

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

July 26, 2017

Treasurers of Local Spiritual Assemblies, Registered Groups, and Treasurers' Assistants

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We bring you warm greetings and welcome you as the treasurer of your Local Spiritual Assembly, Registered Groups or Treasurers' Assistants! We wish you much joy on the path of service to the institution of the Fund, the life-blood of the Cause, and thank you for your deeply valued services as a steward of the Funds of the Faith.

The Office of the Treasurer has developed a variety of materials and resources. Below is an outline of steps you can take to fulfill these sacred duties.

We recommend as your first step, to watch a recording of the Welcome Webinar for treasurers, which can be found [here](#). This gives a visual and verbal overview of what is required in the stewardship of the Funds.

Fund Education

- 1) Fund education is essentially a process of helping the friends fall in love with Bahá'u'lláh, the Faith and His institutions. A good first step is to consult with the Assembly and reflect on where the community is at, what they need to know about the vision of the Assembly, and what will inspire greater levels of love.
- 2) Make sure you are receiving the *Bahá'í Treasurers Bulletin* (BTB), a Bahá'í monthly email communication from the Office of the Treasurer that includes the Treasurers Notes, a 1-page printable resource with news, updates, stories, and quotes. If you aren't receiving the BTB, visit [here](#) to subscribe and visit bahaitreasurer.us to view the latest edition.
- 3) Become familiar with *Sacred Trust* and use it regularly as a resource for consultations with your Assembly and educating the believers in your community. This e-book can be found on american.bahai.us under 'Forms & Manuals->Treasurer's Tools'.
- 4) Encourage the friends to *say the Fund prayer and use the Online Contribution Systems (OCS)*, which has been shown to both increase participation and encourage a direct relationship with each of the Funds of the Faith.

Training

- 1) Attend a Fund Empowerment Workshop in your area along with as many members of your Assembly or Group as can attend. These workshops are for new and veteran treasurers, their fellow Assembly or Group members, and Treasurers' Assistants. *Watch for an invitation to a training in your area.*
- 2) Stay tuned for future webinars hosted by the Office of the Treasurer that cover topics ranging from where the money goes, to Planned Giving, to the Local Fund Online.

Financial Stewardship

- 1) If you are a new treasurer make sure you secure the following materials:
 - a) Past financial records – make sure they are stored in a secure location
 - i) Collect the records from the former treasurer. Until you get the records, begin keeping a cash journal of your own. A cash journal is a complete record of all transactions (both coming to your treasury and generated out of your treasury.) The cash journal can be kept on paper or on the computer. Some treasurers use Excel, Quicken, or QuickBooks.
 - b) Bank account information – including signatories on file with the bank
 - i) Become an official check signer on your community's bank account. Usually this requires a trip to the bank with another check signer (including the former treasurer) to show proof of your identity and to add your name to the list of official check signers. There should be at least 2 people authorized to sign on all accounts.
 - c) Checkbook
 - d) Receipt book
 - e) Community fund box(es)
- 2) Please remind the friends, when they are sending in checks for the National Fund and other Funds, to include their Bahá'í ID number.
- 3) Review the Online Contribution System (OCS) account – as treasurer you have access to the 'My Locality' tab within the OCS system which allows you to contribute to the various Funds on behalf of your local institution.
 - a) To access OCS you need a Bahá'í Online Services account. If you don't already have a Bahá'í Online Services password, please register at american.bahai.us. Then, when you sign in, go to the website bahai.us/fund to use OCS (contribute button.) You will have access to your own and your community's records. Remember, you only need to sign yourself in. Once in, there are two sets of records (yours and your locality.)
 - b) If you would like information or assistance in accessing the system or if you have not previously used OCS, please feel free to contact the Office of the Treasurer.
 - c) Enroll in the Local Fund Online if you have not already done so, which allows the friends in your community to contribute to the Local Fund using OCS. Go to: localocs.bahai.us
 - d) The Office of the Treasurer can receive contributions through OCS only for those Funds currently listed in OCS, including your own Local Spiritual Assembly if registered, and up to three additional LSAs. For other Funds not listed in OCS, please send your requests to the Office of the Treasurer, 1233 Central St., Evanston, IL 60201, or contact us by emailing finance@usbnc.org
 - e) When contacting the Office of the Treasurer, please make sure to provide your Locality number on all correspondence.
- 4) Check on the status of recent audits. Audits are due by **July 31** for the fiscal year just ended.
 - a) For an **audit form**, visit american.bahai.us->Forms & Manuals->Treasurer's Tools. Under "Accounting" you will find the various financial forms needed for your work.
 - b) Please make sure your Assembly or Registered Group keeps a copy of last year's audit report and uses it to implement any recommendations from the auditors.

- c) If the audit was not done for the previous fiscal year, kindly start the process as soon as possible. Appoint two auditors and provide all of the records to the auditors.
- 5) Balance the accounts every month. It is easier to catch an error now than later.
- 6) For contributions made by cash or check, some treasurers give a receipt after each contribution, and some send them once a year. Receipts should be in the donor's hands as soon after the new year (January 1) as possible, so working ahead of time is usually necessary. Online contributions through OCS are receipted automatically.
- 7) Fundraising information:
 - a) Please refer to the following link for a *Fundraising Packet* of information to assist you with fundraisers: american.bahai.us->Forms & Manuals->Treasurer's Tools under the Fundraising Packet heading.
- 8) If your Assembly hasn't had a chance to *develop a budget*, we would like to encourage you to do so at the Assembly's earliest convenience. If one has already been established, some Assemblies find it useful to review it with the new Assembly.
- 9) New to OCS is the LSA Fund view feature allowing all members of your Assembly to have access to various reports for your Local Spiritual Assembly, and seeing contributions made to the Funds of the Faith, including online contributions to your Local Fund. Only the treasurer can see specific contributor's information to preserve confidentiality. This allows all members to review contributions made to your locality.
- 10) For *Registered Groups*, please visit elections.bahai.us and look under "Registered Groups" at the bottom of the page for more guidance specifically for Registered Groups.

This fiscal year the National Spiritual Assembly has decided to increase the National Fund goal to \$36 million, which is to be reached by April 30, 2018. After the successes of the past year, where more was contributed than ever before, we are sure this goal can be achieved with your valued and capable support. We humbly request that each Local Assembly and Registered Group prayerfully considers increasing their gifts to the National Fund if it is appropriate within the goals of your community.

If you have any questions, feedback or concerns please contact us at finance@usbnc.org or 847-733-3472

We wish you many confirmations in your service and assure you of our ready support.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Office of the Treasurer