The New FamilySearch
Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains questions that have been asked most often about the new Temple and Family History system, called new FamilySearch and the new support process.

Goals for the New FamilySearch

Q. What are the goals for the new FamilySearch?

A. The goals for the new FamilySearch are to reduce duplication of research and temple work; simplify the process to prepare a name for temple ordinance work; and create an easy way for members to collect, organize, and share their family history with other relatives.

Seeing, Adding and Retrieving Information in the New FamilySearch

Q. Where did the information come from that I see about me and my family in the new FamilySearch?

A. The information you will see in the pedigree tree and family group views came from Church membership record information, the International Genealogical Index, the Pedigree Resource File, and the Ancestral File.

Q. What information about myself, my living relatives, and others will I be able to see in the new FamilySearch?

A. For yourself, you will see your name/maiden name, address, telephone number and date of birth. Your current spouse information will include his/her name and gender, as well as your marriage date and marriage place. For your minor children in your household you will see names, gender, and dates of birth. If any of your children are over 18 years of age, you will still be able to see their name and gender, but not their birthdates.

On living direct line ancestors or descendants you will see only names and gender. You will not be able to see any aunts, uncles or cousins. This living information may be added by you, but only you will be able to see the living information that you have entered.

Q. In the past when contributing names for temple ordinances, I have had to check the IGI, Ancestral File, the Pedigree Resource File and TempleReady for work that was already done. Will I still need to check these different databases with the new FamilySearch?

A. No. All of the information contained in these databases has been included in the new FamilySearch. All name checking is done automatically by the new FamilySearch and will identify Ancestral names that qualify for temple ordinances.

Q. How does the new FamilySearch simplify the process of submitting names for temple ordinances?

A. The current process for submitting names to the temple requires members to perform many steps, which include using multiple computer programs, exporting and importing computer files using floppy diskettes, and processing the names at a Family History Center.

With the new process, a member logs into the new FamilySearch at new.familysearch.org, selects the ancestor that needs temple work, selects the ordinances to be performed, prints out a paper family ordinance request form, and takes it to the temple where the ordinance card is printed—a total of five steps.

Q. In the existing system it is hard to see if ordinances have been completed for an ancestor. What will the new FamilySearch provide?

A. When ordinances are completed in the temple, the ordinance information is recorded into the system, usually within 24 hours. All members can then see when and where the ordinances for the deceased were completed.

Q. In the event a family history consultant is unavailable and members need help, how can they contribute names for temple ordinances?

A. When a family history consultant is not available, family information may be taken or sent to a family history center or, in special cases, a temple to be entered into the new FamilySearch.

Q. If family history information that a member has previously contributed to the Church does not appear in the new FamilySearch, will the member need to re-enter it?

A. No. All ancestor information should be in the new FamilySearch, but some of the family relationships may not appear. The member can use the search capability in the new FamilySearch to find previously contributed ancestral information and then restore the family relationships.

Q. Can relatives who are not members of the Church use the new FamilySearch?

A. Not yet. The initial release of the new FamilySearch is first being made available to Church members. The features of the new FamilySearch that have been available prior to this new release will continue to be available to everyone. Future releases of the new FamilySearch will include additional features and will be made available to the general public.

Q. If I find errors in the information about my ancestors, can I change it?

A. Yes, if you are the original contributor of the information. Information about an ancestor that was contributed by someone else can only be changed by that person. However, you can add another opinion or dispute information that has been entered by others.

Security and Protecting My Contributed Ancestral Information

Q. During the registration process, I was asked to provide my membership record number and confirmation date. Why do you need this information and where do I get it?

A. A membership record number and confirmation date identifies the person as a member of the church and provides the information needed to link you to your parents, grandparents, etc. This registration requirement also helps protect the integrity of all ancestral information contained in and added to the new FamilySearch.

Your membership record number and confirmation date may be obtained from the ward clerk. The membership record number may also be found on newer temple recommends.

Q. During the registration process, why I am asked to enter some letters and numbers from a picture I can see on the same screen where I enter my membership record number and confirmation date?

A. There are many people who attempt to gain unauthorized access to computers on the Internet using automated programs that randomly enter information in a login name and password field. The automated programs cannot see or enter the security information contained on the Internet site page and therefore, this prevents unauthorized access into the new FamilySearch.

Q. Will others be able to change the information a member contributes?

A. No. Only the member who contributes the information will be able to change or update it. Others will be able to see the information and add an alternate opinion if they desire to do so.

Q. If I enter my information, I am afraid that someone will delete or change my information. How is my information protected?

A. The new FamilySearch ensures that an individual's family history information will be preserved and protected. The information entered into the system can only be changed or corrected by the person who submitted it. Others may add a different opinion or dispute a previous entry if they believe it is incorrect, but they cannot change or delete it.

