

Pinelands Preservation Alliance

Record Retention Policy

September 27, 2011

The Pinelands Preservation Alliance will adhere to the following policy of record retention for the identified types of documents. This policy aims to ensure accurate bookkeeping, to comply with legal requirements, and to eliminate accidental or innocent destruction. When in doubt, a document should be retained unless reliable information indicates otherwise. These policies represent minimum retention times, so it is permissible to retain materials longer than the stated periods.

Many types of information, such as accounting and banking actions, are preserved electronically via accounting software or other means. These materials are also treated as “documents” and they must be handled in the same way, with the same minimum retention times, as hard copy materials.

Records containing personal information about individuals or financial information, such as bank account numbers or credit card information, of a business or individual must be shredded.

Document types not identified below need not be retained but, if disposed of, must be disposed of in a fashion that ensures the privacy of personal and financial information of any persons referenced in such documents. Any document as to which there is uncertainty or ambiguity regarding its status under this policy should be taken to the executive director for a determination.

Document retention and destruction is a responsibility of PPA’s staff, but trustees must also be aware of and respect these policies. If trustees wish to dispose of PPA-related documents, they should adhere to the destruction policy for shredding sensitive information or give the documents to PPA’s executive director for proper disposal.

Documents relating to any ongoing litigation or investigation must be retained until the executive director determines the litigation or investigation is concluded and the documents may be disposed of. In the case of any litigation or investigation to which PPA records may be relevant, the executive director will notify staff and trustees of the scope of the matter and the appropriate document retention requirements.

Email and voicemails need not be saved unless (a) they fall into one of the categories identified below or (b) in specific circumstances and on instruction from the executive director. In the case of legal proceedings or investigations, emails and voicemails should be treated as documents and retained if relevant to such a proceeding or investigation.

Type of Document Minimum Retention Period

Audit reports and backup materials: Permanently

Financial statements: Permanently

Tax returns and worksheets: Permanently

Bookkeeping data in database: Permanently

Withholding tax statements: 7 years

Payroll records and summaries: 7 years

Bank statements: 7 years

Checks written or received: 7 years

Credit card transaction records: 7 years, except that records of full credit card numbers of donors or purchasers will be destroyed immediately after transaction is entered with bank

Invoices and bills (to customers, from vendors): 7 years

Expense reports: 7 years

Records of donor communications or agreements in connection with donations to PPA: 7 years

Contracts, notes and leases: 7 years beyond last effective date

Deeds and mortgages: Permanently

Liability insurance records, current accident reports, claims, and policies: Permanently

Liability waiver forms for PPA programs: 7 years

Board meeting minutes, bylaws, incorporation documents, and IRS determination letters:
Permanently

Personnel files: 7 years after date of termination of employment

Funded grant proposals and correspondence: 7 years from end of grant period

Photographs: Permanently

My signature below indicates my receipt and understanding of this policy. I also verify that I have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions about the policy.

Employee Signature

Date