





Navigating the Fiscal Agent Relationship

Webinar: Navigating the Coalition/Fiscal Agent Relationship

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Typical Fiscal Structures of Coalitions:

- Coalition is own fiscal agent
- Coalition exists in larger agency that serves as fiscal agent
- Third party entity not associated with coalition serves as fiscal agent

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Avoiding potential pitfalls begins with clearly defined roles and responsibilities

- Fiscal Agent
- Staff
- Coalition Members

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Considerations

- Who is responsible for what
- What is the interaction between these three groups
- What is the decision making authority of each group
- How are the interaction documented



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Set Up For Success

- Who will provide oversight of the daily operations and management of the coalition?
- What are the fiscal agent policies that will impact coalition work?
- Who has the authority for making strategic and funding decisions?
- Need to create job descriptions
- What is the operating structure and how are coalition members involved in leadership?



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Five Critical Discussions

1. "Who's the Boss" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffing Issues• Role of Executive Committee• Role of the Fiscal Agent	3. "A Roll of the Dice" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision Making Procedures
2. "Show Me the Money" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget Development Issues• Resource Allocation	4. "The Buck Stops Here" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial Management Guidelines
	5. "That's Not What I Heard" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Channels ₆



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1. Who's the Boss

- A. Staffing Issues
- B. Role of Executive Committee
- C. Role of the Fiscal Agent

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A. Staffing Issues

Clearly define policies about the following issues and incorporate into the job description for staff.

- Hiring and firing
- Daily supervision
- Work space/hours
- Benefits, pay range, raises, vacation

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A. Staffing Issues

- Performance reviews
- Travel & training expenses (including volunteer reimbursement)
- Communication (business cards, press releases, etc)
- Branding/Marketing
(Is the coalition marketed as a separate entity, or is it a project of the [YMCA], or presented by and supported by the [YMCA]?)

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B. Role of Executive Committee



Clearly define policies about the following issues and incorporate into job descriptions for coalition members.

- Strategy selection and implementation
- Setting the budget for the coalition
- Allocation of resources for the work of the coalition
- Supervision & management of staff assigned to the coalition
- Defining and filling volunteer leadership roles
- Planning for succession

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C. Role of Fiscal Agent

Clearly define policies about the following issues and incorporate into a job description for the fiscal agent.

- What does fiscal oversight mean?
 - How are grant funds monitored on behalf of the coalition?
 - Communicating between fiscal agent and finance committee/coalition about how money is spent
 - Fiscal reporting on behalf of the coalition
 - Joint supervision of coalition staff when appropriate

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C. Role of Fiscal Agent

- Management of spending within budget developed and approved by the coalition
- Provide space for the coalition and its staff to use
- Allocate resources based on the guidance of the coalition
- Participate in the finance committee
- Provide legal guidance and oversight of coalition funds
- If FA staff hours are dedicated to the grant, define exactly how many, how they will be used and when they will occur.

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2. Show Me The Money

Budget Development and Approval

- Fiscal agent is the grantee **but** received money to fund the approved coalition budget
- Budget is based on assessment findings and subsequent strategic plan
- Staff hours are defined as necessary to oversee the implementation of the funded plan

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2. Show Me The Money

- Negotiation points
 - Budget development committee: Representatives from Fiscal Agent, Volunteer Coalition Leadership and Staff
 - Determine who develops the annual budget
 - Determine who approves the annual budget
 - Determine how changes are made to annual budget

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2. Show Me The Money


- Who determines the expenditures for budget excess
- Who fills the gaps for budget shortfalls
- What are the fiscal agent policies for the coalition fundraising?
- When the coalition fundraises, who receives the money and who determines how it is spent?

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3. A Roll of The Dice Decision Making Procedures

- What are the Fiscal Agent, Volunteer and Staff Leadership Roles?
- What authority do they have to make decisions – independently and collectively?
- How and when will the three entities work together to make decisions – time limited?



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4. The Buck Stops Here Financial Management

Clearly define financial policies/procedures such as:

- How will expenditures be approved?
- How will checks be requested and processed?
- What is the time line for paying invoices?
- Are Fiscal Agent P&P's in line with grant requirements?
(Resource: <http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/management.aspx>,
Click on PDF of Financial Management Requirements)

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5. That's Not What I Heard

Communication Channels

Clearly define communication policies/procedures such as:

- Who communicates with the funder?
- Who is cc'd on communication to/from the funder?
- How are financial reports made, to whom and how often?
- How is the budget communicated to the full coalition?

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5. That's Not What I Heard

Communication Channels

- Bottom Line: What is the operating structure of the coalition?
 - Organizational Chart – Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Task Forces
 - Internal and External Communication Channels
 - Leadership Roles
 - Succession Plans

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Putting It In Writing

The "MOU"

- If it's not in writing, it doesn't exist.
- Relationships need to be clearly defined and documented.
- Must recognize this is a **legal** agreement with funder
- A solid MOU = basis for discussion, negotiation and decision making as the relationship becomes more complicated with funding.

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Resources

CADCA – Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America www.cadca.org

CADCA National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute: Help & Technical Assistance – Contact: 800-54CADCA x240 training@cadca.org

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