

## Women's Council of REALTORS® Florida

### Financial Policies and Procedures

### January 2025

#### ***Policy***

It is the intent of the Financial Policies and Procedures, hereinafter referred to as the “Policy” to provide direction, clarity and transparency to the Officers, Finance and Budget Committee and Governing Board members for the operational aspects of the finances and assets of the Women’s Council of REALTORS® Florida, hereinafter referred to as the “Council”.

Modifications may be proposed by the Bylaw and Standing Rule Project Team as recommended from the Executive Line Officers and/or the Finance and Budget Committee. Prior to being presented to the Governing Board for ratification, these changes must receive approval from the Finance and Budget Committee.

#### **1. Travel Allowances, Policies and Procedures**

#### ***Policy***

It is the Council’s policy to provide the President, President-Elect, 1st Vice President, Treasurer, State Liaison and District Vice Presidents, with annual budgets for reimbursement of travel expenses for the budgeted year for which they serve, to ensure compliance with IRS regulations.

Travel reimbursement budgets are allocated to District Vice Presidents for the use of attending Women’s Council of REALTORS® Florida conferences and travel expenses related to the local networks assigned to District Vice President.

#### ***Procedure***

All expense reimbursement requests must be submitted to the Treasurer within 30 days of incurring the expense for payment or not later than 30 days following the end of the event. The Council is not responsible for reimbursing expenses not submitted in a timely manner. All cash and credit expenditures must be verified with receipts submitted along with the expense form. The Treasurer will assist Committees, Project Teams, and Line Officers, by informing them of the status of their funding and current budget balances upon request. All Executive Line Officers will have view only access to the accounting software. All reimbursement requests must be approved by either the President, President-Elect or Treasurer. However, no Officer shall approve their own reimbursement request.

Reimbursement documentation required:

- a. Scanned receipts and sending them via email is acceptable.
- b. In the event of a lost receipt or no receipt provided, members have the option of submitting a separate explanation for expenditures. These occurrences will be monitored by the Treasurer so that the policy will not be abused. Expenditures submitted for reimbursement which are outside or exceed the current reimbursement policies will be adjusted and an explanation provided to the

- submitting member outlining the reason their reimbursement is not equal to the requested reimbursement amount. Final approval for a requested reimbursement expense exceeding the amount allowed under this policy will be made by the Finance and Budget Committee. Should the members appeal their decision, the appeal will be heard and decided by the Executive Line Officers.
- c. Should the Council reimburse a member for an expense incurred within 30 days where the event or travel occurred subsequent to reimbursement, and the member did not travel and/or attend the event, the member will repay the Council the full amount of the reimbursement within 14 calendar days from the date of the scheduled travel or event, whichever was to occur later.
  - d. The Treasurer shall process reimbursement requests within 14 business days from the date of receipt, provided there are no additional research requirements. This does not guarantee receipt of said reimbursement within this time period.
  - e. Airfare is reimbursed only with receipt issued by the Airline for main cabin seating with the name of the traveler and date of travel listed on receipt. Electronic ticket purchasers have two options: (1) Request a receipt from the Airline at check in or (2) Submit any form of electronic ticket or itinerary that includes information showing that a credit card was charged, along with substantiation that the travel did occur, such as an email confirmation with all required information shown. Loyalty points or miles awarded to the traveler may be retained by the traveler.
  - f. Lodging – actual cost of room plus tax and resort fee (when applicable) (single room rate) at host hotel or reasonable rate for the area.
  - g. Both the detailed receipt and the summary charge receipt for meals must be submitted with the expense form. If the meal expense covered multiple individuals' meals, the names of each person in attendance and purpose of the meal/event must be documented on the expense form.
  - h. Parking, tolls, valet parking will be paid based on the actual cost, provided the parking is associated with an approved meeting or event.
  - i. The Owner of the vehicle used is to be reimbursed at the current IRS allowable per mile rate for actual mileage traveled, which must be indicated. Clearly indicate departure and arrival locations. Departure and arrival locations shall be clearly indicated including a map and mileage. (The IRS allowable per mile rate will be noted on the expense form provided by the State Treasurer as needed).
  - j. Rental Car & Gasoline Usage – actual costs of rental car including insurance coverage options exercised plus gasoline costs incurred with rental car usage during the rental period. Luxury rentals are not an allowable expense unless a detailed explanation is provided in the purpose and details section. Mileage cannot be claimed along with car rental expenditures.
  - k. Taxi, ride share, airport limo, bus – actual cost.
  - l. Tipping – reasonable cost
  - m. State Line Officers shall be reimbursed for attending Women's Council National and/or State Installations. Executive Line Officers shall also be reimbursed for non-Women's Council Events and Installations when representing the Council.

