

**RULES
OF
THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF BUSINESS AND CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS**

**CHAPTER 1360-03-01
REGULATION OF THE SOLICITATION OF FUNDS
FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES**

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1360-03-01-.01 DEFINITIONS.

- (1) Terms defined in the Charitable Solicitations Act, T.C.A. §§ 48-101-501 et seq. shall have the same meaning for the purpose of these rules and definitions in these rules shall apply to T.C.A §§ 48-101-501 et seq.
- (2) "The Act" shall mean the Charitable Solicitations Act.
- (3) "Branch" or "Affiliate" shall mean a subordinate organization, which is a chapter, local, post, or unit of a central organization. A central organization may be a subordinate itself, such as a state organization that has subordinate units and is itself affiliated with a national organization. A subordinate organization may or may not be incorporated, but it must have an organizing document. A subordinate that is organized and operated in a foreign country may not be included in a group exemption letter. A subordinate organization classified by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)(3) may not be included in a group exemption letter if it is a private foundation described as 509(a).
- (4) "Fundraising Costs" shall mean the total expenses incurred in soliciting contributions including, but not limited to, costs incurred: publicizing and conducting fundraising campaigns; soliciting bequests and grants from foundations or other organizations, or government grants; participating in federated fundraising campaigns; preparing and distributing fundraising manuals, instructions, and other materials; and conducting special events that generate contributions.
- (5) "Gross Contributions" shall mean all contributions received by an organization including, but not limited to: all donated items; all funds or the entire value of noncash items raised by an outside fundraiser in a charity's name and not just the amount actually received by the charity; amounts received from individuals, trusts, corporations, estates, and foundations, or raised by an outside professional fundraiser; and contributions and grants from public charities and other exempt organizations that are neither fundraising organizations nor affiliates of the filing organization.
- (6) "Membership" shall mean a status applied upon condition of the payment of fees, dues, assessments, etc., in an organization which provides services and confers a bona fide right, privilege, professional standing, honor or other direct benefit, in addition to the right to vote, elect officers, or hold offices. The term "membership" shall not include those persons who are granted a membership upon making a contribution.

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- (7) "Parent" shall mean a central organization, which is an organization that has one or more subordinates under its general supervision or control.
- (8) "The Public" shall mean individuals, trusts, corporations, estates, foundations, public charities, other exempt organizations that are neither fundraising organizations nor affiliates of the filing organization, and outside professional fundraisers.
- (9) "Interactive website" is a website that permits a contributor to make a contribution, or purchase a product in connection with a charitable solicitation, by electronically completing the transaction, such as by submitting credit card information or authorizing an electronic funds transfer. Interactive sites include sites through which a donor may complete a transaction online through any online mechanism processing a financial transaction even if completion requires the use of linked or redirected sites.
- (10) "Specifically target persons physically located in the state for solicitation" means to either (i) include on its website an express or implied reference to soliciting contributions from that state; or (ii) to otherwise affirmatively appeal to residents of the state, such as by advertising or sending messages to persons located in the state (electronically or otherwise) when the entity knows or reasonably should know the recipient is physically located in the state. Charities operating on a purely local basis, or within a limited geographic area, do not target states outside their operating area, if their website makes clear in context that their fundraising focus is limited to that area even if they receive contributions from outside that area on less than a repeated and ongoing basis or on a substantial basis.
- (11) "Receive contributions from the state on a repeated and ongoing basis or a substantial basis" means receiving contributions within the entity's fiscal year, or relevant portion of a fiscal year, that are of sufficient volume to establish the regular or significant (as opposed to rare, isolated, or insubstantial) nature of those contributions. An entity receives contributions on a repeated and ongoing basis if it receives at least one hundred online contributions at any time in a year. It receives substantial contributions if it receives \$25,000 in online contributions in a year.
- (12) In T.C.A. Section 48-101-513(j)(1), "paid solicitor" shall mean "professional solicitor" as defined in T.C.A. § 48-101-501(8).

Authority: T.C.A. § 48-101-503(b). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 17, 1977; effective July 18, 1977. Public necessity rule filed August 22, 2007; expired February 3, 2008. Repeal and new rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2008. Amendments filed June 30, 2008; effective October 28, 2008.

1360-03-01-.02 FILING OF REGISTRATION STATEMENT.

- (1) Every charitable organization which has completed a fiscal year of operation, shall file with its application for registration an annual report filed by the charitable organization with the Internal Revenue Service, unless the organization is not required to file such report. Additionally, the organization shall file an audited financial statement if the organization's gross revenue exceeds five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000), excluding grants from government agencies and private foundations.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 48-101-504(a)–(e) and 48-101-506; and Chapter 523, § 14, of the Public Acts of 2007. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 17, 1977; effective July 18, 1977. Amendment filed October 4, 1982; effective November 3, 1982. Public necessity rule filed August 22, 2007; expired February 3, 2008. Repeal and new rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2008. Amendment to 1360-03-01-.02 filed January 14, 2009, and to have become effective May 29, 2009, was withdrawn on March 20, 2009. Amendments filed January 8, 2024; effective April 7, 2024.

