



Your Chapter's Financial Integrity

Financial Procedures for Missouri DeMolay Chapters

Responsibility

The **Advisory Council** is responsible for the Chapter's financial standing and conduct of its business, but the Advisory Council should **involve the young men** of the Chapter in the financial activities as much as possible. Take advantage of this opportunity to teach fiscal responsibility, budgeting, simple accounting and other special skills not taught in other organizations. The Advisory Council is required to observe the Rules and Regulations of DeMolay International (hereinafter referred to as "the Rules and Regulations") in the conduct of the financial business of the Chapter. Particular attention should be paid to Sections 322.1 through 322.10.

Theft of Chapter Funds!

*"This could never happen in **OUR** Chapter!"* That's what any Advisory Council would say or think, prior to experiencing a theft by a member or an Advisor. And it has happened more often than we would like to admit. The amounts in many Jurisdictions have ranged from \$5.00 all the way up to \$20,000.00, and all by men and boys who were trusted without question. This is not to say that you can't trust anybody, or that you should mistrust everyone. But the wise advice is that you follow the policies and procedures established, not to offend those whom we trust, but simply to act as a deterrent to those we should **not** trust. If you follow these guidelines, you will decrease the probability of theft, and you should never have to face the unpleasant task of filing legal or fraternal charges against an errant Brother. The most common errors involve mishandling of cash, allowing only one person to sign checks or make withdrawals, and forgery. Following these procedures will protect your Chapter from these errors. If you are an officer charged with these responsibilities, you should **insist** that the Chapter follow these procedures for the protection of your own reputation.

Audits are a Must!

All funds of a DeMolay Chapter, its Advisory Council, and its appendant organizations must be carefully handled, and **annually audited**. A good

system of record keeping can make the audit job very simple next year. Every Chapter **must** appoint an annual Audit Committee of members and advisors to prepare the Annual Financial Report. The Chapter Scribe and Treasurer, as well as the Scribe Advisor and the Treasurer Advisor should be present for the audit to explain what was done and to answer questions, *but they should not be members of the committee*. The purpose of the audit is to review all accounts, transactions and procedures to verify that all expenses were legitimate and to assure that the Rules and Regulations of DeMolay International were followed. The audit committee is to complete the Annual Financial Report and submit it before the deadline established by the Executive Officer. These guidelines will help you establish good financial records for your Chapter.

Establishing Accounts

Before you establish any accounts, be sure you know your Chapter's Federal Tax Identification Number. If you are not sure of the number, contact the Executive Director and he will provide the number on file. If you are starting a new Chapter, you will need to file IRS Form SS4 in order to receive a number. The form is very simple, and will only take a few minutes to complete. You will be filing as a non-profit organization, and will need to note that the GEN Number for DeMolay International is 8160. You will need this number before a bank will allow you to establish any account. **DO NOT** establish an account with **YOUR PERSONAL** Social Security Number. The bank will report all interest income to the account directly to the IRS. If your SS# is attached to the Chapter's account, you will be liable to pay income tax on interest income. Even worse, if discovered, you may be required to pay a penalty for failing to report this income on your own income tax statement! Be sure to apply for Non-Profit Organization consideration by the banking institutions you deal with, to eliminate or cut the cost of account maintenance fees. If a bank will not provide you with that advantage, shop around! Also, look for interest-bearing accounts.

- **Checking Account:** This is a **MANDATORY ACCOUNT** for current operating funds. **ALL** expenses of the Chapter should be paid by Chapter check, and not through personal or business accounts.
- **Savings Account:** A general savings account is optional, but highly recommended. This can be for excess operating funds, or to hold funds that will be paid out for other purposes.

- **Life Membership Account:** This is a **MANDATORY ACCOUNT**, unless the Advisory Council has chosen to use the Permanent Fund Option, described in the next paragraph. A Life Membership Account is like a pre-paid annual dues account, for deposit of funds designated for that purpose. The monies in the Life Membership Account may be withdrawn only as allocated by the plan to prorate portions of the fund to be returned to the general fund checking account. This plan is to be approved by the Executive Officer. Its purpose is to provide an annual supplement to the Chapter funds to cover the annual financial obligations of the Chapter. This is just as if the members had paid annual dues in advance, and you were withdrawing enough money to cover them for that one year.
- **The Permanent Fund Option:** The Executive Officer has also authorized the establishment of Permanent Fund. In lieu of a Life Membership Account, you may establish a Permanent Fund, with the minimum amount of \$1,000.00, which will generate interest to pay some of the Chapter's annual obligations, (e.g. Insurance, Dues, Rent, etc.) A Permanent Fund also provides for the financial security of the Chapter. The Chapter may borrow from the Permanent Fund, with the stipulation that all income to the Chapter must then be used to replenish the Permanent Fund before being used for entertainment and activity expenses.

