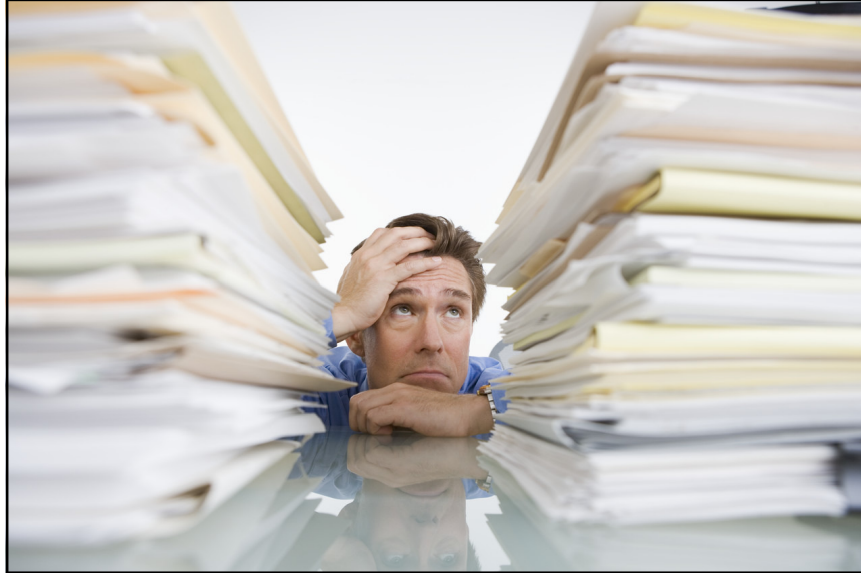

ORGANIZING FINANCIAL PAPERWORK

Starting Your Financial Information Binder



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Organizing Financial Paperwork

What can we learn from recent flood and hurricane disasters? What do you need to know and have ready if you are forced to leave your home quickly during a disaster and emergency? What information would your family need to have access to in case of your death or incapacitation?

Where to Store Important Documents

Note: this is not a conclusive list of important documents/paperwork

Safe Deposit Box	Fireproof Box at Home or Home Filing System	Attorney or Relative or Friend (as applicable)
Automobile Titles**	Cancelled Checks**	Burial Instructions**
Birth/Marriage/Death Certificates*	Bank Account Statements**	Living Will*
	Medical History*	Will (copy or original)**
Citizenship Papers*	Warranties**	Power of Attorney*
Burial Lot Deed**	Living Will*	Trust Documents**
Personal Property Inventory* (update annually, place copy in home file)	Employment Records *	Copy of Personal and Professional Directories**
	Passports**	
	Power of Attorney*	Copy of Personal Property Inventory*
Education Degrees*	Original Will**	
Legal Documents*	Trust Documents**	
Property Deeds and other Real Estate Documents*	Insurance Policies and Record of Claims*	
Divorce and Custody Documents*	Inventory of Valuable Papers*	
	Recent Tax Records*	
Military Documents*	Back Tax Records*	
Stocks and Bond Certificates**	Record of Auto Service and Repair **	
Audit Records *		

* Items to be kept “permanently” ** Items to be kept only temporarily (for the duration of ownership or until updated)

Organize your records for safety and accessibility. What's important is that:

- √ Valuable or hard-to-replace documents are kept in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box at a bank or a fireproof box at home. A good rule to follow is to keep the item at home unless it is a legal document or is difficult to replace or duplicate. Then it should be kept in a safe-deposit box or possibly left with your attorney.
- √ The attorney/friend/relative that would tend to your affairs in the event of your incapacitation or death has easy access to the documents that would be needed.
- √ When in doubt, don't throw it out.

Households should be viewed as mini-businesses since many of the functions of planning, purchasing and record keeping are the same as they are for any other type of business, large or small. You will find financial records becoming a vital part of your life. They are a key to your credit standing, are essential to help you save money on taxes, and provide a continuing indications of your financial progress.

A systematic plan for keeping track of important papers which come into your home can save hours of anxious searching, can help preserve peace and harmony as well as make it easier to cope with emergency situations.

Plan and evaluate the need for storage of all papers to determine which should be discarded or stored and where. Make the decision and file each paper accordingly. Do not just stack papers and plan to return to them later. This is the way things become lost and cause you to waste valuable time searching for or replacing them.

Source: Your Important Papers, What to Keep and Where, MSU, Marsha A. Goetting

Starting Your Financial Information Binder

A Financial Information Binder provides a quick reference to your entire financial situation. Start one now. When completed, your Financial Notebook will help you manage your financial affairs. It will also help the person who must manage for you in the event that you become temporarily incapacitated or die.

