



Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs

In accordance with Title I, Canon 7, “Of Business Methods in Church Affairs”, and Resolution D-147 (1979 GC): “Accounting Principles and Practices for Dioceses, Parishes, and Other Congregations”

July 2007

Section B. Internal Control Questionnaire

The following Internal Control Questionnaire is intended to provide guidance for setting up an accounting system and a checklist for periodic review and evaluation of an existing system. The questionnaire is designed also to assist a congregation's internal audit committee. The format is a series of questions, most of which refer to some recommended internal control. The normative answer to a question will be positive. A negative response suggests an area of the system that could be strengthened.

Developing a narrative description is suggested, to provide documentation of the current review. This narrative should be retained for reference in future evaluations.

General: The following items are intended to provide general information to aid understanding of the overall accounting and internal control system.

1. Are prior internal control questionnaires and auditors' recommendations available? Yes No
2. Have recommendations of prior reports on internal controls been implemented? Yes No
3. Is a complete and current chart of accounts, listing all accounts and their respective account numbers, available? Yes No
4. Is there an accounting policy and procedure manual? Yes No
5. Is it up to date? Yes No
6. Is a current edition of this manual available? Yes No
7. Is the accounting system using a double-entry bookkeeping method? Yes No
8. Have the findings of external auditors been reported to the Vestry? Yes No

Budget: The development and use of a budget is a critical management tool that will aid in the stewardship and administration of church resources and program.

1. Is the budget approved by the Vestry? Yes No
2. Are all changes to the budget authorized by the Vestry and Yes No

recorded in the minutes of the meetings?

3. Is there a periodic review of the budget by the Vestry? Yes No

Reporting: The best accounting system is of little value unless it communicates the information it contains to those responsible. Although there may be variations, certain minimum standards exist to assure adequate communication of the financial information.

1. Is a Treasurer's report submitted to the Vestry or accounting committee each month? Yes No
2. Is the Treasurer's report presented in sufficient detail to inform the reader about the nature of the various income and disbursement items? Yes No
3. Does the report present the current actual financial data compared with the approved budget? Yes No
4. Is there periodic reporting, at least quarterly, of all other funds And activities, including designated or restricted funds? Yes No

Cash Receipts: Clearly stated policies and procedures regarding the handling of cash and other receipts help not only to protect from loss, but assure that all receipts are properly recorded in the records.

1. Are there safeguards to protect the collections from theft or misplacement from the time of receipt until the time the funds are counted and deposited? Yes No
2. Are the collection receipts counted and deposited so that the deposit equals the entire amount of receipts on a timely basis, i.e., at least weekly? Yes No
3. Are there at least two unrelated persons responsible for counting and depositing the collections? Yes No
4. Are the persons responsible for counting receipts rotated on a periodic basis? Yes No
5. Do the counters have a standardized form for recording the deposit information? Yes No
6. Are the counters' sheets retained and reconciled with actual deposits, and are all discrepancies investigated? Yes No
7. Is there a control prohibiting the cashing of checks from the currency received? Yes No
8. Are all of the pledge envelopes or other memoranda retained and reconciled to the recorded amounts? Yes No
9. Are all other cash receipts recorded and deposited on a timely basis? Yes No
10. Are all checks received restrictively endorsed "for deposit only" immediately upon receipt? Yes No
11. Are all cash receipts deposited into the general operating checking account? Yes No
12. Are there procedures that will highlight, or bring to someone's attention, the fact that all receipts or income have not been received or recorded? Yes No

13. Are periodic statements provided to donors of record (i.e. at least quarterly)? Yes No
14. Do acknowledgments of contributions in excess of \$250 include a receipt from the recipient organization which states that it is "the contemporaneous acknowledgment required by the Internal Revenue Code, and states that, in accordance with Section 170(F)(8)(B), any goods or services provided consist solely of intangible religious benefits"? Yes No
15. Are all discrepancies investigated? Yes No

Cash Disbursements: The following procedures will assist in assuring that all payments are properly approved, recorded, and supported by appropriate documentation.