Initiation Fees

The initiation fee a Chapter charges must take into account the fees immediately payable to DeMolay International and annual costs to the Chapter, such as insurance premiums. The fee must be the same for everyone within your particular Chapter, so you will need to establish a fee which would cover a member's expenses during his nine years of active membership (years 12-20). This fee is a part of the Chapter bylaws, and must be voted on and approved by the Chapter members.

Signatures

At least two authorized signatures are required for each check or withdrawal from any account held by the Chapter. This is to assure that only authorized expenses are paid by the Chapter. If a member or Advisor accepts the responsibility for signing checks, they are agreeing not to sign any checks except for those which were legally authorized by vote of the members for payment. DeMolay International approves the

following options for account signatures authorizing transfer or payment of bills:

- a. Treasurer **or** Master Councilor, **and** an Advisor, or
- b. Treasurer **and** two Advisors.

As a general rule, it is not advisable to permit two members of the same family to sign checks, whether for Chapter funds or other accounts held by any of its subsidiary units, such as a Parents' Club, Chevalier Court or Advisory Council. For such organizations, the authorized signatures should be a combination of at least two of the officers. A third optional signature on the account should be the Chairman of the Advisory Council. **Blank checks must NEVER be signed before the payee and amount is inserted.**

Segregation of Duties

It is advisable to segregate the duties of various officers to provide additional checks and balances against unauthorized payments. While it is authorized, the use of a Scribe/Treasurer provides one less level of safety for your Chapter funds. One of the best safeguards is to have the monthly bank statements sent to someone other than the treasurer or adult leader who writes the checks (most often these are sent to the Chairman of the Advisory Council). This provides an opportunity to review disbursements and deposits on a monthly basis, and to question unusual payment or deposit amounts. It is important that this review be completed upon arrival of the statement so that it can be turned over to the Treasurer and the books balanced each month.

Handling Monies

All monies are received by the Scribe. The Scribe writes a duplicate receipt, keeping one copy for his records, and giving the original to the person who turned in money to him. The Scribe then turns all monies over to the Treasurer, with an accounting of the sources of those funds for deposit. The Treasurer, in turn, gives a receipt to the Scribe for the total amount turned over. The Scribe and Treasurer both enter the amount of the receipts in the Receipts portion of the ledger, but the Scribe's entries will detail each amount, while the Treasurer's entries will only reflect total amounts.

Expenses incurred on behalf of the Chapter must be authorized in advance. Perhaps you won't know exact amounts, but the Chapter should approve an approximate expenditure, either by the approval of a

term budget or at the request of committees on a project-by-project basis. Without this approval, you face the prospect of being presented a bill that far exceeds the resources or the intentions of the Chapter membership. The Chapter has the right to reject payment of any bill for services or supplies it did not authorize in advance. However, if the Chapter has not established the practice of authorizing expenses, it is fully liable for all expenses incurred in good faith, on its behalf, by its officers or Advisors, and must pay creditors so as to avoid a bad reputation for not paying its obligations.

A bill to be paid, which must be evidenced by a receipt, is presented at a regular meeting of the Chapter and voted on. If the Chapter votes to pay the bill, the Scribe will write a voucher, sign it, and have it signed by the Master Councilor. The voucher instructs the Treasurer to write the check, and tells him the amount, and to whom to make it payable. The Treasurer gets the appropriate signatures, and gives the check to the Scribe for mailing or distribution.

Financial Reports

The Treasurer should give a complete report of financial activities at each meeting, and the Advisory Council should review the status of the funds at each Advisory Council meeting. The financial advisor should work with the Scribe and Treasurer to make sure they are keeping accurate and neat records. Check their work often and use this unique opportunity to teach fiscal responsibility to the Chapter Officers as well as to the individual Chapter members. **Annual Financial Reports** are due March 15 annually to the Executive Officer. The Advisory Council **MUST NOT KEEP KNOWLEDGE OF CHAPTER FUNDS FROM THE MEMBERS.** The practice of keeping secret funds, or investments of which the Chapter has no knowledge, will not be tolerated.

Fidelity Bond

The Scribe, Treasurer and all Advisors given responsibility for funds of the Chapter should be bonded by an approved insurance company. The present policy provided through DeMolay International is designed to cover losses exceeding \$5,000.00 from theft, mismanagement or embezzlement, **so long as the proper safeguards, such as described in this document, have been followed.** ALL THEFT from DeMolay Chapters **MUST** immediately be reported to the Executive Officer upon discovery, who will provide direction for recovery of all losses.