Your Financial Binder should be updated annually and whenever a significant change occurs (such as, birth, death, marriage, divorce, widowhood, relocation, purchase or sale of assets). Store a copy of the entire notebook in a fireproof box at home, with a friend, or in a safe deposit box, and keep the original handy for the ongoing management of your financial affairs.

Guidelines for Starting your Financial Information Binder

First, purchase supplies. Your Financial Binder doesn't have to be fancy. You'll need:

1. A sturdy three-ring binder
2. At least 16 index dividers
3. Plastic page protectors
4. College-ruled notebook paper (if not using computer)

Next label the dividers with the titles of your Notebook Items. Some suggestions are listed below. Add other items as needed.

Suggested Binder Items

- Personal Directory
- Professional Directory
- Financial Information
- Goals List
- Personal Property Inventory
- Net Worth Statement/ Budget/ Special Expenses
- Loan Papers
- Income Tax Information and Documents
- Rental or Lease Agreements
- Insurance Policies
- Social Security Benefits Statement
- Pension/Retirement Benefits Statement
- Birth Certificates, Immunization Records, Social Security Cards
- Credit Report—visit <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>
- Paycheck stubs

Personal Directory

List each family member and friend who should be notified in the event of a death in your family. Include the executor of your will. Also, include the Social Security and military discharge numbers of immediate family members. These numbers will provide a quick reference should you or your representative need to apply for benefits.

Charles Michael Jones

1314 West 400 South
Serendipity, Utah 12345
Soc. Sec. 555-55-5555
(123) 456-7890 (home)
(123) 456-7890 (cell)
(123) 456-7890 (work)
September 7, 1955: Ogden, Utah
Married: November 9, 1981 - American Fork,
Utah
Employer: Utah Irrigation Specialists
Incorporated

Kellie Anderson Jones

1314 West 400 South
Serendipity, Utah 12345
Soc. Sec. 555-55-5555
(123) 456-7890 (home)
(123) 456-7890 (cell)
(123) 456-7890 (work)
April 13, 1958: Bliss, Utah
Married: November 9, 1981 - American Fork,
Utah
Employer: Bliss County School District

Oldest Son: (Executor)

Michael Steven Jones (Charlotta)
784 Hogwarts Avenue
Layton, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890
Social Security: 555-55-5555
June 14, 1983 - Serendipity, Utah

Youngest Son:

Christian Michael Jones
Social Security: 555-55-5555
April 19, 1985 - Serendipity, Utah

Oldest Daughter:

Megan Marie Jones
Social Security: 555-55-5555
February 9, 1988 - Serendipity, Utah

Youngest Daughter:

Cassidy Ann Jones
Social Security: 555-55-5555
November 11, 1991 - Serendipity, Utah

Kellie's Family:**Parents:**

John and Alice Roberts Anderson
1492 South 600 West
Logan, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

Brother:

Steven Anderson (Melinda)
93 San Patricio
Mission Viejo, California 12345
(123) 456-7890

Sister:

Megan Cherie Major (Ryan)
932 St. Olaf Way
Portland, Oregon 12345
(123) 456-7890

Uncle:

Steven Roberts (Sarah)
58 Taste of Heaven Drive
Serendipity, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

Uncle:

Karl Roberts (unmarried)
45 West Milldale Blvd.
San Antonio, Texas 12345
(123) 456-7890

Aunt:

Kathryn Jackson (Melvin)
394 Albatross Way
Oceanside, California 12345
(123) 456-7890

Charles' Family:**Charles' Mother:**

Jessie Jones (John - deceased)
Serendipity, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

Brother:

Peter Jones (Melissa)
49 Cinnamon Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 12345
(123) 456-7890

Sister:

Annabelle Jones Murphy (Phillip)
8321 South 300 East
Pocatello, Idaho 12345
(123) 456-7890

Uncle:

Eugene Jones
945 Majestic Meadows Way
Serendipity, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

Friends of Kellie and Charles:

Edward and Effie Swampgump
184 Harmony Way
Tabiona, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

John and Liza Ghostbuster
4390 Haunted Mansion Way
Transylvania, Pennsylvania
12345
(123) 456-7890

Baxter and Bessie Snodgrass
459 Imperial Loop
St. George, Utah 12345
(123) 456-7890

Professional Directory

Together with the Personal Directory, this list would be enormously useful to your representative if you or a family member should die or become incapacitated. Include your employer (and your spouse's employer) and every professional involved in your affairs:

- Physician
- Dentist
- Clergy
- Lawyer
- Accountant
- Insurance agent(s)
- Banker
- Financial advisor
- Funeral director
- Real estate agent

- Human Resource Manager at work

Financial Information

Include all account numbers and other contact information related to your finances.

