



Board Financial Oversight and Internal Controls

Girls on the Run councils have a responsibility to maintain strong financial oversight and internal controls to protect our mission, reputation, and resources.

Financial Oversight Expectations

Board

- The board (and finance or audit committee) is responsible for fiduciary oversight and must collectively receive and review monthly financial statements.

Board Treasurer

- All boards of directors are required to have a Treasurer who possesses appropriate financial expertise and acumen.
 - The Treasurer's role is oversight, not execution. They should *review, interpret, and question* financial information—not create it. This includes a monthly review of reconciled financial records provided by the bookkeeper, as well as regular review of bank statements. These reviews should be used to identify and inquire about any unusual transactions, discrepancies, or variances.

**The Treasurer is not the bookkeeper.*

Finance Committee

- All boards are required to have a Finance Committee. This committee is typically comprised of the Treasurer, serving as the Finance Chair, and at least 1-2 other board members that have financial *expertise*. **The Finance Committee does not serve as the bookkeeper.*

Bookkeeper

- All councils are required to have an external bookkeeper as a governance safeguard.
 - GOTRI has a preferred vendor, Attolero, that can provide these services and more
- A bookkeeper provides a neutral, professional layer that protects leadership. The bookkeeper reports to council staff, not the BOD.

Separation of Duties

Clear separation of duties is a core principle of sound nonprofit governance and financial stewardship. It ensures that no single individual has control over authorizing



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transactions, recording them, and reviewing financial activity, which significantly reduces the risk of errors, mismanagement, or fraud.

When operational tasks such as bookkeeping are kept separate from leadership and oversight roles, the CEO can focus on management and accountability, while the Treasurer and board can objectively review financial reports and fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities. This role clarity not only strengthens internal controls but also protects staff and board members by eliminating real or perceived conflicts of interest and reinforcing trust with donors, funders, and other stakeholders.

Written Financial Policies and Controls

All councils must maintain and regularly review written financial policies and internal controls that include:

- Spending limits
- Petty cash policy
- Cash withdrawal policy
- Reimbursement and approval procedures
- Vendor oversight
- Permissions for access to accounting systems and bank accounts
- Permissions for access to payment collection platforms such as Venmo and Square
- Adding and removing signatories and card holders on bank accounts

Training and Culture

- Councils should provide periodic training for boards and staff on financial responsibilities.
- Create a culture where transparency, oversight, and speaking up about concerns are expected and encouraged.

Year-End Review

We encourage every council to take time before year-end to review these practices, identify any gaps, and make a plan to strengthen financial safeguards in partnership with your board. Council Directors and board members should reach out to their regional director for support as needed.

Additional Resource

[Fraud Risks in Nonprofit Organizations: Eight Steps Nonprofits Can Take Today to Mitigate Fraud Risks](#) – Farella Braun + Martel

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