

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **OCT 05 2001**

GOOD MESSAGE FOUNDATION  
1072 S DEANZA BLVD STE 532  
SAN JOSE, CA 95129

Employer Identification Number:  
77-0569956

DLN:  
17053156004011

Contact Person:  
DENNIS SAYERS

ID# 52486

Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31

Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information you supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3). We also determined that you are a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code.

Based on the information you submitted with your application, we have determined that you are likely to qualify as a private operating foundation described in section 4942(j)(3) of the Code. Accordingly, you are treated as a private operating foundation for your first year. After that, you will be treated as a private operating foundation as long as you continue to meet the requirements of section 4942(j)(3).

This ruling satisfies the good faith determination requirement of section 53.4942(b)-3(b)(2) of the Excise Tax Regulations.

If you change your sources of support, your purposes, character, or method of operation, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status and foundation status. If you amend your organizational document or bylaws, please send us a copy of the amended document or bylaws. Also, let us know any changes in your name or address.

As of January 1, 1984, you are liable for social security taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act on amounts of \$100 or more you pay to each of your employees during a calendar year. You are not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA). However, since you are a private foundation, you are subject to excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. You also may be subject to other Federal excise taxes. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other Federal taxes, please let us know.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Letter 1075 (DO/CG)

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Donors may deduct contributions only to the extent their contributions are gifts, with no consideration received. Ticket purchases and similar payments in conjunction with fundraising events may not necessarily qualify as deductible contributions, depending on the circumstances. See Publication 1391, which sets forth guidelines on when payments made by taxpayers for admission to, or other participation in fundraising activities for charity are deductible as charitable contributions.

You are required to file Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Trust Treated as a Private Foundation. Form 990-PF must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your accounting period. A penalty of \$20 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed \$10,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. For organizations with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 in any year, the penalty is \$100 per day per return unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. The maximum penalty for an organization with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 shall not exceed \$50,000. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete, so please be sure your return is complete before you file it.

You are not required to file federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You are required to make certain returns available for public inspection for three years after the later of the due date of the return or the date the return is filed. The returns required to be made available for public inspection are Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Nonexempt Charitable Trust Treated as a Private Foundation, and Form 4720, Return of Certain Excise Taxes on Charities and Other Persons Under Chapters 41 and 42 of the Internal Revenue Code. You are also required to make available for public inspection your exemption application, any supporting documents, and your exemption letter. Copies of these documents must be provided to any individual upon written or in person request without charge other than reasonable fees for copying and postage. You may fulfill this requirement by placing these documents on the Internet. Penalties may be imposed for failure to comply with these requirements. Additional information is available in Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, or you may call our toll free number shown above.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If you did not enter an employer identification number on your application, we will assign a number to you and let you know. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

If we have indicated in the heading of this letter that an addendum

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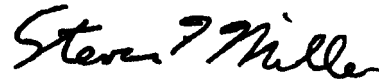
applies, the addendum enclosed is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your exempt status and private foundation status, you should keep it for your records.

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Steven T. Miller  
Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure:  
Addendum

## ***Charitable Contributions - Substantiation and Disclosure Requirements***

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**UNDER THE NEW LAW, CHARITIES WILL NEED TO PROVIDE NEW KINDS OF INFORMATION TO DONORS.** Failure to do so may result in denial of deductions to donors and the imposition of penalties on charities.

Legislation signed into law by the President on August 10, 1993, contains a number of significant provisions affecting tax-exempt charitable organizations described in section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. These provisions include: (1) new substantiation requirements for donors, and (2) new public disclosure requirements for charities (with potential penalties for failing to comply). Additionally, charities should note that donors could be penalized by loss of the deduction if they fail to substantiate. **THE SUBSTANTIATION AND DISCLOSURE PROVISIONS APPLY TO CONTRIBUTIONS MADE AFTER DECEMBER 31, 1993.**

Charities need to familiarize themselves with these tax law changes in order to bring themselves into compliance. This Publication alerts you to the new provisions affecting tax-exempt charitable organizations. Set forth below are brief descriptions of the new law's key provisions. The Internal Revenue Service plans to provide further guidance in the near future.

### ***Donor's Substantiation Requirements***

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**Documenting Certain Charitable Contributions.** — Beginning January 1, 1994, no deduction will be allowed under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code for any charitable contribution of \$250 or more unless the donor has contemporaneous written substantiation from the charity. In cases where the charity has provided goods or services to the donor in exchange for making the contribution, this contemporaneous written acknowledgement must include a good faith estimate of the value of such goods or services. Thus, taxpayers may no longer rely solely on a cancelled check to substantiate a cash contribution of \$250 or more.

The substantiation must be "contemporaneous." That is, it must be obtained by the donor no later than the date the donor actually files a return for the tax year in which the contribution was made. If the return is filed after the due date or extended due date, then the substantiation must have been obtained by the due date or extended due date.

**The responsibility for obtaining this substantiation lies with the donor, who must request it from the charity.** The charity is not required to record or report this information to the IRS on behalf of donors.

The legislation provides that substantiation will not be required if, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary, the charity reports directly to the IRS the information required to be provided in the written substantiation. At present, there are no regulations establishing procedures for direct reporting by charities to the IRS of charitable contributions made in 1994. Consequently, charities and donors should be prepared to provide/obtain the described substantiation for 1994 contributions of \$250 or more.