This could include but is not limited to:

- Checking Accounts
- Savings Accounts
- Retirement Accounts
- Certificates of Deposits
- Savings Bonds
- Safe Deposit Box
- Wills
- Trusts
- Loans: Auto, Mortgage, etc.
- List of Titles for Vehicles Owned
- Insurance Records: Life, Auto, Home, Renter's, Accident, Health, Disability, Umbrella
- Real Estate (Include Cemetery Plot)
- Mutual Funds
- Individual Stock and Bonds
- Other Investments
- Money Owed the Family
- Credit Cards (including toll free number)
- A list of where your important documents are located

Goals

What are your financial goals?

Short Term - less than 3 months

Medium Term - 3 months to 1 year

Long Term - more than 1 year

Money Management Goals Contract is included on page 7.

Money Management Goals Contract

Use this handy form to work on each step to make it to each of your financial goals! Tape the contract to the refrigerator or other obvious location to remind you of your financial goals. Remember to take one goal at a time. There are no shortcuts to financial peace.

My (our) overall money management goal is: _____
_____.

My (our) small goals (short-term) to achieve this goal include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

When a goal is reached, I (we) will reward myself (ourselves) by the following:

To help me (us) achieve my (our) goals, the following people will be part of my (our) support system.:

I (we) do hereby commit to strive daily towards achieving the goals set above.

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

Projected Date of Completion: _____

Personal Property Inventory

A household inventory of all your possessions is essential to help your memory under the stress that comes from a personal tragedy like a fire. A household inventory - or personal property inventory - can be done by using a video recorder or a camera. Color pictures are better than black and white. Photograph each room, wall by wall, floor to ceiling. For larger areas that won't fit into a single shot, snap the area in sections, overlapping your shots slightly. While you are taking pictures, open the drawers of china cabinets, dressers, and stereo cabinets to photograph the contents as well as those of other containers such as tool boxes.

When you have photographed each room, go on to the closets. Don't forget the basement, attic, and garage. While you're outside, film the lawn furniture and the contents of any storage or tool shed. After you have completed your photo inventory, use a portable tape recorder to walk through your house, describing everything in each room.

If you have especially valuable objects such as jewelry furs, clothing of any kind, or antiques, you may need a qualified appraiser to establish value. Take extra care to document these items - and keep the documents in a safe place.

If you do not yet have an inventory of all your belongings, making one may seem to be a monumental undertaking. However, it does not need to be. Break it into steps and inventory one room at a time. Make it a family project, with everyone contributing something to the effort.

Keep your inventory in a safe place. A copy of the inventory and photographs, slides or videotape should be kept in a safe-deposit box with a second copy in your fireproof safe at home. This will make it easier to update the inventory once a year and add new items at the time they are purchased.

Net Worth Statement, Income/Expense Statement, Savings/Spending Plan, and Special Expenses

If someone were to take over your finances, would they know what bills to pay? Would they understand the family budget? Would they need to know the non-monthly special expenses that occur every year - but are not necessarily in the budget? These need to be updated yearly and the newest version put in the Financial Information Binder

Loan Papers

Include all past and present loan papers in this section. If you have paid a loan off, make sure that you note that it is paid in full. This is particularly important when lending/borrowing from relatives.

Tax Information and Documents

Include all information for each year that you would need if you are audited. Make sure that your W-2 forms are included with each year's information. If you are applying for a mortgage, you will need to have these to prove your income and employment over the past several years.

Rental or Lease Agreements

Any real estate, farm property, or storage sheds that you either rent yourself or you own that someone else leases, usually has a lease agreement. This is where they belong for easy access.

Insurance Policies

A complete list of all insurance policies should be kept here - unless you included a list with your financial information documentation. The actual policies need to be kept in your fire proof safe at home - or in a safe deposit box if you prefer.

Social Security Benefits Statements

Stash all of these statements here for easy referral of benefits.

Pension, Benefits, IRA, 401K, and Retirement Statements

These statements are important to be able to collect benefits upon the death of your spouse. They also help you estimate retirement benefits in preparation for that blessed event

Birth Certificates, Immunization Records, and Social Security Cards

End those days of searching for these important documents by adding them to your Financial Information Binder.

Credit Reports

Keep your most current credit report here. These should be check yearly for mistakes and identify theft. Go to <http://www.annualcreditreport.com> (or call 1-877-322-8228) to receive one free report from each credit-reporting bureau per year.

Paycheck Stubs

These are important for applying for mortgages and loans to prove income qualifications.

Other

This is where you can create your own areas according to your needs. Suggestions include: Travel Reservations, Organizations/Clubs, Wills/Trusts (copies), Safe Deposit Box (Key and List of Contents), Warranties, Holiday Card List, Investments, Pet Records, Divorce Papers, list of medical conditions and medications of family members in your care, etc.