

Diocese of Phoenix - Parish Financial Review Policy

Policy statement

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix treasures God's gifts and employs a dynamic Parish Financial Review Program to ensure that those temporal gifts placed at her disposal are safeguarded through fiscal integrity, accurate reporting, and appropriate use.

Related policy information - General

1. The Diocesan Pastoral Center Finance Department is responsible for the Parish Financial Review Program.
2. The reviews focus on accounting systems, finance-related business processes, internal controls, conformance to generally accepted accounting principles or other comprehensive basis of accounting, and compliance with applicable canon and civil laws as well as Diocesan policies and norms.
3. The Parish Finance Liaison manages the program, reporting to the CFO with a dotted line relationship to the Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia, the Diocesan Finance Council Audit Committee, and the Deans.

Related policy information - Parishes

1. Auditors perform financial reviews at each Parish no less than once every three years.
2. Reviews are performed at every Pastor change; the review will be scheduled no later than 60 days after the change. If possible, the review will be scheduled before the change of Pastor.
3. Reviews are performed in a timely manner in response to appropriate special requests.
4. The auditor holds an exit meeting to discuss the findings with the Pastor, the bookkeeper, a Parish Finance Council member, and whomever else the Pastor chooses. Required changes are clearly specified in the report; the report may also contain non-required recommendations.
5. The Diocesan Parish Finance Liaison attends the audit exit meetings whenever possible. In all cases, the Liaison provides ongoing support from the Finance Department.
6. The auditor, the CFO, and the Pastor sign the Financial Review Report. A copy goes to each member of the Parish Finance Council. The Moderator of the Curia and the Dean receive the two-page executive summary; the full report is available to them upon request. The Moderator of the Curia determines whether to pass the report on to the Bishop. All parties are copied on any written responses from the Pastor.
7. Approximately six months after each exit meeting, the auditor follows up to review and document the actions taken on the recommendations. The scope of the follow up depends upon the extent of the changes required; some follow ups can be done by phone, others require on site visits. The complete results are shared with the Pastor and the Parish Finance Council. The Moderator of the Curia and the Dean receive a follow-up executive summary; the full report is available to them upon request.
8. Future element of the program available 1/1/2006: a post-review parish survey.
9. Future element of the program available 7/1/2006: a self-review program will be available for use anytime by Parish staff and/or Parish Finance Councils.