



Tax Forms That Councils Must File Annually with
the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to Maintain 501(c)(3) Status
<http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=96103,00.html>

Beginning with the 2007 tax year, most tax-exempt organizations must file either a Form 990-N, also known as the “e-Postcard;” or a Form 990-EZ; or a Form 990.

Exceptions are organizations included in a group return or those that are churches, their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches.

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 added this filing requirement to ensure that the IRS and potential donors have current information about the organization.

An organization that fails to file a required return is subject to a penalty of \$20 a day for each day the failure continues. If an organization is required to file an information return or annual electronic notice and fails to do so for three consecutive years, the organization will lose its tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third year.

For the organization to have its tax-exempt status reinstated, it must apply (or reapply) for tax-exempt status and pay the appropriate user fee.

Form 990 returns are due on the 15th day of the 5th month after the end of the organization's “tax year.” A tax year is usually 12 consecutive months.

There are two kinds of tax years:

- Calendar Tax Year: This is a period of 12 consecutive months beginning January 1 and ending December 31; or
- Fiscal Tax Year: This is a period of 12 consecutive months ending on the last day of any month except December.

If a council's tax year ends December 31, its version of the Form 990 is due May 15. If your council's tax year ends on June 30 (which is most councils), the deadline is November 15.

Due dates may be extended for three months, without showing cause, by filing IRS Form 8868 before the due date; an additional three-month extension may be requested on Form 8868 if the organization shows reasonable cause why the return cannot be filed by the extended due date.