



# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE US SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

® Webinar Q&A: Annual Reporting, October 21, 2020

Below are all the questions entered into the chat during the webinar, including questions that were answered live. The order of the questions has been modified to group together questions on the same general topic, some were edited for clarity, and answers have been added.

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## Resources to Learn About Annual Reporting

In addition to the webinar Q&A that follows, the resources below contain comprehensive information and instructions for annual reporting.

### [Council/Conference Documents](#)

[Conference Treasurers Manual](#)

### [Annual Report Forms](#)

Forms include instructions and explanations

### [Governance-in-a-Box](#)

## Annual Report Basics: Who, When, How?

- **What is the deadline for submission?**

Conference reports are due November 30

- **What if you are doing a district report. Is it the same form, and is it done online also?**
- **Is the 2020R District report online. I saw it can be downloaded as a paper copy, but how can I do it online. I have a password for my conference report, but I need to do a district report also. Do I need another password?**

The District Report is a different form and it is online as well. You will need to request your next higher Council to give you permission for District Council reporting. You will still use the same username and password to log in.

- **Does every conference automatically have access to a Members Portal? We are fairly new and have never submitted a report online just by mail.**

Every Conference has access, but not automatically. You will need to contact your next higher Council to receive authorization for somebody in your Conference.

- **If previous years' annual reports were not done online by us, are they there having been entered online by national?**
- **Does a Conference have the option of submitting Report "manually?"**

Hard copies should not be sent to the National Council office unless you are an isolated Conference (not part of a District or (Arch)Diocesan Council.)

If reports are submitted manually, the data is entered by your local District or (Arch)Diocesan Council. *(Most Councils will use this as an opportunity to introduce you to the Membership Database!)*

- **Am I correct in thinking that the Secretary is responsible for filling out this online report?**

The actual data entry may be done by whoever the President designates, but the President is ultimately responsible for submitting the report. The best practice is for the Secretary, Treasurer, and President to work together to assemble the data for the report.

- **Can you view previous fiscal years online?**

When you get to the annual reports, it specifies the year. There is a drop-down box that allows you to view a prior year. Click on the year you want.

- **As new conference president, do I send national report or does the council send to national based on conference CAR reports?**
- **When we "send" the online annual report, does our district council get the report in addition to National?**

You only need to submit your report once. The local council automatically has access to all their Conferences' reports and use them to create their consolidated reports.

- **I am also the new treasurer for the District Council, when I need to do the conferences summary report will the reports entered by the individual conferences be available to me.**

They will be available to you once they are finalized. You (or your administrator) will be able to see whether they are finalized, and offer "gentle reminders" as reporting deadlines approach.

## Volunteer Hours and Mileage in Special Works

- **If a member of our conference volunteers at a Council thrift store, and reports their hours by logging into the computer system at the store, should we also report those hours on our annual report?**

The hours would be recorded by the Council store or special work and should NOT be included with the Conference report.

- **We have a number of members who work at a community food pantry. Do we count those hours?**

Members volunteering at a community pantry are volunteering their own time, and it is not a work of your Conference. It can only be included in the Conference report if this is a regular work of the Conference, not just the individuals.

- **Can we count mileage for volunteer work in support of a Special Work that is owned by our Council?**

Yes.

## Gift cards: Giving, Buying, and Receiving

- **Where and how do I record gift cards given to the conference for use?**
- **We're not purchasing the gift cards; someone donated them. Those are in-kind, correct?**
- **How do you record a gift card donated to us?**

Gift cards received as donations should be treated as in-kind assistance to our friends in need. When gift cards are distributed, they have a specific value for the purpose for which you give them (food, clothing, etc.). They are not cash so they would not be treated as income since they cannot be deposited to your account and show up in the balancing of your accounts.

- **If we purchased 1000 gift cards, but only gave out 500, do we report the 1000 or 500?**
- **Where do you list gift cards the conference may have purchased to be given out on visits, but they have not yet been used?**

Gift cards or gift certificates purchased by Conferences should be reported under "6. Those We Serve" since the expenditures are on behalf of friends in need.

All gift cards purchased in a fiscal year should be reported as expenditure whether they are all given out or not, since the Conference can't "cash them in" for another purpose. The best practice is to avoid "stocking up" when purchasing cards, as this could cause you to run short of funds when other needs are presented to you before the cards have been used.

