

FE446 (Reviewed December 2024)

Inventory of Important Papers



Reviewed by

Carrie Johnson, Personal and Family Finance Specialist

An inventory of important papers will help you find records when you need them, and it can be a guide to others in an emergency.

Keeping family records in an organized manner saves time, trouble, money and frustration.

This inventory may be filled out by hand or in a fillable-form file found online at www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/inventory-important-papers and updated as needed.

Keep one copy of this inventory in a convenient spot in your home files, and a photocopy in your safe deposit box or a fireproof, waterproof and burglarproof home safe. You can store the computer file version on a computer hard drive or in a secure online storage system.

Properly filled out and kept current, this information can help you find records when you need them

A good recordkeeping system, with an up-to-date inventory, will allow someone who is unfamiliar with the system to locate important documents, maintain records and prepare reports in case of an emergency.

For more information on important family records see the following NDSU Extension publications:

- FE445 – Family Records: What to Keep, Where and for How Long
- FE1748 – Replacing Important Papers.

This inventory includes:

- **Family Record**
(Page 2)
- **Important Advisers and Contacts**
(Page 2)
- **Property**
(Page 3)
- **Banking, Savings and Investments**
(Page 3)
- **Insurance** (life, health, disability, homeowners/renters, auto, etc.)
(Page 4)
- **Cards** (credit, debit, ATM, Smart, etc.)
(Page 5)
- **Debt Information**
(Page 6)
- **Membership in Organizations/Clubs**
(Page 7)
- **Other Important Records**
(Page 8)

Family Record

Family Member Name	Birth Date	Location of Birth Certificate*	Social Security Number	Location of Social Security card*

* Because of the threat of identity theft, carry your Social Security card only when needed for employment and to register for benefits.
Keep your Social Security card number and birth certificates in a safe-deposit box at a financial institution or in a fireproof, waterproof and burglarproof home safe.

Important Advisers and Contacts

Type	Name	Address	Telephone or Email Address
Attorney			
Executor/trix of my will			
Executor/trix of will for spouse/partner			
Religious adviser			
Primary-care doctor			
Other doctors			
Dentist			
Accountant or tax adviser			
Stockbroker/investment adviser			
Banker or trust officer(s)			
Employer or personnel manager			
Business manager or business partner			
Life insurance agent			
Home insurance agent			
Auto insurance agent			
Child/adultcare provider			
Neighbor or close friend			
Parents – maternal			
Parents – paternal			
Guardian of children			
Children's school contacts			

Property

Type	Owner(s)	Type of Ownership	Date Acquired	Location/Description	Location of Title/ Ownership Information*	Additional Information
Real estate: Residence(s)						
Business(es)						
Timeshare(s)						
Cemetery plot(s)						
Motor vehicle(s)						
Other						

* Store titles, leases and other important ownership information in a safe-deposit box or fireproof, waterproof and burglarproof home safe.

Banking, Savings and Investments

Type	Financial Institution/Company	Address/Telephone	Owner	Location of Records*	Additional Information (if applicable)			
					I.D. #	Beneficiary	Price/Value(s)	Dates (purchase, maturity, etc.)
Checking account(s)								
Savings account(s)								
Money market account(s)								
Bonds, treasury bills, etc.								
Stocks, mutual funds, investment trusts, etc.								
Individual Retirement Accounts, Keogh accounts, SEPs								
Retirement plans, pensions, etc.								
Other								

* Savings and investment certificates, bonds, bills and other evidence of ownership (financial records difficult or costly to replace, or that could be transferred illegally in case of loss or theft) should be kept in a safe-deposit box or fireproof, waterproof and burglarproof home safe. Monthly statements and substitute or canceled checks, or their images, which generally can be replaced, can be kept in a home business center, file drawer, desk, etc.

Debt Information

Type	Company/Person and Address	Total \$\$ Owed	Payment Amount and Date	Location of Contracts/Records*	Additional Information
What we owe:					
What others owe us:					

* Keep important contracts, notes, liens and evidence of debt payments in a safe-deposit box or fireproof, waterproof and burglarproof home safe.

Other Important Records

	Kind of paper or record	Location	Additional Information
Safe-deposit box	Adoption papers		
	Baptismal records		
	Titles and bills of sale		
	Citizenship/naturalization papers		
	Death certificates		
	Diplomas		
	Divorce/separation papers		
	Durable powers of attorney		
	Easements/rights of way		
	Health records (with blood type)		
	Household inventory		
	Irreplaceable receipts (proof of tax deductions)		
	Living will		
	Marriage certificates		
	Military records		
	Passport		
	Patents/copyrights		
	Trust		
	Will		
Home business center	Appraisals: collections/antiques/jewelry/other		
	Cemetery plot/records		
	Computer passwords (copy)		
	Education records		
	Employment records		
	Family history		
	Household inventory (copy)		
	Income/expense records		
	Income tax returns		
	Funeral plan documents/instructions		
	Legal appointments for others (e.g., power of attorney, executor/trix of will)		
	Letter of last instructions		
	Living will (copy)		
	Medical records		
	Net worth statements		
	Safe-deposit box inventory		
	Warranties/appliance manuals		
Will (copy)			
Wallet	Employee ID card		
	Identity card/whom to notify		
	Insurance/medical cards		
	Organ donor card		
Other	Living will (copy at doctor's office)		

This publication was authored by Debra Pankow, former family economics specialist, NDSU, 2006.

NDSU Extension does not endorse commercial products or companies even though reference may be made to tradenames, trademarks or service names.

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ndsu.edu/extension

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 100, 701-231-7708, ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881. 2M-9-06; 3M-3-09; 200-3-15; web-3-20; web-12-24