

## What Are Critical Documents?

**Q: What is the single most important thing you need when taking over the responsibility of being a Treasurer for a non-profit group?**

**A: A System!**

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A way of organizing your paperwork so that you have everything you need at your fingertips. Our **Treasurer Bin Checklist** will give you some idea of the types of supplies you will want to have handy. The other part of the process is to have somewhere to store the day-to-day records of your organization for the current fiscal year.

In our experience, the best way to collect this information is in a 3-inch 3 ring binder. As you are going to be going in and out of this binder a lot, this is no time to scrimp. The D-ring binders with the rings mounted on the back cover, not on the spine, are by far the most durable and easiest to deal with.

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### So here is your shopping list:

- ✓ One 3 inch, 3-ring binder, D-ring style with the rings on the back cover
- ✓ 12 sheet protectors
- ✓ 12 dividers – one for each month of the year
- ✓ Sticky labels and a marking pen

To setup your binder, affix a sticky label to the top right hand corner of each sheet protector and write the month on it. If your dividers came with the month name printed on them, you are set, otherwise write the month names on the inserts and insert them into the dividers.

Start with the sheet protector and divider that represent the first month of your financial year, for example, January. Insert the January Sheet protector in your binder. In the sheet protector put all the awkward little things for that month that tend to get lost: letters from the bank, stubs from a check you have deposited, etc.

Next put in your Check Request Forms (see our resource titled Reimbursement Forms). Oldest, that is the first one you wrote, that is the lowest number, on the bottom. So on the right side of your binder from the bottom up you would have your January Sheet Protector, then check request form (with the invoice or receipt or whatever TAPED to the back) for check #2021, then check request for check #2022, etc.

See how easy this is? Every time you have a new check, you just open your binder and its record goes right on top of the pile. No flipping all those pages over every time.

We recommend taping the receipt to the Check Request Form. Otherwise all those staples on the left side of the page make your files a lot thicker than they need to be. Tape keeps them secure and tidy and you can fit a lot more into the same binder. Be sure to file your voided checks here too, taped to a check request form in the right order. Then there will be no question about whether a check was voided or if it just disappeared. When all your check records have been filed for the month, you can add the bank statement and your reconciliation report and your Treasurer's Report for the month.

Now it's time to put in the next month's Sheet Protector ON TOP, followed by the checks for the next month and so on.

At any point during the year you now have an organized collection of paperwork that will enable you to find information about any of the transactions that occurred during the year. And at the end of the year the job of turning over your records to the Audit Committee, or to the next Treasurer, will be much easier.