Many people store family history information in their homes on paper or other media. Unfortunately, this information may get lost, be thrown away, or be destroyed through disasters such as flood or fire. To ensure their family history information is never lost and is preserved for future generations, members can submit their information to the new FamilySearch.

Q. Can I use my existing name and password from the current FamilySearch to access information in the new FamilySearch?

A. No. Members must re-register on the new FamilySearch and create a new user login name and password, even if they have previously registered on another Church Internet site, including the existing FamilySearch. The new login name and password can be the same as the existing name and password if they have not already been used by someone else.

Q. May two members use the same sign-in name and password?

A. No. In order for information to remain secure, members should not share their sign-in name and password with anyone. A membership record number and confirmation date is required to create a sign-in name and password in order to protect the information that members will see and update in the new FamilySearch.

Compatibility Between the New and Existing FamilySearch

Q. If I am using the new FamilySearch and someone else uses TempleReady to prepare family names for the temple, will his/her completed ordinance information be updated into the new FamilySearch?

A. Yes. Information processed using TempleReady will continue to be added to Church records and the new FamilySearch will be updated accordingly.

Q. Will information that I enter into the new FamilySearch be added into the International Genealogical Index (IGI), Pedigree Resource File or Ancestral File?

A. No. Information contributed into the new FamilySearch will not be added to the IGI, Pedigree Resource File or Ancestral File.

Q. Is the new FamilySearch a replacement for the existing temple and family history Internet site, FamilySearch?

A. No. Over time, the functionality of the two Church family history websites will be combined into one Internet site.

Q. Many members have temple cards already printed. Can these cards still be used at the temple?

A. Yes. Temple ordinance cards that have already been printed may be used at any temple. The completed ordinance information will automatically be entered into the new FamilySearch.

Q. Will temples that have implemented the simplified process for temple and family history work still accept TempleReady disks that members have previously created?

A. Yes. While the new temple and family history process is being implemented throughout the Church, temples that are using the new process can still accept TempleReady disks to prepare temple ordinance cards.

Contributing Ancestral Information on Paper

Q. Can I still contribute names to the temple without using a computer?

A. Yes. Ancestral information contributed on paper documentation may be entered into the new FamilySearch by a family history consultant, or at a nearby family history center.

Q. How does someone who does not have a computer or Internet access prepare names for temple ordinances?

A. Members who do not have access to the Internet at home can still go to their local Family History Center to use the center's Internet connection and access the new FamilySearch. They can also submit their family history information via paper forms to their local names processing center.

Reducing or Eliminating Duplication

Q. How does using the new FamilySearch reduce duplication of research work?

A. In the existing system people cannot easily coordinate their research with others, see what someone else knows about an ancestor, determine if the ordinances have been performed for an ancestor, and share that information with others.

The new FamilySearch combines the Church's IGI, Ancestral File and Pedigree Resource File databases into a single pedigree format. When a family member enters a new piece of information into the system, all other family members can go to one place to see the new information so everyone's research efforts can be coordinated.

Q. How does using the new FamilySearch eliminate duplication of temple ordinances?

A. With the new FamilySearch, once a member has selected an ordinance he or she wants to perform for an ancestor, no one else can select and perform the same ordinance for the ancestor. Other family members can see the status of ordinance work in progress, which will lead to coordinated rather than duplicated efforts.

Personal Ancestral File

Q. May I still use PAF to organize my family records?

A. Yes. Members may continue to use PAF as a personal record manager to record and track their family history. Family information may also be entered directly into the new FamilySearch without using PAF.

Q. Do I need to use Personal Ancestral File (PAF) to enter information?

A. No. Family information may be entered directly into the new FamilySearch. This information can be added to or changed online by the individual who made the original submission.

Q. All my family history is currently in Personal Ancestral File (PAF). Do I have to retype all my information into the new FamilySearch?

A. No. Members can export their PAF information in GEDCOM format and upload it into the new FamilySearch. They can see the individual they select automatically displayed in a timeline that highlights important events in the individual's life. The new FamilySearch will allow people to find and combine duplicate entries of individuals, as well as to separate incorrect merges.

Q. How do I retrieve information from the new FamilySearch to enter into my personal copy of PAF?

A. Currently, it is not possible to export information out of the new FamilySearch for use in PAF or any other family history personal record manager. This feature is planned for a later time.

Q. What are some of the other new features of the new FamilySearch?

A. New features in the new FamilySearch include:

- Improved search capability to find ancestors' names
- Improved ways to look at information, such as the timeline view that highlights important events in an ancestor's life
- The ability to identify duplicate entries and merge them together
- The ability to extend ancestral lines by tying into work that has been done by others
- The ability for members to enter data for others who don't have access to the system