

## Donating Your Records Organizations and Businesses

The OJA holds a number of organizational and business records. Historically, Jewish organizations, including synagogues, have acted as the voice of the community on many different issues and have worked to provide a variety of programs and services to the general Jewish population. Organizational records are important to understanding community issues, trends, debates and activities. Business records are also an invaluable part of our collection as they provide a unique perspective and represent one particular aspect of the overall Jewish community. When preparing your records for donation, one designated authority within the organization should be responsible for interacting with the OJA.

Archivists are trained in appraising records for their **archival value**, which establishes whether or not records meet the criteria for long-term preservation. However, there are some simple steps you can take on your own to determine what records might be of interest to the OJA.

Records of value can consist of a range of material, but they are generally **those records that substantially document the purpose of the organization or business and the activities that support this purpose.**

### **Records that the OJA may be interested in can include (but is not limited to):**

- letters of incorporation
- meeting minutes and agendas
- reports
- planning documents
- newsletters
- photographs
- general correspondence
- program and event material
- financial records and ledger books
- publicity and promotion material
- Inventory and price lists
- other records that are unique to your organization

**Generally, the OJA is not interested in:**

- duplicates in any format where the original exists
- drafts (unless they are annotated with important information showing the decision-making process)
- records created by businesses other than your own and used for reference
- poor quality photographs with little or no identification (the exception would be event photographs where complete identification is often impossible)
- low level financial documents like cheque stubs, receipts, requisition slips (unless they are unusually significant to the business)
- unused items, such as notebooks and ledger books
- published books and religious texts
- plaques and other mounted items (unless they are unusually significant)
- interoffice memos, unless the content is very important
- individual donor lists
- event registration/rsvp lists
- records created by organizations other than your own and used for reference

**When in doubt, don't throw it out!**

Please **contact** the OJA with your questions or if you require a site visit

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**THANK YOU!**