Council related business activities that do not fall under specific expense categories listed on the form such as meeting & event registrations, postage, photocopies, etc. The reason for the expense must be noted in the *purpose and details section* of the expense form.

### **Non-reimbursable expenditures**

The following expenses are not reimbursed:

- Personal entertainment (in-room movies, health club/ spa fees)

- In-room minibars
- Babysitting fees
- Laundry
- Purchase of books or magazines
- Personal attire
- Barber or beautician fees
- Kennel fees
- Alcoholic beverages

## **2. Expenditures**

### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to recognize expenses as incurred.

### ***Procedure***

All invoices shall be submitted to the Treasurer for review and approval. Reimbursements are to be submitted along with a Check Request Form. Invoices are to be initialed by the reviewer to document authorization to process as a payable. Invoices are then assigned an appropriate general ledger account number based on the detail of the invoice and/or direction from the President and entered into the financial software. Invoices are initialed with the date entered into the financial software and payment initiated on the invoice.

The Council will reimburse any graduates of the National Leadership Institute, from Florida, upon graduation. Reimbursement covers expenditures incurred during the program. Reimbursement amount not to exceed budgeted amount.

## **3. Check Supply Control and Disbursement**

### ***Policy***

It is the Council's policy to keep all checks under lock and key until they are used and limit access to the Treasurer only, and to be used only when the assigned debit card or online banking check processing cannot be utilized.

### ***Procedure***

Checks are stored in a locked and secured location easily accessible by the Treasurer.

## **4. Check signing**

### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to give check-signing authority to the following individuals:

- President
- President-Elect
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President/Secretary
- Treasurer

## **5. Council Debit Cards**

### ***Policy***

It is the Council's policy to issue debit cards to the Executive Line Officers.

### ***Procedure***

It is the responsibility of the individual issued the card to safeguard and monitor the use of these cards. All purchases made on the Council debit cards must be supported by invoices or receipts and include information regarding the business purpose, name(s) of attendees for the transaction on the receipt.

Email notifications for subscriptions are to be sent to the official state Treasurer email account for any purchases made on the card for which there is no physical card present.

For any cards issued, the following uses are strictly prohibited:

- To purchase personal items
- To obtain a cash advance for personal or business purpose
- To secure credit on a personal basis

Allowed uses:

- Reserving and paying for Executive Line Officers Accommodations.
- Reserving and paying for the Women's Council Suite and 2 rooms.
- Food and non-alcoholic beverages provided in the Council Suite for the consumption of The Council members and guests during social receptions and meetings within the Suite.
- Paying for Council Business-related meals.
- Vendor/Event deposits and payments

Charges for expenses other than those listed above must be paid personally and expensed by the officer/member and submitted for reimbursement per this policy.

In case of loss, theft, damage to the card or the approval denied, the Executive Line Officers affected shall contact the Treasurer immediately, and will notify the issuing bank of the loss, theft or damage and request a replacement card.

## **6. Monthly Accounting**

On a monthly basis, the Treasurer will use the reconciliation feature within the financial software to reconcile to the monthly bank statements.

The Treasurer will consult with the Executive Line Officers regarding strategic partner and sponsorship money commitments and receipts.

## **7. Contract Signing Authority**

### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to grant the President the authority to sign contracts for expenditures within the Council's budget. The only exception to this policy shall be for contracts associated with the leadership summit and installation, which shall be given to the President-Elect.

### ***Procedure***

A copy of all contracts executed shall be immediately provided to the Treasurer to be maintained with the financial records.

## **8. Finance & Budget Committee**

### ***Responsibilities***

- a. Review proposed budget for the upcoming year to approve - recommendation for approval by the Governing Board at the Mid-Year Meeting (August).
- b. Review revisions during the year as necessary from the Treasurer to the budget for recommended approval by the Governing Board.
- c. Review the budget and actual expenditures provided by the Treasurer on a quarterly basis.
- d. The President will appoint an Audit Committee Chairperson and 2 committee members from within the Finance and Budget committee.
- e. Monitor that tax and incorporation filing are completed annually.
- f. Review accounting firm performance yearly or as needed. Set guidelines for the expectations from the accountant.

## **9. Budgeting**

### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to prepare an annual budget for the following year as recommended by the President-Elect, which is approved by the Finance and Budget Committee at its annual meeting in August, and presented to, and approved by the Governing Board.

### ***Procedure***

The budget may be amended at the January meetings to account for situational changes as it may impact the budget.

The budget is to be entered into the financial software so that budget to actual comparison reporting can be performed.

During the course of the year, it is the responsibility of the Treasurer to monitor the budget and report to those responsible when they are not meeting their budgets. The Treasurer will confer with the Executive Line Officers regarding what courses of action are needed to meet the budget by year end.

**Policy**

It is the policy of the Council to allow the Executive Line Officers to spend up to \$2500 per year on nonbudgeted industry events and/or unforeseen time sensitive Network needs.

