

Conference Governance - Baton Rouge

- a. ensure that all solidarity contributions are paid in a timely manner (when applicable).
In Baton Rouge the District Council pays the solidarity to National for all conferences in the District. These payments are made from the money sent to the Council by each conference quarterly. The Council portion of the solidarity is approximately \$4000 per year. Additional solidarity is paid to National by Special Works based upon income for the year.
- b. assure that the Conference submits annual reports on time.
Conferences submit annual reports to the District Council by October 31st of each year. The Council verifies the amounts with quarterly reports and then enters the annual reports into the National SVDP database by the deadline.
- c. facilitate and ensure compliance with Diocesan and/or National Council safe environment policy
The Council and all its conferences must comply with the Child Protection Policy of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. This is required if minors will participate in the ministry. Please contact the Child Protection services coordinator in your parish before an event where minors will be encouraged to participate for guidance on compliance. Minors are not usually conference members but they could be involved in special projects from time to time.
- d. be alert to issues of accountability and good governance.
The Financial procedures for Conferences of the District Council of Baton Rouge lay out the procedures to be followed to ensure accountability and good governance in each conference. This document can be found on the web site <https://svdpbr.org/parish-member-conference-forms>

1. Does the treasurer provide a written financial report to the members present at each meeting?

Each conference must answer.

2. Does the Conference have a bank account separate from the parish? Are there appropriate signatories on the bank account(s)? The National Office has a treasurer's manual that may prove to be helpful.

Conferences within the District Council of Baton Rouge do have bank accounts separate from the church parishes. The Financial procedures for Conferences of the District Council of Baton Rouge details recommendations for appropriate signatories on the bank accounts.

3. Does the Conference have its own 501(c)3 or is it covered under the Council 501(c)3?

All but one conference (St. Joseph-GLP) operates under the Council 501(c)3 designation.

4. Are complete, accurate, confidential records for every person helped kept, updated regularly, placed in a safe, central location, and made available to the active members of the Conference?

Each conference must answer.

5. Has a complete list of local resources and contact people to aid in cases been prepared and maintained by the Conference?

A list of resources has been prepared by a Council ad hoc committee. That document can be found at <https://svdpbr.org/parish-member-conference-forms>

6. Has the Conference explored the need for insurance coverage?

Most conferences have no assets except the money in their checking account and perhaps food in a pantry. SVDP Baton Rouge has insurance coverage with Catholic Mutual. The church parishes in the Diocese of Baton Rouge also have insurance coverage with Catholic Mutual. Conferences can individually buy insurance through the National Insurance program.

7. Does the Conference conduct appropriate and timely audits or financial reviews?

The conferences are required to conduct an annual self-audit of conference operations and submit the written report of the audit to the District Council. SVDP Special Works and Conference operations are audited annually by an outside auditor. In addition individual church parishes are audited periodically by the Diocese of Baton Rouge. When a church parish is audited the SVDP conference operations are also audited as part of that Diocesan audit.

8. Is there a need to file a form 990 with the IRS?

For the conferences that use the 501(c)3 designation (tax ID) of the District Council, the 990 is prepared and submitted annually along with 990s for Special Works operations. The data from conference annual reports is used to prepare the 990s. Some additional questions are asked to the conferences regarding fund raising events and donors of \$5000 or more to complete the 990s.

9. Are there appropriate Bylaws? (The National Council Office has approved Bylaws that can easily be modified)

As far as I know, conferences do not currently have bylaws. We need to work on this.