location” found in the Records Preservation Centers section on history.lds.org/adviser for more information).

Finding and Retrieving a Record

You can use the center’s inventory list or the Church History Catalog (see churchhistory.catalog.lds.org) to search for a record. In the catalog, begin by entering the creator’s name, the title, or key words. Typically, a search will generate a list of possible results. Look through the list until you find your desired record, which will generally have an RPC call number. Once you find the correct record, write down the call number. Look for the matching call number on the outside of the

archival box in the regular-size storage area or on a box, book flag, or tag in one of the alternative storage areas. Records are stored in call number order within each storage area.

When removing a record from its storage location, the box where it is stored should be pulled from the shelf. A piece of paper listing the call number, the date, and the name of the person who requested the record should be placed in the vacated spot. The record should be pulled from the box and given to the requestor. When the person is finished with the record, it should be inspected for possible loss or damage, placed back in its proper location within the box, and returned to the original storage location. The paper with the checkout information should be removed and saved indefinitely as evidence of who accessed the record (see the video “Removing a Record from Its Storage Location” found in the Records Preservation Centers section on history.lds.org/adviser for more information).

Handling Records Properly

The improper handling of records poses the greatest threat to long-term preservation. The more an item is handled, the greater the likelihood it may be harmed. Listed below are a few guidelines to help minimize major risks. Annually, all staff members working at the center should view the online courses for the proper handling of various record types found in the Records Preservation Centers section on history.lds.org/adviser.

Scratching

Keep sharp objects, such as jewelry, name badges, buckles, and scissors, away from records. Some art and artifacts may benefit from the use of packing material, such as tissue paper, polyethylene padding, or clean cotton flannel when being shipped or stored. Be sure to consult with the Church History Department on using packing materials because some materials may be harmful to records.

Contaminating

Always clean your hands before handling records. Avoid transferring body oils and fluids onto the records. Food, drink, and plants should not be stored or consumed near records because they may stain the records or attract insects, rodents, and other pests. Avoid affixing paper with adhesives (such as sticky notes) to the documents or attempting to repair the materials with tape or glue. It is not necessary to wear gloves when working with paper documents. However, wearing cotton, nitrile, or latex gloves that fit well and are clean is preferred when working with photographs, art, and artifacts. Avoid touching your face, eyes, or hair while wearing gloves, because this contaminates the gloves.

Damaging

Examine items carefully before handling them. Identify strong and weak points, and avoid stressing any weak points. Avoid stacking items or crowding them onto a shelf or moving cart. Use a pencil instead of a pen when working near records to reduce the risk of unintentionally permanently marking them.

Do not overextend the cover of a book when opening it, because doing so may break the spine. This happens frequently when making photocopies. Contact the Church History Department for directions if you discover extra papers or items inserted in a bound book.

Unfold or unroll records and store them flat in an appropriately sized box or drawer. Folds and rolling will cause permanent damage. Consult with the Church History Department when dealing with records that are too large to be stored flat or that will not stay flat after being unrolled.

Dropping

Do not hurry while handling records. Handle only one item at a time, even if it is small. Always use two hands. When transporting large or heavy records, use a cart. No part of the item should protrude beyond the edges of the cart. Get help if an item is too heavy or awkward to handle on your own. Never drag an item on



Film material can deteriorate over time.

the floor or slide it across a table. In addition to observing the above guidelines when handling records, never pick up items by the handle, rim, or other protruding part. Pick them up by the most solid component. Move as slowly as necessary to keep the items stable. Never walk backward, and make sure your pathway is clearly visible and unobstructed.

Monitoring Environmental Conditions Such as Temperature, Humidity, and Light Exposure

Centers should use an environmental monitor provided by the Church History Department to record the temperature and relative humidity in the preservation area. Each month you will need to upload data from this device to eclimatenotebook.com. Instructions can be found at history.lds.org/adviser under the Records Preservation Centers section. Uploading this data allows the Church History Department to monitor conditions, identify problems, and work with the facilities manager to resolve concerns quickly.

Looking for Signs of Trouble and Seeking Help from the Church History Department

Inspect newly acquired items for damage and signs of insect, rodent, or mold activity. If you see signs of trouble, isolate the material and contact the Church History Department immediately. At least once a year, inspect items by opening every box and container, looking for signs of trouble. Signs of trouble include the presence of insects, alive or dead; casts of skins or body parts; chewing marks and exit holes; hair, fur, or feathers; frass (debris or excrement produced by insects, usually a soft powdery material); fecal pellets or spots; dried stains or fuzzy growth; and strange smells. Report any suspicious findings to the Church History Department through your contact.



It is normal for older records to show signs of use.

to the Church History Department, and follow their directions. In most cases, you will be directed to simply return the unrepaired item and any broken-off pieces to its storage container.

Some high-value items may justify the cost of performing major conservation work. If you have questions about specific items, contact the Church History Department. Department conservators and collection care professionals will determine the appropriate course of action, and when conservation work is deemed necessary, the Church History Department will pay for the work.