## Food Pantries

- **We don't enter Special Works or Stores or walks, etc. unless they are "owned" by the Conference, right?**

Right! The Conference report should only include works of the Conference.

- **When you receive food donations, do you report that as In-Kind donation?**

Donated food, like all non-cash contributions to the Conference, is reported under "In Kind' Services and Goods, Items F-M" as it is given out.

- **If the Pantry is run by the Parish and they give us food then it is an in-kind donation. Right?**
- **What if it's not an SVdP pantry?**

If the food is given to you to distribute to those your Conference serves, it is reported as it is given out under "In Kind' Services and Goods, Items F-M"

- **We used to have the pantry as a Special Work but was informed by a member of the Council that it should not be, since "all Conferences do that."**
- **Pantries are spelled out as Special Works in the Special Works instruction. This seems unusual since it is so common for Conferences to have one. Is this correct?**

Not all Conferences have pantries. If your pantry is used strictly for the members to take food to people we serve, then it is a Project and not a Special Work. If neighbors come to the pantry to pick up food for themselves, then it is a Special Work.

- **Our pantry is by appointment only, and food choices so that is done through phone calls when they call for appointment. Should those calls be counted as Other In-Person Visits in addition to their visit to the pantry?**

Yes, if it is an interview. If it is a simple call to make an appointment, no.

## Other Special Works

- **Each month our Vincentians meet with 18-20 patients at a local free clinic to greet them and provide them with a goodie bag with health items. Should we consider this as a Special Work?**

Yes.

- **Is prison ministry a special work? Is nursing home a special work? (Inside a prison/county jail)**

These can be considered either Special Works or Projects, depending on the resources regularly dedicated to them. Consult the Special Works report instructions for more details.

Simple visits to prisons, hospitals, and nursing homes are reported under those specific line items within "Person-to-Person Visits." Expenses for these are generally reported under "6 Those We Serve."

- **Fund Raising - Special Works have the definition updated as it says right now. "Enter the total gross income from all Special Works operated by the Conference." It would be helpful to have an example.**

If the Conference runs pharmacy (special work), all income to that pharmacy would be listed here. All expenses of the pharmacy would be listed in Operating expenses – Special Works.

### **Donations: Poor Boxes, In-Kind, Parish Collections, Bequests, Fundraising**

- **When are we changing the name from "Poor Box" to "Donation box?" Sometimes "poor" doesn't describe a situation.**

"Poor Box" is a term commonly used by churches because it is generally understood. Some parishes use different terms.

- **Most of our support comes from parishioner donations made directly to conference. Are these church/poor box collections?**

Donations from our fellow parishioners, whether received via a "Poor Box," a collection envelope, or the Parish's online giving portal, should all be reported under "2. Church/Poor Box Collections."

- **What is the difference between "3A. Fund Raising - Special Works" and "3C. Fund Raising - Special Events/Other?" For example: We usually have a "Pancake Breakfast" and a "Friends of the Poor Walk" fundraiser each year. Do these go under the same one and which one?**

"3A. Fund Raising - Special Works" includes the gross income from all special works operated by the Conference, such as a pantry or meal program.

"3C. Fund Raising – Special Events/Other" is for funds that are actively solicited, such as your two examples.

- **if someone remembers our Conference in their will, is it reported in other miscellaneous receipts?**

Generally, bequests are reported under "5E Other Receipts." If they are left to the Conference as restricted funds; e.g., "only to be used for rent assistance," they should be reported under "5D Other Restricted Funds"

- **I thought that money used out of you own pocket, such as me using my own stamps, the value is to be included as an in-kind donation in the treasurer's report portion in "4. Other SVdP Contributions".**

Other SVdP Contributions includes funds received from other SVdP entities: Councils, Conferences, etc. Stamps would be "In Kind' Services and Goods, Item M, Other"

## Grant Funding

- **are grant funds for housing assistance recorded on line 7**
- **Are all Grants entered on Line 5E?**
- **Would a Covid Grant be listed under 5B, "Disaster Funds"?**

5A. Other – Qualified Government Grants Only: This includes ONLY grants received from federal, state, and local government agencies that individually exceed \$50,000 with documentation that the grant provides an administrative allowance of ten percent or less. All other grants are to be included in 5D below (Other – Other Restricted Funds). If the funds do not fit this description, then they should be recorded elsewhere.

