

*Presbytery of Redstone*

**RECORDS RETENTION POLICY FOR INQUIRER/CANDIDATE FILES**

NATURE OF COMMITTEE RECORDS

*WORKING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS:* During the course of the Committee on Preparation's multi-year oversight of inquirers/candidates for ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament (under provisions of the Book of Order G14.0300), a substantial number of papers, letters, documents, reports and similar documents are generated in the Committee's file on each person under the Presbytery's care. All such records are on going, working, ecclesiastical records of the Presbytery of Redstone, and copies of substantially all of such documents regularly are provided to the inquirer/candidate concurrently with the document being generated. Some such documents include copies of Book of Order mandated psychological reports, copies of seminary grades, and copies of Ordination Examination scores, all of which documents were provided to the Committee upon the prior written consent of the person under care. In addition, the working file may consist of annual plans of inquirers/candidates, summaries of annual performance against plans, letters of recommendation, schedules of meetings, reports of Committee actions and suggestions, and so forth. The volume of each such record can be substantial.

*FORMAL PRESBYTERY REPORTS/DOCUMENTS:* During the course of the Committee's work, regular, formal reports about inquirers/candidates under care are made to the Presbytery of Redstone. All of such formal reports are made a part of the records of the Presbytery of Redstone. Those kinds of formal documents/reports include the following: (1) Forms 46 and their responses, (2) educational institution transcripts, (3) letters and documents from churches, pastors, and/or sessions of the inquirer/candidate (4) psychological and/or career analyses, (5) records of conversations and/or communications from the committee and/or the candidate concerning their preparation and/or readiness for ministry within the Presbyterian Church (USA) and (6) any other notes or memoranda concerning the individual under the Presbytery's care.

STATEMENT OF FILE POLICY

It is the Committee's stated policy that (1) all of the Committee's working documents generated during the years a person seeking ordination is under care of the Committee are supporting documents, secondary to the formal reports/documents sent by the Committee to the Presbyter, (2) all such working documents are time-dated, of limited need and interest, and of no long-term value, and (3) many of such working documents may, but do not necessarily, contain spiritual and personal observations about and by the persons under care, which observations are relevant only at a particular point on a long and otherwise developing journey to ordination, and which observations therefore have no permanent record value.

Therefore, it is the Committee's stated policy that any and all working documents of the Committee shall be destroyed at five (5) years after the committee's jurisdiction ends for any given inquirer/candidate under care.

## JURISDICTION ENDS

The Committee's jurisdiction for any given inquirer/candidate ends at the later of (1) the person completes the entire Committee on Preparation's oversight process and receives a call to be ordained to serve within the Presbyterian Church (USA) or other agency whose work has been validated as a position of service or call or (2) the person withdraws from the inquiry/candidacy process or is removed by the Presbytery. The end of the Committee on Preparation's jurisdiction over an individual seeking ordination is made a matter of permanent record in the Presbytery of Redstone's minutes through its action.

## NOTICE OF DESTRUCTION

At and after five (5) years from the ending of the Committee's jurisdiction over any given inquirer/candidate, the then chairperson of the Committee shall give formal, written notice thirty (30) days in advance to both the then current Moderator and the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Redstone of the Committee's pending destruction of the Committee's working file records on specific inquirer(s)/candidate(s). Absent formal, valid written objection by either the Moderator or the Executive Presbyter, the records shall be destroyed after such 30day notice.

## MANNER OF DESTRUCTION

The records shall be burned, shredded or otherwise destroyed in such a manner as the records are obliterated and not reasonably recoverable.

## EXCEPTION

If for any reasonable source the Committee has notice that any objection or claim has been raised involving the Committee's oversight of any given inquirer/candidate, then notwithstanding the destruction times set forth in this Policy the Committee's records on any such inquirer/candidate shall not be destroyed, but shall be maintained for a period of five(5) years after the final resolution of such objection or claim involving the Committee's work.

## REPORTS OF DESTRUCTION

The Committee shall maintain a record of the dates of the notice and of the destruction of each inquirer(s)/candidate(s) records