1360-03-01-.03 FILING OF REGISTRATION RENEWAL APPLICATION.

- (1) The renewal application shall be accompanied by an annual report filed by the charitable organization with the Internal Revenue Service, unless the organization is not required to file such report. Additionally, the organization shall file an audited financial statement if the organization's gross revenue exceeds five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000), excluding grants from government agencies and private foundations.
- (2) All organizations requesting an extension of time for filing a renewal of registration shall file the request on the form prescribed by the Secretary and shall provide any supporting documentation with the form (e.g. an application for extension to file an exempt organization return that was filed with the Internal Revenue Service).

Authority: T.C.A. § 48-101-506; and Chapter 523, §§ 14 and 16, of the Public Acts of 2007. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 17, 1977; effective July 18, 1977. Public necessity rule filed August 22, 2007; expired February 3, 2008. Repeal and new rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2008.

1360-03-01-.04 PROFESSIONAL SOLICITORS AND FUNDRAISING COUNSEL.

- (1) Commercial co-venturers and political consultants for political parties, candidates and political action committees shall not be considered to be "professional fundraising counsel" or "professional solicitors."

Authority: T.C.A. § 48-101-503(b). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 17, 1977; effective July 18, 1977. Public necessity rule filed August 22, 2007; expired February 3, 2008. Repeal and new rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2008.

1360-03-01-.05 DENIAL OF REGISTRATION AND APPEAL.

- (1) Any applicant who appeals the denial of registration shall have a hearing held before an administrative law judge from the Administrative Procedures Division of the Tennessee Department of State. The hearing shall be conducted pursuant to Rule 1360-04-01-.14, Uniform Rules of Procedure for Hearing Contested Cases of State Agencies.
- (2) The hearing may be conducted telephonically by agreement of the parties.
- (3) The order of the administrative law judge shall be the final order in the case, and shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 4-5-314(b) and (c) and 48-101-508(a) and (b); and Chapter 523, § 24, of the Public Acts of 2007. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 17, 1977; effective July 18, 1977. Public necessity rule filed August 22, 2007; expired February 3, 2008. Repeal and new rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2008.

1360-03-01-.06 SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF REGISTRATION AND APPEAL.

- (1) Upon concluding that an organization's registration with the Division is improper or unlawful, pursuant to T.C.A. § 48-101-514(a)(1), the Secretary of State shall notify the registrant of his intent to suspend or revoke its registration. The notification shall contain the reasons for the action and shall inform the organization of its right to request an administrative hearing within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notification. The suspension or revocation shall become effective thirty (30) days after receipt of the notification unless a request for an administrative hearing is received by the Secretary of State before the expiration of the thirty (30) days. If a hearing is requested and the suspension or revocation is upheld, the suspension or

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revocation shall become effective upon the service of the final administrative decision on the organization.

- (2) The hearing shall be held before an administrative law judge from the Administrative Procedures Division of the Tennessee Department of State and conducted pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, T.C.A. §§ 4-5-101 et seq. and Rule 1360-04-01-.14, Uniform Rules of Procedure for Contested Cases of State Agencies.

Authority: T.C.A. § 48-101-503(b). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed June 30, 2008; effective October 28, 2008.

1360-03-01-.07 APPLICATION OF REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS TO INTERNET SOLICITATION.

(1) Entities That Are Domiciled Within Tennessee

- (a) An entity that is domiciled within Tennessee and uses the internet to conduct charitable solicitations in Tennessee must register with the Division, unless exempt from the registration requirements pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated Section 48-101-502. This is true without regard to whether the internet solicitation methods it uses are passive or interactive, maintained by itself or another entity with which it contracts, or whether it conducts solicitations in any other manner.
- (b) An entity is domiciled within Tennessee if its principal place of business is in Tennessee.

(2) Entities That Are Domiciled Outside Tennessee

An entity that is not domiciled within Tennessee must register in accordance with the law of Tennessee, unless exempt from the registration requirements, if:

- (a) Its non-internet activities alone would be sufficient to require registration;
- (b) The entity solicits contributions through an interactive website; and
- (c) Either the entity:
 - (i) Specifically targets persons physically located in Tennessee for solicitation, or
 - (ii) Receives contributions from Tennessee on a repeated and ongoing basis or a substantial basis through its website; or
- (d) The entity solicits contributions through a site that is not interactive, but either specifically invites further offline activity to complete a contribution, or establishes other contacts with Tennessee state, such as sending e-mail messages or other communications that promote the website; and
- (e) The entity satisfies (2)(c).

Authority: T.C.A. § 48-101-503(b). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed November 6, 2007; effective March 28, 2007.