**Procedure**

The expense must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Line Officers. These are emergency funds and are limited to expenses incurred due to unexpected industry events and/or unforeseen needs of the network that were not budgeted. These funds are to be accessed only when the event and/or need is time sensitive and waiting until the next scheduled Finance and Budget meeting is not in the best interest of the Network.

**10. Financial Statement Preparation & Distribution****Policy**

It is the policy of the Council to prepare and distribute financial information on a regular basis to promote transparency and accountability.

**Procedure**

On a monthly basis, the Treasurer will prepare the following for distribution to the Executive Line Officers:

- Profit & Loss Statement, Budget vs. Actuals & Balance Sheet;
- Brief narrative of significant transactions occurring during the period

On a quarterly basis, the Treasurer will prepare the following for distribution to the Finance and Budget Committee:

- Profit & Loss Statement, Budget vs. Actuals & Balance Sheet;
- Brief narrative of significant transactions occurring during the period

The above financial information will also be distributed to the governing board at the annual and midyear meetings. The Council will furnish upon request a detailed financial statement to any Governing Board member in good standing.

At the January conference, the Budget vs Actuals for the previous year are presented to the Governing Board by the previous year's Treasurer.

**11. Operating Account and Reserve Funds****Policy**

It is the policy of the Council to be good stewards of the members' money and to maximize investment strategy while still maintaining adequate operating funds.

**Definitions**

**Operating Account** – This is the checking account used to pay bills and accept deposits.

**Reserve Accounts** – These are actual savings accounts with individual bank account numbers, earmarked for a specific purpose.

- a. *State Reserve Account* - This account is a general reserve account established to include back-up working capital as well as investment funds.
- b. *CD Account* - The CD Fund shall be invested in short-term FDIC insured CDs, with Chase, our current bank. Maturities not to exceed 1 year. Established to maximize the return on the members' money while maintaining back-up working capital.
- c. *Future National President Reserve Account* - This is a restricted fund that has been established to support a Florida member who becomes National President.
- d. *Leadership Identification Account* - This is a restricted fund whose purpose is to promote leadership advancement at the local, state and national level.

**Restricted Funds** – The funds that are earmarked for specific purposes within the General Reserve.

- a. *National President Installation Reserve* - This is a restricted fund established to support the installation of a Florida member who becomes National President.
- b. *Strategic Planning Reserve* - This reserve account has been established to accumulate monies needed for professional strategic planning assistance.
- c. *We Care Account* - This Reserve has been established to support Florida members in need as a result of natural disasters, medical emergencies or other needs.
- d. *National Service and Speaker Support Reserve* - This is a restricted fund established to support those members serving on the National Level and/or speaking at Women's Council National conferences. Members serving or speaking on the national level may apply to the state Executive Line Officers for funding. Funding limits per person and per year, to be determined by Finance and Budget and be approved by the state Executive Line Officers.

Both Reserve Funds and Restricted Funds are reported on the Balance sheet and are in interest bearing savings accounts.

### ***Procedure***

- a. *Operating Account Maximum Balance* - The maximum 3 months weighted cash flow or \$60,000 (Maximum Balance) is to be kept in the Operating Account. Treasurer to review the cash flow for the previous year, in February of each year. If the weighted average of 3 months cash flow, in the previous year, exceeds \$60,000, the Treasurer will recommend to the Executive Line Officers that the minimum be raised to the recommended amount. The Executive Line Officers may vote to increase the maximum.
- b. By March of each year, the Treasurer shall transfer the funds in excess of the Maximum Balance in the Operating Account to the General Reserve Fund
- c. Once all excess funds are transferred to the General Reserve Fund, 75% of the balance will be transferred to the CD Fund and 25% maintained in the General Reserve Fund. New additions to the CD Fund shall be invested immediately into a short-term CD, as defined in the "CD Account".

- d. Interest earned in the CD Fund will be transferred into the National Service and Speaker Support Reserve. The CD amounts, start dates, maturity dates and projected interest will be reported quarterly to the Finance and Budget Committee and the Executive Line Officers.
- e. The Treasurer is to report all proposed transfers in writing to the Executive Line Officers for final approval. Email is acceptable.
- f. Budgeted Strategic Planning General funds in the Operating Account shall be transferred to the General Reserve by the end of March each year and will be earmarked for the Strategic Planning Reserve (Restricted Funds).
- g. Budgeted, unused, National President Installation Reserve funds shall be moved to the National President Installation Reserve Account at year end.
- h. Budgeted, unused funds from Leadership Identification shall be moved to the Leadership Identification Account.

All Reserve funds may be added to, or adjusted by, the recommendation of the Finance and Budget Committee and voted on by the Governing Board.

