

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

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

June 22, 2018

Treasurers and Treasurer Assistants of Local Spiritual Assemblies and Registered Groups

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We bring you warm greetings and welcome you as the Treasurer of your Local Spiritual Assembly or Registered Group! May there be much joy on the path of service to the institution of the Fund, the life-blood of the Cause. We are thanking you in advance for your deeply valued service as a steward of the Funds of the Faith.

There are two sacred duties that each Treasurer must strive to carry out: trustworthy stewardship of the Funds of the Faith and educating the community about the spiritual rewards and responsibilities related to contributing to the Funds. Addressing Fund education, the Universal House of Justice has written that,

While the friends have the sacred obligation and privilege to contribute to the Fund, each Local and National Assembly also has the inescapable duty of educating itself and the believers in the spiritual principles related to Bahá'í contributions...

The Office of the Treasurer is full-heartedly working to ensure you achieve these goals and has developed a variety of materials and resources to aid and assist you. Below is an outline of steps you can take to fulfill these sacred duties as well as noteworthy occasions you should make note of.

Important Dates

- 1) Audits are **due by July 31** for the fiscal year just ended. (Please refer to the section under **Audits** below)
- 2) **Welcome Webinars** are scheduled to familiarize you with your role as a local Treasurer. *To register for one of these webinar sessions, click the date below:*

[Monday, July 16](#)

2 – 3 pm Central Time

[Wednesday, July 18](#)

12 – 1 pm Central Time

[Monday, July 23](#)

2 - 3 pm Central Time

- 3) **National Treasurers' Forum, September 20-22**, in Evanston, IL. An informative and inspirational 3-day event with plenaries and workshops, we encourage LSA Treasurers and their Assistants to attend. Please contact bahaitreasurersoffice@usbnc.org if you have not already received our invitation or you would like to register for this exceptional event.

Fund Education

- 1) Fund education brings the heart to mind and the mind to heart such that 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 members need to know about your vision, 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 to share at Feast. If you are not receiving the BTB, please contact our office at bahaitreasurersoffice@usbnc.org. Visit bahaitreasurer.us to view the latest edition.
- 3) Become familiar with *Sacred Trust*, an e-book found on bahai.us, and refer to it often for clarity on procedural obligations, spiritual requirements, consultation with your Assembly and the occasion to educate the believers in your community. Located under Forms & Manuals, click Treasurer's Tools, click **Sacred Trust (PDF)** under the 'General' heading.
- 4) Encourage the friends to say the Prayer for the Bahá'í Fund and use the Online Contribution System (OCS) which has been shown to both increase participation and encourage a direct relationship with each of the Funds of the Faith.
- 5) Remind the friends of the various occasions to contribute to the Funds of the Faith by sharing the suggestion of 'In Memory' contributions for those who have *passed* on to the Abhá Kingdom and 'In Honor' cards for special occasions celebrating childbirth and birthdays, anniversaries, graduations and like milestones, healing, Holy Days and more.

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, QuickBooks or similar accounting resources.
- b) Bank account information – including signatories on file with the bank
 - i) Become an official check signer on your community's bank account. This will require 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. At least 2 people should be authorized to sign on all accounts.
 - c) Checkbook
 - d) Receipt book
 - e) Community fund box(es) for Feast, if available
 - 2) Please remind the friends to include their Bahá'í ID number when they are sending in checks for the National Fund and other Funds.
 - 3) Establish good accounting procedures. Balance the accounts every month. We have found it is easier to catch an error sooner rather than later.
 - 4) For contributions made by cash or check, some Treasurers provide a receipt after each contribution, some send them once a year. An account of yearly receipts should be in the donor's hands as soon after the new year (January 1) as possible. Working ahead of time may become necessary. Online contributions through the Online Contribution System are receipted automatically.
 - 5) If your Assembly hasn't had an opportunity to develop a budget, we encourage you to do so at the Assembly's earliest convenience. If a budget has already been established, some Assemblies find it useful to review it with the new Assembly. Note: It is no longer necessary to submit a copy of your local Assembly's budget to the National Spiritual Assembly.
 - 6) The Corresponding Secretary will also receive copies of all correspondence and receipts related to the treasury function. The National Spiritual Assembly established this policy as a protection for both the Assembly and the Treasurer.
 - 7) For Registered Groups, please visit elections.bahai.us and look for "Registered Groups" at the bottom of the page for more guidance specifically for Groups.

