

Legal Documents Notebook

It is very important that each PTA maintain a legal documents notebook. This is a notebook into which the PTA places all documents relating to the legal status of the local PTA; many of these documents are subject to public inspection. To truly safeguard your PTA's organizational records, you should keep them in a safe deposit box at a bank. If that is not possible, records should be maintained in a fireproof safe. Most organizations maintain their corporate records in a three-ring binder (or several binders) with tabs for different categories of documents. The PTA's standing rules should state who has the notebook and who is responsible for updating it. For example, the secretary may be responsible for maintaining the original notebook and making copies for the president and treasurer. More information is available on the WSPTA website under PTA Leader Resources.

The following documents need to be maintained by your PTA in a legal documents notebook. **Items listed in bold are subject to public inspection and should be available upon request.**

Section 1: Internal Governance Documents

Current documents

- *WSPTA Uniform Bylaws*
- Contracts currently in effect (see section 7 for contracts not currently in effect)
- Documentation of equipment owned by PTA (asset list with depreciation of 20% per year)
- Standing rules, policies, and written procedures
- Notice of special meetings for the current year
- Reseller permit
- Bank signature cards and authorized signers
- List of banks and bank account numbers

Section 2: Evidence of Corporate Status

Retain permanently

- **Articles of Incorporation**
- **Amendments to and restatements of Articles of Incorporation**
- **Certificate of Incorporation**
- **Annual Incorporation renewals to Secretary of State**
- **Annual charitable organization registration**

Section 3: Corporation and Charitable Solicitations Filings

Retain for 10 years

- Copy of letter from Secretary of State acknowledging registration
- Copy of the registration form

Section 4: Evidence of Tax-Exempt Status

Retain permanently

- **Completed Form 1023 or 1024 (application for tax-exempt status)**
- **All documents submitted in support of application**
- **Correspondence with IRS regarding application**
- **IRS determination letter**

Section 5: Other Federal Tax Matters

Retain permanently

- Letter assigning Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- **Form 990, 990 EZ, or 990-N** (e-postcard. Exempt from public inspection is schedule B of 990)
- Form 990-T (to report unrelated business income, if applicable)
- All correspondence with the IRA

Section 6: Banking and Insurance Records

Keep for 3 years

- Bank signature cards and authorized signers (from past years)
- List of banks and account numbers (keep three years after account is closed)
- Certificates of insurance
- Policies of insurance

Section 7: Legal Matters

Keep for 7 years

- Contracts not currently in effect
- Hold harmless agreements (if any)
- Restricted donation agreements (grant agreements)

Section 8: Other Documents

See records retention schedule

- A current copy of *PTA and the Law*
- A current copy of *Money Matters*
- Any other material or information the PTA feels is important to its legal status