## **12. Audit**

### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to engage the Audit Committee to conduct an audit of the financial documents a minimum of 2 times per year, at the January and August meetings.

Following the August Elections, the incoming Treasurer shall shadow and work with the current year Treasurer and be provided access to documents including view only access to financial software, in order to allow a smooth transition from year to year.

### ***Procedure***

The Audit Committee shall review the records from the date of the previous audit, through the end of the calendar month proceeding the audit. The Audit Committee shall:

- Review expense and reimbursement documentation to ensure compliance with policy
- Compare all debits and credits shown on the bank statement against the corresponding receipts or deposit tickets and check copies (for deposited items) for the month
- Compare the bank statement debits and credits to the financial software reconciliation statements to ensure agreement
- Provide a written account of the result of the audit to the Finance and Budget Committee comprised according to the state bylaws



### **13. Related Parties and Conflict of Interest**

#### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to identify, evaluate and disclose all related party relationships. Related parties include management, board members and their immediate families.

#### ***Procedure***

Prior to entering into any contractual or vendor relationships with related parties, the proposed transaction shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Line Officers for approval.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President shall ensure annual Conflict of Interest statements are obtained from all Executive Line Officers and District Vice Presidents which describe any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest.

### **14. Records Retention & Destruction**

#### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to retain records as required by law and to destroy them when appropriate.

#### ***Procedure***

The following shall be retained for a minimum of 6 years:

- Bank reconciliations and statements
- Deposits and receipts
- Contracts and leases – length of the contract plus 6 years
- Personnel files – throughout employment plus 6 years
- Payroll records and summaries
- Employment applications
- Invoices and supporting payables documentation

The following records shall be retained permanently:

- Articles of incorporation
- Corporate resolutions
- Determination letter from the IRS
- Independent audit reports
- Tax returns
- Board minutes

### **15. Information Technology**

#### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to safeguard systems used to capture and report financial and operational data.

### ***Procedure***

- The Council currently utilizes QuickBooks online as its general ledger software package. Only authorized Officers with a business purpose to access this program are provided with a unique login. Executive Line Officers other than the Treasurer and the President will have view only access to financial software.
- The Council shall utilize a cloud based file storage platform for Council records. Authority to access Council records will be distributed to the respective Line Officers to the files pertaining to their roles.
- Upon termination of an Officer's time in service, their access to Council systems shall immediately be disabled.
- Require all Officers to sign a commitment statement for restricting access to unauthorized users and reporting the theft or loss of any device which is used to access the Council's records.

## **16. Whistleblower Policy**

### ***Purpose***

This Whistleblower Policy is designed to provide a mechanism for Officers, Governing Board Members and other Council members to raise good faith concerns regarding suspected violations of law or Council policy; to facilitate cooperation in any inquiry or investigation by any court, agency, law enforcement or other governmental body; and to protect individuals who take such action from retaliation or any threat of retaliation by any other Officer or agent of the Council.

### ***Scope***

This policy applies to all Council members, Sponsors, Strategic Partners and Vendors.

### ***Policy***

Women's Council of REALTORS® Florida is committed to maintaining an atmosphere where members are free to raise good faith concerns regarding the Council's business practices. Members should be encouraged to report suspected violations of the law; to identify potential violations of Council policy, including those contained in the Policy & Procedures Manual; and to provide truthful information in connection with any official inquiry or investigation.

### ***Procedure***

Reports of suspected violations of law or policy and reports of retaliation will be investigated promptly in a manner intended to protect confidentiality. The President will manage such investigation and may request the assistance of counsel or other outside parties as he or she deems necessary. The President will prepare a report of the findings of the investigation and submit such a report to the Executive Line Officers and National Liaison. In the event that a report concerns a member of the Executive Line Officers, the National Liaison shall be notified, and that member shall recuse themselves from the proceedings.

Should the Council need legal representation (in a court of law), the Executive Line Officers shall select the attorney or firm to represent the council. If there is no budgeted amount, the Executive Line Officers

shall approve the funding needed to hire the individual firm without Budget & Finance Committee or Governing Board approval.

In the event that a report concerns the President, he or she shall recuse himself or herself from the proceedings, and the National Liaison shall select an appropriate officer of the Women's Council Florida to continue the investigation.

Any Member who believes that he or she has been subjected to any form of retaliation as a result of reporting a suspected violation of law or policy should immediately report such incident to the President or National Liaison.

### **17. Unclaimed Property**

#### ***Policy***

It is the policy of the Council to adhere to the State of Florida reporting guidelines for unclaimed property.

#### ***Procedure***

Outstanding checks shall be reviewed every six months. Attempts at contacting the payee will be made and documented by the Treasurer. The Council may employ professional services to facilitate this follow-up and the preparation of the annual unclaimed property filings on May 1 of each year. The report should reflect accountancy activity for the one-year period, three years prior to the last calendar year.