1. Are all disbursements made by check, except for small expenditures made from petty cash? Yes No
2. Are all checks pre-numbered and used in sequence? Yes No
3. Is there a clearly defined approval process for all disbursements? Yes No
4. Are all voided checks properly cancelled and retained? Yes No
5. Are all checks payable to specified payees and not to cash or to bearer? Yes No
6. Are all disbursements supported by original documentation? Yes No
7. Is the original vendor's invoice or other documentation cancelled at the time of signature to prevent duplicate payment? Yes No
8. Check signing:
- a. Is signing blank checks prohibited? Yes No
- b. Is using a signature stamp or pre-printed signatures prohibited? Yes No
- c. Does all supporting documentation accompany checks presented for signature? Yes No
- d. Are all account signers required for any check? Yes No
- e. Is more than one signature required for any check? Yes No
- f. If not, do checks for more than \$500 required more than one signature? Yes No
- g. If signature imprint machines are not used, are the keys kept under lock and key except when in use? Yes No
9. Are all disbursements requiring special approval of funding sources or the Vestry properly documented in the Vestry or Finance Committee members? Yes No
10. Are there adequate controls and segregation of duties regarding Electronic Funds Transfers? Yes No

Journal Entries: Journal Entries offer a special opportunity to make adjustments to accounting records. The general journal is an equally important book of original entry as the cash receipts and cash disbursements journals.

1. Is there an appropriate explanation accompanying each journal entry? Yes No
2. Are all journal entries approved by a knowledgeable authority other

- than the person initiating the entry? Yes No
3. Is adequate documentation maintained to support each journal entry? Yes No

Bank Account Reconciliation: The monthly reconciliation of all bank accounts is a primary tool for assuring the proper recording and accounting for all cash account activity.

1. Are all bank accounts reconciled within 10 days of receipt of bank statement? Yes No
2. Do two different people perform the tasks of opening and reconciling the bank statement? Yes No
3. Does someone complete the bank account reconciliations other than the person who participates in the receipt or disbursement of cash? Yes No
4. Do the reconciliation procedures provide for:
 - a. Comparison between the bank statement and the cash receipts journal of dates and amounts of deposits? Yes No
 - b. Investigation of bank transfers to determine that both sides of the transactions have been recorded? Yes No
 - c. Investigation of all bank debit and credit memos? Yes No
 - d. Review of all checks outstanding more than 90 days? Yes No
 - e. Are checks more than 180 days outstanding voided during the year-end reconciliation? Yes No
 - f. Is the bank immediately notified of all changes of authorized check-signers? Yes No
5. Are all journal entries for bank charges and bank account interest recorded routinely? Yes No
6. Are all bank accounts included on financial reports to the Vestry? Yes No

Petty Cash: The following controls are intended to provide a timely recording of cash expenditures in the accounting system.

1. Is the responsibility for the petty cash fund assigned to one person? Yes No
2. Are all petty cash funds maintained on an imprest basis, i.e., the total amount of vouchers paid or disbursed, plus cash, always equal the amount of the fund? Yes No
3. Is adequate review made of documentation before the fund is reimbursed? Yes No
4. Is the petty cash fund reimbursed at least monthly? Yes No
5. Are check cashing and making loans to employees prohibited? Yes No
6. Is the actual petty cash protected from theft or misplacement? Yes No

Investments: Procedures for proper recording and control of all investment instruments will help to assure that all assets and related income are accounted for and properly reported.

1. Are all investment instruments held in the name of the church only? Yes No
2. Is the authorization for the sale and/or purchase of investments provided for by the Vestry or authorized Investment Committee? Yes No

3. Are all investment instruments adequately protected from fire, theft, or misplacement, preferably in custody by a bank, broker or other financial intermediary? Yes No
4. Is the income/dividends/interest recorded? Yes No
5. Are all investment accounts included in financial reports to the Vestry? Yes No

Property and Equipment: Certain procedures involving the physical assets of the church will aid in detecting, identifying and preventing losses.

