I. Purpose

To ensure that relevant records are preserved and that key employees are notified of record preservation requirements in the event of current or anticipated litigation relating to the parish.

II. Definitions

"Parish" means a parish within the Archdiocese Territory that is Archdiocese-recognized as Catholic.

"Pastor" means a Parish pastor or a Parochial Administrator, as the case may be.

"Parochial Administrator" means a priest appointed as parochial administrator of a Parish by the Archbishop.

"Litigation Hold" means a suspension of the destruction of records relevant to a current or reasonably anticipated legal issue or proceeding.

III. Policy

An employee of the parish who receives actual notice that certain records may be relevant to a legal issue or proceeding shall promptly notify their supervisor, who shall, in turn, promptly notify the Pastor or Parochial Administrator.

The Pastor or Parochial Administrator shall take necessary steps to preserve relevant records, regardless of any records retention schedule, until further notice. To accomplish this, the Pastor or Parochial Administrator, in consultation with appropriate legal counsel, shall determine the scope, location of the relevant records, and the custodians thereof.

The Pastor or Parochial Administrator shall send a Litigation Hold memorandum to the custodians of the relevant records. The memorandum shall:

a) Identify the reason for the hold;
b) Describe what records are relevant;
c) Identify preferred methods for preservation;
d) Prohibit destruction or alteration of relevant records; and
e) Articulate that the preservation obligation is ongoing until further written notice.

Written permission of the Pastor or Parochial Administrator is required to lift a Litigation Hold.