

3. A school below college level affiliated with a church or operated by a **religious order** described in Regulations section 1.6033-2(g)(1)(vii).

4. A mission society sponsored by, or affiliated with, one or more churches or church denominations, if more than half of the society's activities are conducted in, or directed at, persons in foreign countries.

5. An exclusively religious activity of any **religious order** described in Rev. Proc. 91-20, 1991-1 C.B. 524.

Certain governmental organizations.

6. A state institution whose income is excluded from gross income under section 115.

7. A **governmental unit** or affiliate of a governmental unit described in Rev. Proc. 95-48, 1995-2 C.B. 418.

8. An organization described in section 501(c)(1). A section 501(c)(1) organization is a corporation organized under an Act of Congress that is an instrumentality of the United States, and exempt from federal income taxes.

Certain political organizations.

9. A political organization that is:

- A state or local committee of a political party;
- A political committee of a state or local candidate;
- A caucus or association of state or local officials; or
- Required to report under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 as a political committee (as defined in section 301(4) of such Act).

Certain organizations with limited gross receipts.

10. An organization whose **gross receipts** are normally \$25,000 or less. To determine what an organization's gross receipts "normally" are, see Appendix B, *How to Determine Whether an Organization's Gross Receipts Are Normally \$25,000 (or \$5,000) or Less*.

11. A **foreign organization**, including organizations located in **U.S. possessions**, whose **gross receipts** from sources within the U.S. are normally \$25,000 or less.

Certain organizations that file different kinds of annual information returns.

12. A private foundation (including a private operating foundation) exempt under section 501(c)(3) and described in section 509(a). Use Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation. Also use Form 990-PF for a taxable private foundation, a section 4947(a)(1) **nonexempt charitable trust** treated as a private foundation, and a private foundation terminating its status by becoming a **public charity** under section 507(b)(1)(B) (for tax years within its 60-month termination period). If the organization successfully terminates, then it files Form 990 or Form 990-EZ in its final year of termination.

13. A black lung benefit trust described in section 501(c)(21). Use Form 990-BL, Information and Initial Excise Tax Return for Black Lung Benefit Trusts and Certain Related Persons.

14. A religious or apostolic organization described in section 501(d). Use Form 1065, U.S. Return of Partnership Income.

15. A stock bonus, pension, or profit-sharing trust that qualifies under section 401. Use Form 5500, Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan.

C. Sequencing List To Complete the Form and Schedules

You may find the following chart helpful. It limits jumping from one part of the form to another to make a calculation or determination needed to complete an earlier part. Certain later parts of the form must first be completed in order to complete earlier parts. In general, first complete the core form, and then complete alphabetically Schedules A-N and Schedule R, except as provided below. Schedule O should be completed as the core form and schedules are completed.

1. Complete lines A through F and H(a) through M in the Entity section of Form 990, on page 1.

2. See the instructions for Schedule R and determine the organization's **related organizations** required to be listed in Schedule R.

3. Determine the organization's officers, directors, trustees, key employees, and five highest compensated employees required to be listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A.

4. Complete Parts VIII, IX, and X of Form 990.

5. Complete line G in the Entity section of Form 990, on page 1.

6. Complete Parts III, V, VII, and XI of Form 990.

7. See the instructions for Schedule L (Form 990) and complete Schedule L (Form 990) (if required).

8. Complete Part VI of Form 990. Transactions reported on Schedule L (Form 990) are relevant to determining independence of **members of the governing body** under Form 990, Part VI, line 1b.

9. Complete Part I of Form 990 based on information derived from other parts of the form.

10. Complete Part IV of Form 990 to determine which schedules must be completed by the organization.

11. Complete applicable schedules (for "Yes" boxes that were checked in Part IV). Use Schedule O (Form 990), to provide required supplemental information and other narrative explanations.

12. Complete Part II, *Signature Block*, of Form 990.

TIP A **public charity** described in section 170(b)(1)(A)(iv) or (vi) or section 509(a)(2) that is not within its initial five years of existence should first complete Part II or III of Schedule A, *Public Charity Status & Public Support*, (Form 990 or 990-EZ) to ensure that it continues to qualify as a public charity for the tax year. If it fails to qualify as a public charity, then it must file Form 990-PF rather than Form 990 or Form 990-EZ.

D. Accounting Periods and Methods

TIP See IRS Pub. 538, *Accounting Periods and Methods*, about reporting changes to accounting periods and methods.

Accounting Periods

Calendar year. Use the 2008 Form 990 to report on the 2008 calendar year accounting period. A calendar year accounting period begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

Fiscal year. If the organization has established a fiscal year accounting period, use the 2008 Form 990 to report on the organization's fiscal year that began in 2008 and ended 12 months later. A fiscal year accounting period should normally coincide with the natural operating cycle of the organization. Be certain to indicate in item A of the Entity section of Form 990 the date the organization's fiscal year began in 2008 and the date the fiscal year ended in 2009.

Short period. A short accounting period is a period of less than 12 months, which exists when an organization first commences operations, changes its accounting period, or terminates. If the organization's short year ended prior to December 31, 2008 (not on or after December 31, 2008), it may use 2007 Form 990 to file for the short year.

Accounting period change. If the organization changes its accounting period, it must file a Form 990 for the short period resulting from the change. Write "Change of Accounting Period" at the top of this short-period return.

If the organization previously changed its accounting period within the 10-calendar-year period that includes the beginning of the **short period**, and it had a Form 990 filing requirement at any time during that 10-year period, it must also attach a Form 1128 to the short-period return. See Rev. Proc. 85-58, 1985-2 C.B. 740.

Accounting methods

Unless instructed otherwise, the organization should generally use the same accounting method on the return to report revenue and expenses that it regularly uses to keep its books and records. To be acceptable for Form 990 reporting