Manual
of the
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
in the United States

National Council of the United States Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.
affiliated Council. Councils compile all Conference reports and forward these compilations to the next higher Council, along with their own reports. The National Council, in turn, collects all the compilations and publishes a Consolidated Annual Report that is distributed to all U.S. bishops, the U.S. Congressmen, and all U.S. members of the Society. Donors frequently request this document, as do foundations and federal agencies processing grant applications. The Consolidated Annual Report derives its value from the timely, accurate reports of the Conferences and Councils.

Record Retention

In the course of operation, Conferences generate case records, bank statements, invoices, etc. Confidentiality demands that all records on individuals and families served be kept in a secure, private place. Special care should be taken to secure electronic databases and prevent unauthorized access. Confidential material should not be transferred via email or web unless its security is assured.

Because federal, state, and local statutes of limitations vary, Conferences operating special works should check with their auditor or legal counsel and develop their own record retention policy. Conferences that operate no special works, have no payroll, pay no employment taxes, etc. can adopt the record retention schedule below, but should check first with their Council to make sure that no special circumstances apply to them. A Conference Record Retention Policy should dictate the manner in which records are kept secure and confidential, the length of their retention, and the means of disposal (e.g. shredding paper files, destroying computer disks). Records with historical value should be kept permanently.

Retention Schedule:

Annual Conference Report* .......... Permanent
Letters of Aggregation ................. Permanent
Bank Deposits .......................... 3 Years
Bank Reconciliations ................... 3 Years
Bank Statements ...................... 7 Years
Cancelled Checks ..................... 7 Years
Invoices Received ...................... 7 Years
Case Records & Cards .................. 3 Years
General Correspondence ............. 3 Years
Meeting Minutes ..................... 7 Years
Minute Books ......................... 7 Years
Treasurer Statements .................. 7 Years
*including statistics, membership list, and items with historical significance

Conflict of Interest Policy