## Twining

- **We twin with local parishes and also receive funds from them. Where do we report these?**

Twining funds received from other SVdP Conferences are reported under “4 Other SVdP Contributions.” Twining funds given to other local SVdP Conferences are reported under “9A Domestic Twining.”

## Home Visits, Phone Calls, and Other In-Person Visits

- **For Other In-Person Visits, do we keep track of every time we call the person and multiply the number of times we called them?**

Yes, other types of visits should be kept track of & the number of times multiplied by number of people served.

- **When posting phone interviews (other) do you multiply the number of people in the home by the number of times you call them?**

Only if each call represents a separate case. For multiple calls regarding the same case, do not multiply by the number of people.

- **When we drop food in neighbors' homes and talk to them at a safe distance but without entering their home, is this a Home Visit?**

Yes, you should report it as a Home Visit.

- **If we are working with a family by phone and the family consists of five individuals; and we help 3 time over six months, how do we count this?**

Count each of the three cases.

## Bylaws

- **Our conference met twice a month until COVID eliminated meeting after Donut Sunday Mass. How do we answer By-Law compliance?**

While COVID restrictions are preventing regular, in-person meetings, Conferences may satisfy the twice per month requirement by meeting via Zoom, conference calls, or other remote means.

The Bylaw compliance question is asking have you adopted the most recent (April 2019) version of the appropriate bylaws. If you have adopted those, check that box.

- **Where can I find the 2019 bylaws online?**

You will find the current Bylaws in the [Governance-in-a-Box](#) section of the National Council website.

## Assistance to Those in Need: Cash, In-Kind

- **When we give clothing vouchers, do we record number of vouchers given and dollar amount? For example, clothing voucher for \$40 per adult in the 'in-kind' section**

Yes.

- **Are eyeglasses considered medical or other?**

Medical.

- **If we take a prescription to a neighbor in need, and we pay for it out of our own pocket, is this considered a Home Visit plus also In-Kind under number of times and in-kind value.**

It could be, but it is best if the Conference reimburses you for the amount spent. Then it becomes a Conference work and expense – not your personal charity. You can always donate the money back to the Conference.

- **We have been delivering food cards personally with COVID precautions, but not interacting with the friend. Assume these are not counted as home visits.**

No, if you are not visiting with, or interacting with the neighbors, you should report these as Other In-Person Visits.

- **How do we report motel/hotel bills for a client? RENT or Client Assistance? If Rent, do we need to obtain a W-9?**

Motel bills are not considered rent from the IRS standpoint, so a W-9 is not required. However, if the person is actually living in the motel and paying a monthly fee, it may be required.

## Special Cases: Organizational Changes, Consolidations, etc.

- **We combined with another Conference mid-year but their checking account was not closed until after 9-30. Would it be best to complete separate reports or try to consolidate? None of the other Conference's money went through my account so would not be reflected in my ending balance.**

It all depends on how National has defined which Conferences need to report. If both are listed, then the split is appropriate.

- **If the District Council was reorganized, and I have conferences with partial years, how do I account for these Conferences in the district for 6 months?**

It all depends on where National has them listed in the Annual Reports file. It would be the full year in the Council in which they are listed now. They would not be listed twice.

- **How do you discontinue a special works category that was used in the past but not any longer?**

Please contact Governance and Membership Services at the National Council office to get this updated for you.

### Miscellaneous

- **It would be nice to include that opening prayer in an email if permitted - very timely prayer.**

Of course! The [Peace Prayer for the Privileged](#) that Marty Cormack shared was written by a Franciscan Friar, Father Daniel Horan.

- **When is the last time that "Chapter 3" of the Treasure's doc has been updated?**

While we do not have a record of specific changes, the Treasurer's Manual was last updated in November 2017, and is currently is under review for revision.

- **Where do we enter Conference insurance?**

Insurance is reported as a "12D Operating Expense."

- **I read in the E-Gazette that a member can be a member of 2 Conferences. How does National account for duplication of members?**

This is such a rare occurrence, the National Council does not worry about duplication.

- **We are having a new building constructed. I would put those expenses in 13. Other. Would that be correct?**

This is correct.