

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Operating Policies – Document Retention

This policy provides guidelines for the retention of documents relating to the operation of the church. Many of these documents will be physically stored in the church archives room although they are not considered part of the archives. The church “archives” will maintain their own guidelines for other church documents of historical significance.

The following documents should be kept for a minimum of three years:

- Duplicate bank deposit slips
- Employment applications and interview materials of those not hired
- Petty cash vouchers
- Pledge records

These documents should be kept five years:

- Authorization to perform background checks and the results obtained

These documents should be kept a minimum of seven years:

- Accounts payable ledgers
- Bank reconciliations and bank statements
- Cancelled checks
- Monthly financial statements
- Loan payments and schedules
- Payroll registers
- Personnel records after termination
- Time sheets
- Vendor invoices
- Vouchers of payments to employees for reimbursements, allowances, etc. (filed with vendor invoices)

These documents will be kept permanently:

- Annual Financial Statements
- General Ledger (called Account Analysis in Power Church) by fiscal year
- Depreciation schedules
- Articles of Incorporation and by-laws
- Audit reports
- Board meeting minutes
- Contracts and Leases in effect
- Expired contracts and leases
- Insurance Policies, including expired policies
- Payroll tax returns, including Form 941, 1099, W-2, W-3, and state withholding returns
- Real property documents including closing statements, appraisals, deeds, mortgages, special assessment and property tax records and related cancelled checks
- Real estate records for as long as property is owned plus three years after disposition
- Securities owned, detailed records of purchases, sales, dividends and investment expenses

Each year, records should be purged and shredded according to these guidelines.

The Church Archives committee has established the following guidelines for retention of information for archives purposes:

- Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees, including financial report to Board
- Annual Reports (the minutes of the Annual meeting of the church congregation)
- Information about “special” financial operations of groups within the church, such as:
 - a) Capital fund drives
 - b) Endowment Fund
 - c) Bequests and gifts to the church or some of its sub-sets, such as:
 - Memorial garden
 - Items for kitchen
 - Contribution of funds for special needs of the building and grounds
 - On-going church involvement in community-wide projects (such as second basket offering/collections) and AMOS projects’ costs
 - d) “Isolated” one of a kind financial events, such as:
 - Sale of church lands or building
 - Purchase of new church lands or buildings