

Book of Forms 2026 - Changes

ADDED:

213.4.1 Commissioning of Interim Moderator Assistants (A&P 2025, p.133, 30)

213.4.1 Where a presbytery discerns that there is no minister of Word and Sacraments available to carry out the full typical range of responsibilities of an interim moderator for a pastoral charge, it may commission a ruling elder or a member of the Order of Diaconal Ministries to assist with this work on the following terms:

- a) The candidate shall be interviewed by the presbytery to ascertain their personal and spiritual qualifications to serve as an interim moderator assistant.
- b) The candidate shall be trained in relevant polity, the facilitation of session and congregational meetings, basic pastoral care and reporting to presbytery through an interim moderator.
- c) Those commissioned as interim moderator assistants shall serve a specific pastoral charge for a period not exceeding two years. The commission is renewable following a presbytery review.
- d) The interim moderator assistant shall be accountable to the presbytery through an interim moderator for the duration of the commission.
- e) The interim moderator assistant may be compensated according to the standing orders of the commissioning presbytery.
- f) Whenever a pastoral charge is deemed by the presbytery ready to begin a search process to call a minister, an interim moderator will facilitate that process while the interim moderator assistant may continue their duties, at the discretion of the presbytery.

REVISED:

APPENDIX G – ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT (A&P 2026, p. 99-103,26)

G–1 Purpose of the Archives

1. The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives (“Archives”) is the designated records repository for the denomination. The Archives is located at the national office, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario. The policies of the Archives are approved by the Assembly Council. The day-to-day operations of the Archives are the responsibility of the Principal Clerk through the Archives staff.
 1. The Archives maintains the corporate memory (activities and decisions) of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by acquiring, arranging, describing, and preserving the archival records of the denomination, i.e., those records, regardless of media, that have significant and enduring administrative, financial, legal, and historical value.
 2. Records held in the Archives are accessible to church staff and the church-at-large to assist with the ongoing work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and to the general public as an important historical research collection.
 3. The Archives also provides a direct records management service for the national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and records management advice and resources for the church-at-large.

4. The Archives will oversee the archival needs, both physical and operational, of the church and recommend such measures as may be deemed advisable to advance the preservation and use of records of enduring value including advice on approved digital formats.

G-2 Archives Collection Mandate

1. The Archives will consider the following for deposit and retention:
 - Records of the General Assembly, its boards and committees, and all other national office departments.
 - Records of presbyteries.
 - Records of synods.
 - Records of dissolved congregations – both physical and digital.
 - Records of active congregations – in approved digital format.
 - Records of persons significant to the history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (i.e., personal papers).
 - Records of colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
 - Records of special media, including: photographic materials, audio-visual materials, architectural plans, and drawings.
2. The Archives reserves the right to accept or decline records transferred to it. Material that is not considered suitable for the Archives will be returned or destroyed at the option of the donor.

G-3 Ownership of Records

1. Records generated by all courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada remain the property in perpetuity of the said courts or their legal successors. Records are not the property of individual church officials.
2. When congregations, presbyteries and synods are amalgamated, the records of such bodies become the property of the amalgamated body.
3. When a congregation is dissolved, the presbytery clerk shall assume responsibility for collection of the records and transfer the appropriate records to the Archives for deposit (contact the Archives for a list of these records). In certain circumstances, the records can be deposited in an alternate repository. Consultation with the Archives is required for approval (see G-3.4)
4. If church court records are deposited in an alternate repository, a formal deposit agreement must be signed by both parties, with a copy of the agreement sent to The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives (a sample Deposit Agreement form can be obtained from the Archives). This deposit agreement must ensure that certain conditions are met, including ownership of the records remaining with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Access restrictions enforced by the Archives must also be enforced by the alternate repository. A digital copy of the records must also be made and sent to The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives ahead of the record deposit. In the case of congregational records (including records of dissolved congregations) only the session minutes and church registers are required to be copied.

5. Copies of vital statistics (baptisms, marriages, and burials) are not to be shared with organizations outside of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for circulation or inclusion in fee-based or subscription services (i.e., genealogical societies or databases).
6. For personal papers to be deposited, a Deed of Gift form must be signed by the donor. This form includes the transfer of ownership of records to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
7. It is the responsibility of the clerk of the court to make recommendation to the proper court for the safekeeping of all the records of that court. This includes making regular back-ups of digital records to ensure their safety and security.

G-4 Deposit of Records in the Archives

1. The Archives will accept material that complies with its Collection Mandate (see G-2.1). The Archives retains the right to cull material, normally in consultation with the donor in order that only records with archival value are deposited in the Archives.
2. All congregations should arrange for digitizing of their session minutes and church registers. The digital copy is deposited in the Archives for preservation and reference purposes as needed, and the originals are returned and must be retained by the congregation. Additional congregational records may also be copied. The Archivist can provide advice on the preparation of approved digital copies.
3. Presbyteries and synods are encouraged to deposit their official signed minutes (in paper or approved digital format), reports, and commission records with the Archives.
4. A “no mould” policy is in effect in the Archives. This policy addresses records where there is physical evidence of either mould or mildew. In such cases, it is necessary to arrange with Archives staff to have records professionally cleaned at the relevant court’s expense prior to deposit in the Archives. It is imperative that records are consistently well maintained and kept in a secure, stable environment by all respective courts. Records should not be thrown out due to mould or other damage.
5. No records deposited in the Archives may be loaned or removed from the premises for any reason without the express permission of the Managing Archivist/Records Administrator.

G-5 Access and Restrictions for Records in the Archives

1. Records deposited in the Archives are normally on open access. For privacy concerns, specific records have access restrictions:
 1. Session minutes less than 50 years old are restricted and cannot be viewed without a letter of permission from the session. Session minutes more than 50 years old are on open access.
 2. Personnel/personal information files are restricted for the most recent 75 years.
 3. Records of special commissions and committees are not restricted unless otherwise specified by the depositing court.
 4. Baptismal records less than 100 years old are restricted. An individual may request a copy of their own baptismal record, as can a parent of the individual if they are noted on the record. Next

of kin, i.e., spouse, common-law partner, parent, child or sibling, may request a copy of a deceased person's baptismal record. An authorized representative, i.e., an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff digitally, unless otherwise requested. Baptismal records more than 100 years old are on open access.

5. Marriage records less than 75 years old are restricted. Either spouse may request a copy of their marriage record. If either spouse is deceased, then a parent, child or sibling of either spouse may request a copy. An authorized representative, i.e., an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff digitally, unless otherwise requested. Marriage records more than 75 years old are on open access.
6. Death/Burial records less than 75 years old are restricted. Next of kin, i.e., spouse, common-law partner, parent, child or sibling, may request a copy of an individual's death/burial record. An authorized representative, i.e., an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff digitally, unless otherwise requested. Death/burial records more than 75 years old are on open access.
7. The Managing Archivist/Records Administrator retains the right to refuse access to specific material on the authority of the Principal Clerk.
2. In the event that documents are required from any agency of the General Assembly by police or other governmental agencies, the Principal Clerk has final granting authority.