

GuideStar Blog

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Five Year-End Considerations for Nonprofits

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1. We are in the Giving Season! As we approach the end of the calendar year, charitable organizations ask both established and potential donors to make a gift. Many individual donors make the bulk of their charitable gifts in December. Now is the time to ask—you want to end up in the in-box of the right people! Remember also the importance of a “thank you” to donors... for next year. The thank you can be combined with the charitable receipt that the donors will need to support their deductions, another important item on the year-end list. *(Editor’s note: check out GuideStar’s Giving Season Resource Center: <http://npo.gs/givingcenter> (<http://npo.gs/givingcenter>))*

2. Financial Order. December 31 is the end of the year for calendar year organizations. Now is the time to make sure that the organization’s financial books and record-keeping are in order. Smaller organizations that do not have in house accounting staff should check in with their accountants with any questions regarding the financial records. Now is also the time to finalize budgets for the coming year.



3. Corporate Policies. As we reach the end of the year, this is a good

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time for organizations to review Jane Callahan

their corporate policies. Consider

those “yes/no” boxes on the Form

990 regarding corporate policies. The Form 990 asks whether the organization has a conflict of interest policy—and also asks whether the organization monitors compliance with the policy. Two more queries about policies are on the Form 990, regarding a whistle-blower policy and a document retention and destruction policy (a result of Sarbanes-Oxley). Now is a great time to adopt any corporate policies that the organization may need, with the added benefit of being able to check “yes” on the Form 990. The organization also should review (or consider adopting) its investment policy to ensure compliance with state laws regarding management and investment of funds (e.g., UPMIFA).

4. Corporate Actions/Documents. Are the corporate minutes up to date? Has the organization held all meetings for the year as required its Bylaws? If the organization has any loose ends from meetings of its directors during the year, now is a good time to finalize minutes. An overall review of corporate actions and documents as the year draws to a close is a good idea—a review of board elections, officer elections, committee appointments—check the Bylaws for requirements.

5. Finally, in the rush of the holidays, stay focused on your vision!

The preceding is a guest post by *Jane D. Callahan* (<http://www.deanmead.com/deanmead-attorney-profiles/jane-dunlap-callahan/>), a shareholder of the Orlando, Fla.-based law firm of *Dean, Mead, Egerton, Bloodworth, Capouano & Bozarth, P.A* (<http://www.deanmead.com/>).

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