

Tips from the APA Office of General Counsel

Every year, whether at convention or in January, APA Divisions change the leadership guard with some persons moving up, some persons moving out, and some staying put. With this comes a shuffling of many important elements to the function and history of the Division. Keeping track of these documents is very important not only for legal reasons but for archival purposes as well.

These documents can include:

Contracts (Publishing, Hotel contracts, employment contracts, consultant contracts, listserv agreements, etc.)
Corporate documents including bylaws and any amendments thereto, Division rules/policies and procedures, minutes of meetings
Listserv information
Financial statements
Investment statements
Annual reports
Copies of publications (journals, newsletters, books, etc.)

As there always is turnover within Division leadership and therefore home offices, it is essential that Divisions work to keep their documents in one place. The Office of General Counsel, working with Division Services, can help you by keeping copies of these documents whether in paper form or electronically. We can have them scanned and saved on our system, while keeping the back-up hard copies too. For documents that need to be archived, please see below.

Document Destruction

Further, it is important to underscore that, under Sarbanes Oxley, if you become aware of a threatened litigation or governmental or criminal investigation or proceeding involving, APA, the Division or related entities, you should cease destroying any related records or documents (including electronic records or documents). Additionally, it is unlawful to alter a record or document in any way in order to influence an existing or contemplated action. Should you have any questions concerning this policy, please contact any lawyer in the Office of General Counsel. Please review the attached copy of APA's Document Destruction Policy.

Please feel free to email or call me with questions: jraben@apa.org/202-414-8074.

APA Archives

The primary purpose of the APA Archives is to collect, maintain, and preserve the records and information of permanent historical value of the Association and its affiliates. The APA Archives works to document the development of the field of psychology in America. It also serves as a research resource for Central Office staff, Association members, and qualified researchers.

The early history of the APA and its Divisions (1917-1985) reside in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. While the time span covered is 1917-1985, the bulk of the records are concentrated in the period 1940-1980. A finding aid listing the materials available in the collection was prepared by the Library of Congress staff and is available in the Manuscript Division Reading Room, James Madison Building, of the Library and online at www.apa.org/archives/.

The APA Archivist is responsible for the collection, preservation, and management of all APA Central Office archival materials. The Archives assists Division officers in the determination of appropriate Divisional archival documents and serves as the official repository for said documents.

Archival records are those that have enduring value. Records or materials that are currently in active use are, by definition, not archival records. Division officers should note that materials sent to the APA Archives will always be available for review and use by Division officers and members. *Division archival materials remain the property of*

the Division. Materials marked confidential will be treated as such and will not be available without special permission. Materials that should be considered archival include materials that reflect the historical growth of the division and/or the division's contribution to the growth of the field of psychology.

Types of materials that should be sent to the APA Archives include:

- officers' files
- substantive correspondence
- memoranda of policy
- agendas and minutes
- reports
- policy statements
- conference proceedings
- publications (brochures, pamphlets, booklets, posters, books, online articles, etc.)
- testimony
- informational and administrative records, presentations
- rosters, membership directories and registers
- photographs of division events, officers and members (dated and labeled)

Materials that are not appropriate for the APA Archives are non-historical items, such as meeting-room schedules and personal items. For assistance in determining the archival value of materials, please contact the Director of Archives.

Divisions should follow these archives procedures:

(1) A review of archival materials should be conducted by the appropriate officers of the Division with assistance, if needed, by the Director of Archives (archives@apa.org or (202) 336-5664).

(2) An Archives Record Inventory Form (click [here](#) for PDF and [here](#) for Word file) should be completed for each electronic transmission sent by email to the Archives or box of archival materials shipped to the Archives.

(3) Archival materials in electronic format can be sent as electronic attachments to archives@apa.org or saved on a CD/DVD and mailed to the Archive address below.

(4) Paper and other materials can be hand-carried to the APA Archives or mailed to the address below:

APA Archives
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

Materials received will be appraised by the Director of Archives and entered into the electronic database. A finding aid will be developed from this database. Materials deemed inappropriate for the Archives will be returned to the Division.

For more information, please contact APA Archives at (202) 336-5664 or archives@apa.org.

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