



The purpose of this document is to describe at a high level how NSCS Computer Services is involved (or not involved) in processing and acknowledging donations made to the North Shore Choral Society. This description starts with Computer Services being notified of a donation and its details.

Notification

Computer Services can be notified in several different ways, but for quality assurance/audit trail purposes, notification always involves an email or written document rather than oral (face-to-face or telephone conversation) instructions.

Most often, the General Manager sends an email documenting the receipt of donations that have been sent to the Choral Society by mail. Computer Services, the Vice President of Fundraising, the Patrons Coordinator, the President, and the Treasurer are all notified when a donation is received.

The date that the NSCS received the donation is not usually specified in the email. In those cases *the date and time that the email was sent* is used as the donation **Received Date**.

For donations by **check**, the information in the email includes the name of the donor, the check date, the address of the donor (if the donor's name is not recognized as a member or previous donor), and the amount of the donation.

NSCS Members sometimes give donations by check directly to the General Manager, Treasurer, or President, rather than mail them. Any of those Board Members may initiate an email notification.

Occasionally a donor uses **PayPal** to give a donation to the NSCS Annual Fund electronically. PayPal sends an email to orders@northshorechoral.com with the name, email address, and street address of the donor, the donation amount, and a Transaction ID or Confirmation Number. The date NSCS received the funds is either stated in the email message, or is represented by the Sent date/time of the email. This PayPal email is automatically forwarded to the NSCS Ticket Coordinator as well as to Computer Services, the Vice President of Fundraising, the Patrons Coordinator, the President, and the Treasurer.

Cash donations are also communicated by sending an email to the same people. This happens very rarely.

The notification also specifies whether the (financial) type of the contribution is a standard individual donation, a donation via a donor advised fund (DAF) or qualified charitable contribution (QCD), or a donation of stock. This will determine who generates the thank you / tax letter.

The email may also include specific fund designations (Larson, Gockel, DCYAA), honor/remembrance roster requests, matching gift program participation, requests for donor anonymity, additional detail to be documented as comments (e.g. "60 shares of AMX" or "To be matched by Northern Trust"), and special instructions for handling the donation (e.g. "please send acknowledgement to Mrs. John Jones, 1234 Main St, Lincolnwood, IL 60712").

Data Entry

Computer Services enters donation information from the email into the CiviCRM database. The standard is to complete the data entry as soon as feasible, so that a reasonably prompt thank you / tax letter can be sent to the donor.

Detailed data entry procedures are included in the Computer Services CiviCRM Procedures document. In addition to **Received Date**, required fields are **Financial Type (Donation, Donation via DAF, or Donation of Stock)**, **Contact** (donor), **Amount** (including currency type, always US Dollars) and **Paid By** (either **Check, PayPal, or Cash**). Specific fund designations, honor/remembrance requests,



matching gift program participation, anonymity requests, and other comments communicated in the notification are also entered into the database.

A new **Contact** may have to be established for first time donors. A mailing **Address** for the donor is required. We use a custom field, **Donor Display Name**, to capture the preferred name of the donor for acknowledgments. This could be the name of a couple (as opposed to an individual). Similarly, a custom **Addressee** name can be used for mailings.

Private acknowledgment of individual donation: Thank You / Tax Letter

Upon request, Computer Services sends files exported from CiviCRM to the Patrons Coordinator, so that thank you / tax letters acknowledgments can be generated. This is done only for individual gifts classified as **Financial Type "Donation."** Thank you / tax letters acknowledgments for contributions of **Financial Type "Donation via DAF"** and **"Donation of Stock"** are generated and sent by the NSCS Treasurer.

Because of the "thank you" purpose of this communication, the NSCS standard operating practice is to send a fairly prompt acknowledgment of the donation details to the donor by mail. This means that we send such letters on an ongoing basis throughout the year. We *do not* send an additional summary of all contributions to the donor at the end of the tax year.

As the recipient of a charitable donation, NSCS is required by the IRS to document in a tax letter *the date we received the gift*, not the date that the donor made the gift. Best practices advise that NSCS should not speculate on the "date of gift" for deduction or valuation purposes. It is also a best practice to make sure that the donor is sent an individual acknowledgment *by the end of January* for gifts received before the end of the year, or shortly thereafter.

Public acknowledgment of aggregate donations: Patrons list in Concert Program Booklet

The Concert Program Booklet Coordinator communicates publishing deadlines for each concert for which NSCS will create a program booklet. The "Patrons pages" of the booklet shows individual donors grouped by categories based on their total amount of donation during the specified period of time. The period of time changes from booklet to booklet because it is based partly on the standard of publicly acknowledging an individual donation in *each of three concert program booklets*, and partly on the concert publishing deadlines. With input from the NSCS Board, the Concert Program Booklet Coordinator determines the database **Received Date** selection criteria for contributions for each booklet and the specific dates are explained in the Thank You paragraph that precedes the Patrons List. Contributions of **Financial Types "Donation," "Donation via DAF,"** and **"Donation of Stock"** are included in the total amount aggregated for each donor. If the donation was marked as "anonymous," the donor's name is replaced with "Anonymous" in the program booklet.

The database is also the source for the Honor/Remembrance Roster acknowledgments, and is used to identify patrons who contributed to each of the special purpose funds (Larson, Gockel, DCYAA).

For quality assurance/separation of duties purposes, the Patrons Coordinator is asked to compare the database output and generated "Patrons pages" to his/her own records. Since the Patrons Coordinator receives the same donation notifications, this enables a check for accuracy and completeness.

Donations to NSCS requested by the family of a deceased person

Donations made in memory of a deceased person are acknowledged by a Thank You/ Tax Letter and in the Concert Program Booklet (Patrons by Category, Honor/Remembrance Roster). However, the Patrons Coordinator established that the NSCS policy is not to send mail to donors who give to the NSCS only because of a request by family members to send donations to NSCS in memory of a deceased person. If the NSCS has no previous relationship with the donor (e.g. membership, previous



donation, ticket purchase), Computer Services will mark the contact as “Do Not Mail.” This will ensure that the donor does not receive an appeal letter or our season brochure.

Communication of donations in honor of current NSCS members

When a donation is made in honor of a current NSCS member, a Board member usually notifies the honored member that the donation was made, and who the donor was. This will allow the NSCS member to personally thank the donor before the donation is made public in a concert program booklet. Although this information is recorded in the database, Computer Services is not involved in generating this communication.

Board acknowledgment of donations by current NSCS members

Occasionally, in the past, Board members have penned handwritten thank you notes to members who have given donations. Computer Services is not involved in generating these acknowledgments.