Conservation Support

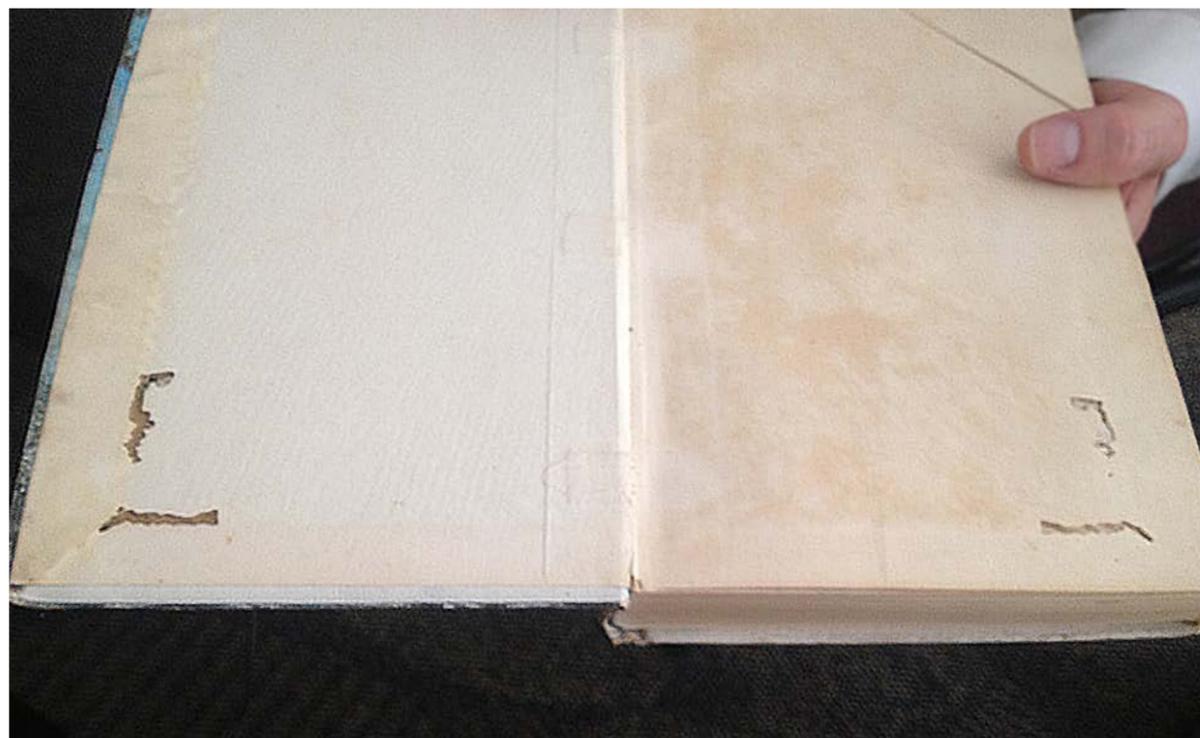
The Church History Department conservators are available to consult with you on any issue relating to the condition of a record, the storage environment, or other instructions in this guide. Contact them through the link at history.lds.org/adviser. Include photographs as needed and your phone number so they can contact you, if required.

Mold can be hazardous to your health, so be cautious when it is suspected. Contact the Church History Department to report any suspicious findings and to receive instructions.

Conservation Work

Conservation work is the repair or stabilization of records to ensure that they survive in their original form as long as possible. This type of work will generally not be done in an RPC.

Flaws in the condition of records are common and include torn pages, broken book spines, scratches, cracks, unwanted tape or other adhesives, and broken pieces. If you discover that an item has such flaws, take several photographs, send them



Report any signs of insect, rodent, or mold activity, such as the insect activity seen in this book.

Digitizing Records

ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS to provide broad access to Church history records is to digitize them and make them available through the Church History Department's online library (see history.lds.org). Digital images are best preserved when transferred to the Church History Department in Salt Lake City, Utah, and stored in the Church's digital records preservation system. Areas should not develop alternative methods for storing and accessing digital records. However, when transferring digital files, it will be necessary to store a copy temporarily until the Church History Department confirms that the transfer was successful.



Digitization requires careful coordination with the Church History Department.

The Church History Department has digitized millions of images through its robust digital operation in Salt Lake City. However, unless an records preservation center (RPC) develops digitization capability, records stored in that RPC will be inaccessible to most researchers. Therefore, it is desirable for RPCs to develop the capacity to digitize records. Doing so enables:

- Records stored at the center to be made available to researchers worldwide through the Church History Catalog.
- The creation of a duplicate copy, thereby reducing the risk of losing information if anything were to happen to the original record.
- The Church to acquire a digital version of the record instead of the original, physical copy.

Various options exist for digitizing records at an RPC, such as periodically sending equipment to the center, periodically sending equipment and an operator to the center, using a local contractor, or establishing an ongoing digitizing operation. Regardless of which option is selected, digitization requires careful coordination with the Church History Department. The principles described in this section will help avoid duplication and ensure that the digital images created will have lasting value. Additional details, such as acceptable file formats, equipment settings,

scanning techniques, file-naming practices, and quality standards, can be found in the Digital Record and Digitization Standards document at history.lds.org/adviser, under the Records Preservation Centers section.

Approving

Do not digitize records held at the RPC without obtaining approval from the Church History Department. Capturing the image (digitization) is a small part of a large and complex process that involves several working groups within the Church History Department. Without coordination and careful planning, it is highly likely that the images you digitize will not be used. Specialized equipment is also needed to ensure that the required quality standards and image formats can be attained. The Church History Department will pay for costs associated with approved work.

Training

The people digitizing records should be very comfortable with computers and technology. Even then, a significant amount of training will be necessary to capture the images consistent with the needs of the Church History

(Left) Digitizing records helps make them accessible to researchers worldwide.



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS