

My organization has never had to pay a fee to participate in the CFC program. Why is this a requirement now?

OPM published CFC regulations in April 2014 to streamline many of the program's operations, including how charities apply to become part of the program. The regulations, which go into effect on January 1, 2017, were issued to ensure the continued growth and success of the program by improving donor participation, CFC infrastructure, and standards of transparency and accountability.

The cost of the campaign will be recovered primarily through application fees paid by the charitable organizations that apply for participation in the CFC. Additionally, upfront application fees will require that charities properly adjust for campaign costs in their own accounting, something that the current process of cost deduction does not reflect.

Currently, the overhead administrative costs of much of the CFC program are paid out of donor contributions through the campaign. OPM maintains that more transparency with respect to administrative overhead would be beneficial to the program, to the donors, and to the charitable organizations that receive donations through the CFC.

In addition to defraying costs, an application fee will discourage those charities who receive no benefit from the campaign from applying, thereby reducing administrative costs, and increasing the number of dollars reaching participating charities. It is in the spirit of these recommendations that OPM proposed to restructure CFC cost recovery.

What are the costs of the campaign?

Historically, campaign costs nation-wide have averaged ten percent. These funds were spent on campaign promotion, printed materials, employee training, and other administrative expenses. All local campaign costs are reviewed and approved by the Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC) governing the local campaign. On average, this cost is low compared with other fundraising campaigns. Charitable organizations pay for these expenses when they apply to participate in the CFC.

How much will my organization have to pay?

The fee structure is based on tiers for different types of organizations. Tiers refer to the size of the applicant organization in terms of total revenue as reported on the submitted IRS Form 990 or pro forma IRS Form 990. The CFC rules, as noted in 5 CFR §950.107, allow for upfront application fees and listing fees as well as distribution fees to be assessed against pledges received. Listing fees are paid only by organizations approved to participate in the campaign.

Tier I Nat'l/Int'l Organizations and Local Organizations are those that report \$1 million or more in revenue.

Tier II Nat'l/Int'l Organizations and Local Organizations are those that report \$250 thousand or more in revenue, but less than \$1 million.

Tier III Nat'l/Int'l Organizations and Local Organizations are those that report less than \$250 thousand in revenue.

APPLICATION FEES

Nat'l/Int'l Federation	\$1,575
Nat'l/Int'l Federation Member Org.	\$400
Nat'l/Int'l Unaffiliated Org.	\$570
Local Federation	\$630
Local Federation Member Org.	\$255
Local Unaffiliated Org.	\$340

LISTING FEES

Tier I Nat'l/Int'l Organizations	\$2,270
Tier II Nat'l/Int'l Organizations	\$555
Tier III Nat'l/Int'l Organizations	\$370
Tier I Local Organizations	\$635
Tier II Local Organizations	\$135
Tier III Local Organizations	\$20

What is the difference between application fees and listing fees?

The application fee is paid at the time the organization submits its CFC application and is not refundable. The listing fee is paid only by organizations approved to participate in the campaign.

How much are the distribution fees?

The distribution fee will be assessed against pledges received should the application and listing fees not cover all the costs of the campaign. For that reason, we cannot provide a fee structure ahead of the pertinent campaign period.

I do not want to pay a fee until I know that my charity is approved; is this possible?

Charities must pay the application fee at the time of submitting the application.

Can I request a waiver to exempt my charity from paying fees?

No.

My organization is not required to submit an IRS Form 990. How do I find out my organization's total revenue?

If the Internal Revenue Service does not require the organization to file the IRS Form 990 (long form) it must complete and submit a pro forma IRS Form 990. IRS Forms 990EZ, 990PF, and comparable forms will not be accepted. Organizations that file these forms must submit a pro forma IRS Form 990. The organization's revenue will be provided on page 9, line 12, column A of the pro forma IRS Form 990.

When is the application deadline?

In accordance with 5 CFR §950.601(a)(1), the online application system will be open during a period between December and January, as determined by the Director of OPM.

Where do charitable organizations apply?

Federations and independent organizations submit their applications directly to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management through the CFC application module (when it becomes available). If you have chosen to apply as a member of a federation, submit your application as instructed by the federation.

Is it necessary for a charitable organization to submit an application annually?

Yes, all CFC applicants are required to submit a new application annually. However, in accordance with 5 CFR §950.201(c), the full application is required once every three years with an abbreviated “verification application”—consisting of only the certification statements and the IRS Form 990 or pro forma IRS Form 990—required in the intervening years.

What are the eligibility requirements for an organization to participate in the CFC?

To be eligible to participate in the CFC, a charitable organization must be recognized as a tax-exempt non-profit organization under [26 U.S.C. §501\(c\)\(3\)](#) of the Internal Revenue Code. An application to participate in the CFC must provide specific information about the organizations accounting, governance, and program functions, as specified in [the CFC regulations at 5 CFR §950](#). The organization must also provide a completed and signed copy of its IRS Form 990 for the most recent fiscal year.

Organizations must demonstrate that they provide services in the service area to which they are applying:

- **National/International** organizations provide services in 15 different U.S. states and/or one foreign country over the three year period immediately preceding the start of the campaign’s application year.
- **International** organizations are defined in regulation as charitable organizations that provide services either exclusively or in a substantial preponderance to persons in areas outside of the United States. These organizations must provide evidence of services in at least one foreign country over the three year period immediately preceding the start of the campaign’s application year.
- **Local** organizations are those that (1) have a substantial local presence in; and (2) provide services in the local campaign zone to which they apply. The services must be provided during the calendar year immediately preceding the start of the campaign’s application year.

Charities may apply to participate in the CFC individually (as an unaffiliated, or "independent", organization) or they may be represented by a federation. A federation is a coalition of individual charities that align to minimize administrative costs and to coordinate activities. All CFC application and participation requirements that apply to individual charities also apply to federations. In addition, federations must demonstrate that they have no fewer than 15 CFC member organizations that meet the CFC eligibility criteria.

How can I find out how much my organization received in pledges the last few years?

Information on pledge data can be requested from the Principal Combined Fund Organization (PCFO). To locate your PCFO for your campaign, go to: <https://www.opm.gov/combined-federal-campaign/find-local-campaigns/locator/>.

Although my organization is listed with the CFC, we typically do not receive any pledges. It does not make sense for us to pay the application fee without a guarantee that we will receive funds. What should we do?

OPM will not make the recommendation as to whether an organization should apply to the CFC program.

We are a new charitable organization. Is it possible to estimate how much we might expect to receive in contributions the first year?

It is difficult to estimate how much an organization will receive in any given year as the CFC. Like any workplace giving program, it is subject to influences that may affect giving (e.g. fluctuations in the Federal labor force). After participating for a number of years, it may be possible to establish an estimated range for the amount to be received. We suggest that charitable organizations contact similar charities which participate in the CFC to inquire about their experiences. Please note that participation in the CFC is not a guarantee that the organization will receive designations from donors.

My 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization was established one year ago. It has provided real services in at least 15 states but does not meet the three year eligibility for National listing. Does the CFC require that participating organizations be in existence for at least three years?

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) does not require that participating organizations be in existence for a minimum of three years. Organizations that apply to participate as national/international charities may submit examples of services provided within the previous three years to demonstrate a national or international presence. However, there is no requirement that services were provided in each of those years.