

MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF THURSTON COUNTY
Policy and Procedure Manual
Records Retention Policy
Board Approval Date: September 1, 2021

POLICY

All short term and long-term storage of administrative and financial records are retained in a safe, secure and confidential manner. Depending upon the type of record, the appropriate length of time for retention complies with legal and funder requirements. Records relevant to pending judicial or administrative investigations are preserved until the actions are concluded.

PROCEDURE

Physical Records are retained by the MGFTC Board Secretary, except the current and prior year's financial records which are retained by the Board Treasurer. At least annually, physical documents and files are transferred from active files to inactive storage and retention dates are noted on the files. Confidential files are clearly designated as such. Files in storage are placed in a secure, waterproof container. Records that are permanently retained are stored with the Master Gardener Program in Thurston County Extension office.

When records pass retention requirements, documents shall be destroyed in a method that maintains confidentiality (i.e., shredding). Documents are not placed in dumpsters. Document destruction shall be suspended during litigation, subpoena, government investigation or other legal process.

Long term storage of electronic records: All electronic files are backed up monthly on an external hard drive. If the secretary and treasurer keep electronic records, they are saved to a MGFTC external hard drive. Annually, backups are moved off-site to safe deposit box at Heritage Bank in Olympia, Washington. The retention periods are consistent with those for physical records.

Former Board members must transfer records to their successor Board members or the MGFTC Board President within two months of the end of their term. Copies of physical and electronic records must be deleted or destroyed within three months of the end of their term. The Board may grant an extension for purposes such as onboarding, training, etc.

Committee chairs and members are required to turn in any records listed below to the President, Treasurer or Secretary for retention. Records related to the operation of the committees must be transferred to their successors within two months after the end of their term. Copies of physical and electronic records must be deleted or destroyed within three months of the end of their term.

The following table provides the minimum requirement for records retention.

Type of Document	Minimum Requirement
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Bank Reconciliations	2 years

Bank statements	3 years
Board and Committee work product (e.g., tickets for events, prize awards, etc.)	2 years
Checks for important payments and purchases over \$1000.00	7 years
Contracts, MOU, and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts, MOU, and leases (still in effect)	Permanently
Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
Depreciation Schedules	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Donor records and acknowledgement letters	7 years
Electronic payments	7 years
Expense Analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Financial Reviews ¹	7 years
Year End Financial Statements	7 years
Grant applications and contracts (expired)	7 years
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Permanently
Investment performance reports	7 years
Inventories of products, materials, and supplies	7 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Minute books, bylaws, resolutions, and charter	Permanently
Receipts	7 years
Software licenses	7 years
Tax returns and worksheets	7 years

Note: The federal Sarbanes-Oxley legislation generally does not pertain to tax-exempt organizations, it does impose criminal liability on tax-exempt as well as other organizations for (1) retaliation against

¹ The MG Foundation does not undergo a formal audit, instead it has an external financial review done by our designated accountant.

whistleblowers that report federal offenses, and (2) for destruction of records with the intent to obstruct a federal investigation.

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