There is no prescribed format for the written acknowledgement. For example, letters, postcards or computer-generated forms may be acceptable. The acknowledgement does not have to include the donor's social security or tax identification number. It must, however, provide sufficient information to substantiate the amount of the deductible contribution. The acknowledgement should note the amount of any cash contribution. However, if the donation is in the form of property, then the acknowledgement must describe, but need not value, such property. Valuation of the donated property is the responsibility of the donor.

The written substantiation should also note whether the donee organization provided any goods or services in consideration, in whole or in part, for the contribution and, if so, must provide a description and good-faith estimate of the value of the goods or services. In the new law these are referred to as "quid pro quo contributions."

**Please note that there is a new law requiring charities to furnish disclosure statements to donors for such quid pro quo donations in excess of \$75. This is addressed in the next section regarding Disclosure By Charity.**

If the goods or services consist entirely of intangible religious benefits, the statement should indicate this, but the statement need not describe or provide an estimate of the value of these benefits. "Intangible religious benefits" are also discussed in the following section on Disclosure By Charity. If, on the other hand, the donor received nothing in return for the contribution, the written substantiation must so state.

The present law remains in effect that, generally, if the value of an item or group of like items exceeds \$5,000, the donor must obtain a qualified appraisal and submit an appraisal summary with the return claiming the deduction.

The organization may either provide separate statements for each contribution of \$250 or more from a taxpayer, or furnish periodic statements substantiating contributions of \$250 or more.

Separate payments are regarded as independent contributions and are not aggregated for purposes of measuring the \$250 threshold. However, the Service is authorized to establish anti-abuse rules to prevent avoidance of the substantiation requirement by taxpayers writing separate smaller checks on the same date.

If donations are made through payroll deductions, the deduction from each paycheck is regarded as a separate payment.

A charity that knowingly provides false written substantiation to a donor may be subject to the penalties for aiding and abetting an understatement of tax liability under section 6701 of the Code.

### ***Disclosure by Charity of Receipt of Quid Pro Quo Contribution***

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Beginning January 1, 1994, under new section 6115 of the Internal Revenue Code, a charitable organization must provide a written disclosure statement to donors who make a payment, described as a "quid pro quo contribution," in excess of \$75. This requirement is separate from the written substantiation required for deductibility purposes as discussed above. While, in certain circumstances, an organization may be able to meet both requirements with the same written document, an organization must be careful to satisfy the section 6115 written disclosure statement requirement in a timely manner because of the penalties involved.

A quid pro quo contribution is a payment made partly as a contribution and partly for goods or services provided to the donor by the charity. An example of a quid pro quo contribution is where the donor gives a charity \$100 in consideration for a concert ticket valued at \$40. In this example, \$60 would be deductible. Because the donor's payment (quid pro quo contribution) exceeds \$75, the disclosure statement must be furnished, even though the deductible amount does not exceed \$75.

Separate payments of \$75 or less made at different times of the year for separate fund-raising events will not be aggregated for purposes of the \$75 threshold. However, the Service is authorized to develop anti-abuse rules to prevent avoidance of this disclosure requirement in situations such as the writing of multiple checks for the same transaction.

The required written disclosure statement must:

- (1) inform the donor that the amount of the contribution that is de-

ductible for federal income tax purposes is limited to the excess of any money (and the value of any property other than money) contributed by the donor over the value of goods or services provided by the charity, and

- (2) provide the donor with a good-faith estimate of the value of the goods or services that the donor received.

The charity must furnish the statement in connection with either the solicitation or the receipt of the quid pro quo contribution. If the disclosure statement is furnished in connection with a particular solicitation, it is not necessary for the organization to provide another statement when the associated contribution is actually received.

The disclosure must be in writing and must be made in a manner that is reasonably likely to come to the attention of the donor. For example, a disclosure in small print within a larger document might not meet this requirement.

In the following three circumstances, the disclosure statement is not required.

- (1) Where the only goods or services given to a donor meet the standards for "insubstantial value" set out in section 3.01, paragraph 2 of Rev. Ruc. 90-12, 1990-1 C.B. 471, as amplified by section 2.01 of Rev. Proc. 92-49, 1992-1 C.B. 987 (or any updates or revisions thereof);
- (2) Where there is no donative element involved in a particular transaction with a charity, such as in a typical museum gift shop sale.
- (3) Where there is only an intangible religious benefit provided to the donor. The intangible religious benefit must be provided to

the donor by an organization organized exclusively for religious purposes, and must be of a type that generally is not sold in a commercial transaction outside the donative context. An example of an intangible religious benefit would be admission to a religious ceremony. The exception also generally applies to de minimis tangible benefits, such as wine, provided in connection with a religious ceremony. The intangible religious benefit exception, however, does not apply to such items as payments for tuition for education leading to a recognized degree, or for travel services, or consumer goods.

A penalty is imposed on charities that do not meet the disclosure requirements. For failure to make the required disclosure in connection with a quid pro quo contribution of more than \$75, there is a penalty of \$10 per contribution, not to exceed \$5,000 per fundraising event or mailing. The charity may avoid the penalty if it can show that the failure was due to reasonable cause.

**Please note that the prevailing basic rule allowing donor deductions only to the extent that the payment exceeds the fair market value of the goods or services received in return still applies generally to all quid pro quo contributions. The \$75 threshold pertains only to the obligation to disclose and the imposition of the \$10 per contribution penalty, not the rule on deductibility of the payment.**



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