Online Contribution System

Make certain your Secretary records the Officer Election results in eMembership or mails the outcome to the Membership Office at the Bahá'í National Center. Once these results are recorded, you are automatically given the privilege of being an Online Contribution System (OCS) Treasurer. This means you can use the OCS to view the contributions your Local Assembly has given to the National Fund and generate reporting to show this.

- a) If you don't already have a Bahá'í Online Services password, please register using your Bahá'í ID number and last name at bahai.us/community. This is required to access your LSA account as well as your own personal account.
- b) Review the Online Contribution System (OCS) account. As Treasurer, you have access to your own personal account (Member) and your locality's (My Locality) tab which allows you to contribute to the various Funds on behalf of your local institution. Remember, you only need to sign yourself in as a Member. Once in, there are two sets of records (yours and your locality.)
- c) To allow the friends in your community to contribute online to your community's Local Fund, your locality must be enrolled in OCS. You can do this by downloading the form, **LSA Application Enrollment in OCS**, found on the website under Forms and Manuals on the front page, then click Treasurer's Tools, under General.

Audits

Check on the status of recent audits and ensure all previous-year records have been submitted. Audits are due by **July 31** for the fiscal year just ended.

- a) For an **Audit form**, visit our Bahá'í website at bahai.us/community. Click **Forms & Manuals**, then **Treasurer's Tools** at the bottom of the page. Under "Accounting" you will find the Audit Worksheet and other supporting audit documents needed for this task.
- b) Make sure your Assembly keeps a copy of last year's audit report and uses it to implement any recommendations that may have come 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 them the necessary records. There is no requirement that Registered Groups furnish an Audit.

Fundraising Information

Presentations, video links and various compilations on the Writings in regards to the practice of fundraising for the Funds of the Faith can be found online at bahai.us/community, click Forms & Manuals, click Treasurer's Tools and refer to the header, Fundraising Packet.

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 and their fellow Assembly or Group members.

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.

As you may know by now, this fiscal year the National Spiritual Assembly decided to increase the National Fund goal to \$38 million—which is to be reached by April 30, 2019. After the successes of the past years where more monies were contributed than ever before, we are certain this goal can be achieved with your valued and capable support. If it is appropriate within the goals of your community, we humbly request that each Local Assembly and Registered Group prayerfully consider increasing their gifts to the National Fund. Your monies generate efforts to bring receptive souls under the sheltering shadow of this Revelation and are surely bringing light upon light into this world and the next. We thank you for your part in this.

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

May Bahá'u'lláh confirm your every effort to serve His Mighty Cause. We wish you many confirmations in your service and assure you of our ready support.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Office of the Treasurer

Prayer for the Bahá'í Fund

O God, my God! Illumine the brows of Thy true lovers, and support them with angelic hosts of certain triumph. Set firm their feet on Thy straight path, and out of Thine ancient bounty open before them the portals of Thy blessings; for they are expending on Thy pathway what Thou hast bestowed upon them, safeguarding Thy Faith, putting their trust in their remembrance of Thee, offering up their hearts for love of Thee, and withholding not what they possess in adoration for Thy Beauty and in their search for ways to please Thee.

O my Lord! Ordain for them a plenteous share, a destined recompense and sure reward.

Verily, Thou art the Sustainer, the Helper, the Generous, the Bountiful, the Ever-Bestowing.

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá