

EXAMPLE POLICY FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

To give an example of how the lists can be updated, let's make up a sample church policy. Say the church constitution states that we have members, inactive members, non-resident members and adherents. The church clerk will review the membership roll in time to report at the annual meeting that always takes place in February.

Members

Members are individuals who regularly attend church, have received the right hand of fellowship at some time, contribute to the work of the church, or are shut ins who have pledged to devote time to pray for the church.

Inactive Members

Members become inactive after two years with no contact or contribution.

Past Members

Inactive members are removed after three years from the list of inactive members and their records are archived for future reference.

Non-resident

Non-resident members who have moved within two years, Members who wish to maintain their connection and membership with the church, Students away at college.

Let's apply this policy to a few of our members. We will use a procedure that has been put in place to accurately record and change members' status and to inform the members of what is happening.

Example 1

Member A was an active member for five years, but attendance dropped and there has been no word from this member, no successful contact and no financial contribution for two years.

In November, a letter is sent to **Member A** stating that those who have not been involved in the church for two years have their status as a member changed from active to inactive. This letter should be friendly and encouraging. The letter would ask whether the member would like their status changed to that of inactive for the time being.

Member A has not responded by the end of January, and so the membership is changed to inactive status.

Example 2

Member B & C have been on the inactive list for three years. The members were on the inactive mailing list and received bulletins, special notices of meetings, etc., but they did not respond.

In October, a letter is sent to **Member B & C** to inform them that the policy of the church is that those on the inactive member list for three years are removed from the inactive list and the record of the membership is kept for future reference.

The warmth and concern in the letter caused **Member B** to reconsider and visit the church for a few Sundays. Member B became an active member once again.

However, **Member C** did not respond by the end of January and was moved from the inactive list to the past member list.

This job is so difficult, but so important. There are many other kinds of policies and procedures that churches use – each of which can have similar subtleties. Each clerk must find what suits their particular church and situation.