

**National Council of the United States
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Rules of Engagement for Collaborations and Partnerships**

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an autonomous Catholic lay institution, a manifestation of the Gospel call for charity and justice for all people. We are committed to being faithful to Catholic Social teaching and believe that this is essential to our identity. Our Catholic values, teachings and traditions are the foundation for the work we do as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The rationale for all of our efforts as members of the Society is our belief in the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of human life.

As other Catholic institutions have done for decades, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States is focused on meeting the needs of those living in poverty and assisting them in becoming self-sustainable with an emphasis on ending poverty through systemic change. In order to do this work we often join in coalitions with others whose focus is to identify and eliminate the root causes of poverty. This sometimes includes working with groups that do not share our Catholic values. We do this with mutual understanding that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul cannot and will not endorse public policy statements that support any efforts on issues that are inconsistent with Catholic teachings and ethical practices and policies of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In addition, as a prerequisite of our engagement in coalitions, collaborative efforts or partnerships, we require the inclusion of a disclaimer which clearly indicates that policy statements made by the coalition do not necessarily represent the positions or beliefs of any of the individual organizations.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a national network of more than 4,500 local St. Vincent de Paul Conference and Councils and while we provide leadership and support to our members there is a degree of local autonomy to the extent that they participate in the different programs and projects at any given point in time. Any use of the Society's name and logo in communications of any type require that advance approval of the National Council's CEO prior to release of the communication items. We reserve the right to withdraw from any and all collaborative efforts or partnerships if the principles in this document are breached for any reason.

In defining the formal agreement, a few things need to be addressed. The document should contain a "hold harmless" clause which relieves the Society of liability for damages incurred. The agreement should have a beginning and ending date. It should also provide for the approval of the Board of Directors for each party of the collaboration/partnership. Depending on the complexity of the agreement, it may also define some of the specific interactions and responsibilities of the parties. If appropriate, it should identify the process by which the agreement will be terminated and the responsibilities/obligations of each party during and after the termination.

For questions on The Society of St. Vincent de Paul's rules of engagement for collaborations and partnerships, please contact, David Barringer, CEO for the Society in the United States via email at _____.

Effective date: _____