



MANAGING ORDINANCES IN FAMILY TREE

A FAMILYSEARCH WHITE PAPER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The temple records contain important information about the ordinances performed in behalf of our deceased ancestors.

Information about completed ordinances is recorded in new.familysearch.org. This information is also added to Family Tree.

In new.familysearch.org, the way ordinances are recorded makes it difficult to correct a person's information without the help of a system administrator.

Family Tree will improve how ordinances are recorded. It currently does or will:

- Allow users of the tree to correct a person's information in Family Tree without having to work with a system administrator to also correct the qualifying information.
- Allows users to see qualifying information to verify that the ordinance record is attached to the right person.
- Lets system administrators attach and detach ordinance records so that they can be attached to the right person.

INTRODUCTION

When a person's information is moved from new.familysearch.org into Family Tree, the temple ordinance information is also moved and displayed in the Family Tree.

This whitepaper discusses how temple ordinances will be managed in Family Tree to ensure that:

- Essential information about completed ordinances is preserved.
- Ordinances are assigned to the correct person.
- Ordinances that are not assigned to the correct person can be corrected.

To better understand this whitepaper, it is recommended that you first read the FamilySearch whitepaper titled "Dealing with Duplicate Records of People in Family Tree."

WHERE THE ORDINANCE RECORDS IN NEW.FAMILYSEARCH.ORG CAME FROM

The ordinance records in new.familysearch.org came from two basic processes:

- **Ordinances done before the release of new.familysearch.org.** These ordinance records were added into the system and then combined with other records in the system.
- **Ordinances reserved in new.familysearch.org.** These ordinances are recorded at the temple, and the information is then added directly to the person's record in new.familysearch.org.

Even though the ordinance information is displayed in new.familysearch.org, the official ordinance records are maintained in a separate database.

PRESERVATION OF "QUALIFYING INFORMATION"

A temple record contains two basic types of information:

- Information about the ordinance itself: which ordinance was done, the date it was done, and the temple where it was done.
- Information about the person for whom the ordinance was done. This is called the

“qualifying information” because it was used to determine whether the person’s record had enough information to qualify for ordinances to be done.

Both types of information need to be preserved.

HOW QUALIFYING INFORMATION IS CREATED

When a person’s ordinances are reserved, the system copies some basic information about the person that the ordinances are being done for. This includes name, gender, and other information. For sealing ordinances, the system also copies basic information about the spouse or parents. This copied information is the “qualifying information” for the ordinances.

The qualifying information has many other uses:

- It gets printed on family ordinance cards.
- It is used to help make sure that the ordinances are properly recorded.
- It is used to resolve questions about which person an ordinance was performed for.

HOW NEW.FAMILYSEARCH.ORG PRESERVES QUALIFYING INFORMATION

When a deceased person’s ordinances are done, the temple sends to new.familysearch.org:

- Information about the completed ordinances.
- The qualifying information.

When it receives ordinance information, new.familysearch.org does the following:

- It displays the date when the ordinance was done and the temple where it was done.
- It adds the qualifying information back onto the person’s record.
- For sealing ordinances, it creates relationships between the people involved in the sealing:

- For a sealing-to-spouse ordinance, it creates a spouse relationship between the two people who were sealed.
- For a sealing-to-parents ordinance, it creates a parent-child relationship between the child and the mother and father.
- It lists the contributor of both the qualifying information and relationships as “FamilySearch.”

If the qualifying information is correct, it is duplicate information on the record. If it is wrong, however, users have to work with system administrators to correct it. This problem is particularly difficult when sealing records create inaccurate relationships to spouses and parents.

HOW FAMILY TREE WILL PRESERVE QUALIFYING INFORMATION

In many ways, the temple records are like sources. They prove that an ordinance was done. Therefore, they contain important details, such as:

- The person for whom the ordinances were done and his or her qualifying information.
- The date and temple where an ordinance was done.

Family Tree will preserve qualifying information with the ordinance record.

Consequently, Family Tree:

- Will not use the qualifying information to automatically create genealogical details (such as names or birth dates) or relationships.
- Will display the qualifying information with the ordinance records. Users can examine the qualifying information. If it is correct and not already on the person’s record, users can add it themselves, preferably with genealogical sources that prove the accuracy.

Family Tree will also have features that make working with ordinance records similar to the features for working with sources. For example:

- Family Tree will allow users to see all of a person's ordinance records, including the qualifying information. (Temple policy will determine which ordinance is effective, but Family Tree will display them all and indicate which are effective.)
- Users can examine the qualifying information to determine whether an ordinance record really belongs to the person that it is attached to.
 - If the ordinance belongs to the person it is attached to, users leave it alone.
 - If the ordinance belongs to someone else, users can request that a system administrator review the ordinance, and if appropriate, attach it to another person.
 - If the ordinance was done for someone who never really existed, users can request that a system administrator detach it.

This ability to attach and detach ordinances will also be helpful if a person's ordinances were done once as a male and once as a female. (In the past, this was an accepted practice in cases where the person's gender was unknown.) Once the person's record contains clear evidence about his or her gender, the ordinances that were done for the wrong gender can be detached.

ORDINANCES AND INAPPROPRIATELY COMBINED RECORDS

Sometimes in new.familysearch.org, records about different people were combined, even though they should not have been. Consequently, the person's record in the Family Tree may contain records of ordinances that were really performed in behalf of another person.

The Family Tree will allow users to fix the combined records. See the whitepaper "Dealing with Duplicate Records of People in Family Tree." The features for attaching and detaching ordinances will be crucial to making sure the right ordinance appears on each record.

CONCLUSION

Ordinances are important for the salvation of our ancestors. Ordinances are done for a specific person. Some ordinances have also been performed using information that was incorrect.

The Family Tree not only provides the ability to correct genealogical information but to also ensure that the temple records will be attached to the people for whom they were intended.

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