Budget

The Chapter's books shall be set up on a calendar year basis. **Each Chapter must develop a budget** and work within the confines of the expected income and expense established by the budget committee. The Advisory Council may alter the budget as needed, but the Chapter should be aware of the budgeting process, again, as a learning opportunity. Refined budgeting can be done for each term, and the Chapter officers should be taught how to perform this exercise, but an annual budget is required at the beginning of each calendar year.

Cash Advances

Cash advances may be issued. They must be authorized and compared to budgeted expenses. Committee Advisors should be involved in supervising finances, and an activity report must be filed with the Advisory Council. **Receipts must prove expenses or cash must be returned.** Only by using a budget can you afford the luxury of authorizing maximum expenditures on a project and working with cash advances. *This prevents Advisors, DeMolays and parents from putting money out of their own funds to cover authorized expenses.* For example, the Entertainment Committee plans a dance, expecting \$500.00 income and \$400.00 expense. The budgeted expense of \$400.00 can be authorized as an allocation to the Chairman or the Advisor of the committee at the proper time, so that he may purchase refreshments and decorations, and pay for the disc jockey or the band. At the meeting following the dance, he would make a detailed report, submit all receipts and remaining cash. If the Committee runs out of money, or desires to exceed the budgeted amount, the Committee would be required to return to the Chapter and request additional funding.

Almoner's Fund

Chapters traditionally maintain an Almoner's Fund, or a charitable fund of the Chapter supported by money collected through fund-raising and voluntary donations at Stated Meetings. Chapters set aside this money for charitable purposes, sending flowers and get-well cards, and the like. Chapters are permitted to set a "box of fraternal assistance" or a collection basket out at Installations and other public functions to take donations to the Almoner's Fund, as long as there is a card or announcement that all donations will be used for charity and relief. **HOWEVER, CHAPTERS ARE PROHIBITED FROM PASSING**

ANYTHING THROUGH THE CROWD TO TAKE UP A COLLECTION. (This practice, perpetuated in other organizations, is not appreciated by family and visitors, and is the source of severe public criticism against our Order; hence it must cease immediately.) The money collected should be turned over to the Scribe and may be kept, either as a separate account, or as a line item in the Chapter's operating fund. It must not be kept in cash.

Appendant Organization Funds

Parents' Clubs, Chevalier Courts, Legion of Honor Preceptories and other appendant organizations are permitted to have their own funds, if necessary to their effective operation. All such funds must be operated in accordance with the rules and regulations of DeMolay International, and these guidelines. In the case of Parents' Clubs, the Chapter Advisory Council must review and approve the annual audit, which will then be included as a part of the Chapter's annual Financial Statement to the Executive Officer. Chevalier Courts and Legion of Honor Preceptories must submit their annual Financial Statements directly to the Executive Officer. In all cases, these organizations must either use their own accounts, or deposit and expend their funds through an affiliated DeMolay Chapter. **IN NO CASE SHOULD A PERSONAL ACCOUNT BE USED FOR THE DEPOSIT OR EXPENDITURE OF ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDS.**

Advisory Council Funds

Some Advisory Councils deem it advisable to handle its expenses through a separate fund. This is not necessary, but it is permitted. If the Advisory Council's expenses can be anticipated and budgeted, they can be worked into the regular budget of the Chapter, and the Secretary of the Advisory Council can receive a cash advance from the Treasurer. Normal rules governing Chapter Funds apply to the Advisory Council in this case.

Designated Funds

➤ **DeMolay International Funds** are those fees due DeMolay International, such as initiation fees and Advisory Council Registration costs. These need not be voted on by the Chapter, since their payment is mandatory, and they must be paid on time. Cost for items purchased from the supplies department (presently called the DeMolay and More Store) of DeMolay International are **NOT** in this

- category since it is not mandatory to purchase these items. Honors fees are **NOT** mandatory; these expenses must be approved by the Chapter, without specifying the name of the honorees, of course. This is an expense that is often handled through an Advisory Council fund.
- **State Funds** are those fees due to Missouri DeMolay for Insurance Premiums, Life Membership Assessments and for Dues, or any other contributions as mandated by the Executive Officer. These need not be voted on by the Chapter, since their payment is mandatory, and they must be paid on time.
 - **Equipment/Regalia Funds** are encouraged for all Chapters, to set money aside to be used to upgrade, repair and replace the Chapter's regalia. DeMolay costumes, capes, jewelry and props must be maintained to give a good impression to candidates.

Fund Growth

Please be aware that while financial stability and self-sufficiency is highly desired for a DeMolay Chapter, fund growth is not the primary goal. **Money is not to be accumulated without a purpose.** A Chapter that has thousands of dollars in the bank, but only a few members participating, is not being responsibly supervised. Money is to be used for the good of the Chapter, within the simple guidelines of DeMolay International.