1. Is formal approval of the Vestry required for all property and equipment additions and dispositions? Yes No
2. Is a detailed inventory of all property, furniture, fixtures, and equipment maintained showing:
 - a. Date acquired? Yes No
 - b. Detailed description? Yes No
 - c. Cost or fair market value at time of donation? Yes No
 - d. Any funding source restrictions? Yes No
3. Is a periodic review conducted to compare the actual property, furniture, and fixtures, and equipment with the recorded inventory listing? Yes No
4. Is there a safe deposit box? Yes No
 - a. Is there an inventory of its contents? Yes No
 - b. Who is authorized to enter it? _____
5. Are permanent records such as articles of incorporation, if applicable, by-laws and real estate deeds kept in a safe place? Yes No
6. Are they up to date? Yes No

Insurance: Insurance should be maintained that is adequate to protect against all reasonable risks of loss.

1. Is there a periodic review conducted to ensure the adequacy of the insurance coverage for:
 - a. Property? Yes No
 - b. Liability? Yes No
 - c. Fidelity Bond? Yes No
 - d. Sexual Misconduct? Yes No
 - e. Directors and Officers Liability? Yes No
 - f. Workers' Compensation? Yes No
2. Is there a policy related to sexual misconduct? Yes No
3. Is there a periodic review conducted to ensure that adequate controls are in place to prevent loss? Yes No

Liabilities and Other Debt: All liabilities and other debt must be clearly reported, and all provisions or restrictions complied with.

1. Is all borrowing or indebtedness authorized by the Vestry and the

- appropriate diocesan board or committee? Yes No
- 2. Are all loan agreements and/or lease agreements in writing and properly safeguarded? Yes No
- 3. Are there periodic reviews conducted to determine compliance with any debt/lease provisions? Yes No
- 4. Are all liabilities noted on Financial Reports to Vestry? Yes No

Restricted Gifts and Income: Gifts restricted by donors are not handled in the same manner as other contributions. Procedures are necessary to assure that these gifts are recorded properly and all restrictions are observed.

- 1. Are records maintained of all bequests, memorials, endowments, or any other restricted gifts to include:
 - a. Date, amount and donor gift? Yes No
 - b. Any restrictions or limitations? Yes No
- 2. Does the Vestry vote to accept all restricted gifts and grants, promising to abide by the restrictions? Yes No
- 3. Are written acknowledgements issued for whom they are required? Yes No

Payroll: The application of policies and procedures involving the employment of individuals assures compliance with payroll tax reporting to the various governmental entities. It is strongly recommended that payroll be processed by a professional service. Questions 3, 4, 5 & 8 are necessary only if payroll is still processed in-house, whether manually or with an in-house computer software program.

- 1. Are personnel files maintained to include:
 - a. Employment application and/or letter of employment? Yes No
 - b. Authorizations of pay rates and effective dates? Yes No
 - c. Internal Revenue Service Form W4? Yes No
 - d. Department of Justice Form I-9? Yes No
 - e. State Withholding Forms? Yes No
 - f. New hire reporting? Yes No
- 2. Is there a written record of hours worked, approved by a Supervisor when applicable? Yes No
- 3. Are there adequate records to:
 - a. Show computation of gross pay? Yes No
 - b. Account for all deductions from gross pay? Yes No
 - c. Support payroll tax returns and Forms W-2? Yes No
- 4. Are payroll tax returns filed on a timely basis? Yes No
- 5. Are Forms 1099 being provided for all individuals who are not employees and for all unincorporated entities paid \$600 or more annually? Yes No
- 6. Are Form W-2 wages reconciled to the general ledger accounts, and all four quarterly payroll tax returns? Yes No
- 7. Are clergy housing allowances recorded in the minutes of the Vestry no later than the first meeting of the year? Yes No

Computer Systems: The use of computers creates the need for additional procedures to safeguard the system and data.

1. Are current or duplicate copies of the operating system and programs maintained off premises? Yes No
2. Is access to the computer and computer programs limited to authorized persons? Yes No
3. Is there adequate documentation, including user manuals, available on-site for all computer programs? Yes No
4. Is there a plan for recovery of data and continuation of operations in the event of a disaster? Yes No