Investments

By vote of the Chapter and with the approval of the Advisory Council, surplus funds may be invested in stocks, bonds, mutual funds, certificates of deposit or adequately secured loans; provided that each separate investment must ultimately be approved by two-thirds vote of all members of the Advisory Council. Be sure you know what you are doing if you decide to invest in risk-oriented instruments. They don't all make money!

Fund Raising

Chapters are to conduct fund-raisers in which the members participate and actively earn money to pay for their activities. Chapters are discouraged from soliciting donations from Masonic Organizations in order to meet routine expenses. Chapters may conduct any fund-raiser permitted by the law of the land, the laws of the Grand Lodge of Missouri, the Rules and Regulations of DeMolay International, and which meet the moral and ethical standards of the Order of DeMolay.

Fundraisers such as meals, sale of foods and household items, physical (but non-dangerous) labor such as landscaping and housecleaning, traffic control, catering, etc. are normal fund-raising projects for DeMolay Chapters. Chapters should avoid working in any environment where alcoholic beverages are served. *A basic rule of thumb: when in doubt, contact the Executive Director, Director of Finance or Executive Officer for guidance.*

Important I.R.S. Information

DeMolay Chapters operate under a blanket exemption issued to The International Supreme Council, Order of DeMolay as a 501(c)(10) fraternal organization, and to DeMolay International, as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. This means that we are exempt from paying Federal Income Tax, but we must file individual Chapter reports, if requested by the IRS. If your Chapter's gross income normally exceeds \$25,000.00, you **MUST** file a Form 990EZ. If the IRS sends you a notice indicating that you have not yet filed a Form 990, and it will begin to assess penalties, **DO NOT PANIC**. There is usually a short tear-off sheet attached to the notice in which you only need to indicate that the Chapter's Gross Income did not exceed \$25,000.00. However, **YOU MUST FILE A RESPONSE TO THIS LETTER**, or there may be penalties assessed! When in doubt, contact the Executive Director, Director of Finance, or Executive Officer immediately.

Receipt of Contributions

Donors to your Chapter may naturally assume that they are giving to a charity, and therefore may take a tax deduction for their contribution. Chapters are reminded that the IRS Code states that **donors may deduct** contributions to our organization, **only if** the contributed funds are to be **used exclusively** for the purposes of the organization and do not inure to the benefit of specific individuals directed by the donor. This no longer precludes many normal Chapter expenses, such as postage, printing, refreshments, educational workshops, public speaking competitions, and similar activities at the State Conclave or the Leadership Training Conference, and other state programs. However, it is unethical for a Chapter to take a contribution for something like a scholarship, directed for the benefit of specified individual members and to provide a receipt as a charitable contribution. Such a directed contribution does not qualify as a charitable deduction for the donor, and it is illegal for us to represent it in that way. The **burden of proof** concerning the use of such

contributions is on your Advisory Council, and not on the donor. You should be very careful when doing anything that involves the IRS. If your Chapter has received donations from individuals who RESTRICT the use of the money in any way, and who specify that they are expecting tax benefits, you are to report such to the Executive Officer immediately, along with a statement as to how the restrictions will be observed by the Chapter. Please be aware that when donors and Estates report such contributions to the IRS, it may trigger an IRS inquiry and/or an audit of your Chapter's financial activities. **EVERY CHAPTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL SHOULD ALREADY HAVE A COPY OF THE DEMOLAY INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO 501(c)(3) REGULATIONS, WHICH SHOULD BE FOLLOWED CAREFULLY.** For questions or additional copies of these guidelines, contact the Executive Director, Director of Finance or the Executive Officer.

Tax Deductibility of Un-Reimbursed Expenses

Advisors are cautioned that un-reimbursed personal expenses incurred in service to DeMolay, such as mileage and other expenses, may not be automatically deductible contributions when computing Federal Income Tax. Expenses, which meet the mission of the Order of DeMolay, *may* qualify, **if properly substantiated**, in accordance with a determination letter issued by the IRS establishing DeMolay International as a 501(c)(3) organization. However, there is no recent test or ruling available relating specifically to the Order of DeMolay to substantiate this interpretation. If you have been deducting such expenses in the past **YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO CAREFULLY DISCUSS THIS PRACTICE WITH YOUR TAX ADVISOR.** In order to substantiate the value of services rendered, the Advisory Council Chairman would be responsible for issuing a statement from the Chapter that contains a description of the services provided, and a statement of how they help meet the core mission of the Order. There are specific regulations concerning the issuance of such statements that must be observed; therefore, any Advisory Council Chairman issuing statements of receipt of money or services contributed for deductible purposes **MUST** file a copy with the Executive Director, Director of Finance and Executive Officer.

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