

THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY
The Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County

Bylaws

Approved by Women's Giving Leadership 6/723
Approved by Community Foundation Board of Trustees 6/23/23

I. NAME

The Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County is the official name of the organization.

II. PURPOSE AND MISSION

- A. Founded in 2006, the Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County cultivates philanthropy among women in the Frederick, Maryland area. Through the power of collective giving, the Giving Circle pools members' monetary contributions to support local nonprofits serving the needs of women.
- B. Mission Statement: The Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County provides opportunities for donors to promote and support programs that enable and empower women in challenging situations to improve the quality of their lives and the lives of those for whom they are responsible.

III. GOALS OF THE WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE

- A. Expand philanthropic and leadership opportunities that encourage and increase giving.
- B. Contribute toward the improvement of the emotional, educational, financial, and physical well-being of adult women who are in challenging situations.
- C. Create philanthropic awareness of the needs of women.
- D. Address both short-term grant funding as well as long-term growth and stability through the maintenance of two funds:
 - 1. Low-risk annually accumulating fund for grant awards and operational expenses (pass-through fund)
 - 2. Investment return -producing fund for growth and stability (quasi-endowment fund)
- E. Award grants based on specific criteria established by the Giving Circle.
- F. Assure the continued funding and success of the Giving Circle by:
 - 1. Growing membership that is open and welcoming to all.
 - 2. Encourage ongoing giving from members and other donors.

3. Maintain a program of planned giving to encourage legacy donations to the Giving Circle called the Pink Circle Society.
- G. Engage and educate members on the challenges faced by women in the Frederick community and the ways in which philanthropy can address their most pressing needs.
- H. Allow for change and evolution in Giving Circle processes and policies to ensure continued success in fulfilling its mission.

IV. SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

The Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County is a membership entity of The Community Foundation of Frederick County. The Community Foundation manages the two Giving Circle funds (pass-through and quasi-endowment) and holds the 501(c)(3) designation under which the Giving Circle operates.

V. OPERATING POLICIES

A. Fund Allocation:

The Giving Circle's funds shall operate under the policies established by the Community Foundation's Board of Trustees for pass-through and quasi-endowment funds. Standard donations made by members are allocated 20% to the quasi-endowment fund and 80% to the pass-through fund unless otherwise designated by the donor. Other revenue from non-member donations, sponsorships, events, merchandise sales, etc. shall be allocated 100% to the pass-through fund.

B. Grants:

1. The Giving Circle, under the guidance of the Community Foundation, is responsible for defining and implementing the grant-making process, including eligibility criteria, timeline, and grant evaluation procedures.
2. In response to a community emergency or other extenuating circumstances, the Leadership Circle may elect to propose and approve out-of-sequence grants funded from either or both of the two Giving Circle funds.
3. Applicants should incorporate the mission statement of the Women's Giving Circle when requesting grant funding.

C. Membership:

1. Membership shall be open to all individuals, organizations, and corporations who wish to further the mission and goals of the Giving Circle.

2. Membership is initiated when a new member makes their initial pledge.
3. Membership becomes permanent when the initial pledge is completed, providing lifetime membership.
4. Completion of a member's initial pledge shall not preclude continued development efforts to encourage ongoing giving to the Giving Circle.
5. Membership types, including the duration and amount of the initial pledge, is defined by the Leadership Circle.
6. Membership policies shall encourage a diverse membership, including pledge options for younger members.
7. Members will:
 - a. Vote on matters submitted by the Leadership Circle via electronic means or at the Annual Meeting.
 - b. Be offered the option to participate in the Giving Circle's work through volunteer opportunities.
 - c. Be invited to attend all Giving Circle events.
 - d. Have access to organizational information through the Giving Circle website, as well as other communication channels.
8. A progressive tier of membership levels defines and recognizes cumulative giving over a member's lifetime.
 - a. The progressive tier levels are:
 - Hope Diamond Members who donate/pledge \$30,000 or more
 - Red Diamond Members who donate/pledge \$20,000-29,999
 - Pink Diamond Members who donate/pledge \$10,000-\$19,999
 - Diamond Members who donate/pledge \$5000-\$9,999
 - Emerald Members who donate/pledge \$3001-\$4,999
 - Sapphire Members who donate/pledge \$3000
(Under the age of 35-\$500 per year for 6 years)
 - Junior Membership (21 and under): A one-time \$500 pledge/donation.

VI. GOVERNANCE

- A. The Giving Circle is governed by the Leadership Circle, consisting of the officers, immediate past Chair, Chair Emerita (Circle Founder), and committee chairs.
- B. The officer roles are Chair, Vice-Chair, and Finance Chair.

1. Officers shall serve two-year terms, coinciding with the Community Foundation fiscal year, July 1- June 30. The Chair and Vice-Chair positions have a one-term limit. The Finance Chair may serve multiple consecutive two-year terms.
- C. Committee Chairs are appointed by the Chair.
- D. The Leadership Circle shall meet quarterly to carry out planning, policy definition, and work towards the continued success of the Giving Circle's mission.
- E. The officer roles are:
1. Chair
 - a. Leads the Giving Circle in all activities and general business.
 - b. Sets Leadership Circle meeting dates.
 - c. Chairs Leadership Circle and member meetings, including the Annual Meeting.
 - d. Works with and provides leadership to the committee chairs in fulfilling their responsibilities.
 - e. Appoints committee chairs.
 2. Vice Chair
 - a. Provides leadership to the Giving Circle in the absence of the Chair.
 - b. Prepares to fulfill the role of Chair as part of an organized succession plan.
 - c. Procures and manages Giving Circle sponsorships.
 - d. Fulfills other responsibilities as defined by the Chair.
 3. Finance Chair
 - a. Oversees finance and cash flow of the organization.
 - b. Creates and manages the Giving Circle operational budget (subject to approval by the Community Foundation Board of Trustees)

- c. Oversees the financial status of the Giving Circle, including review of Community Foundation reporting related to donations and other revenue, grants, and operational expenses.
- d. Organizes and co-manages quarterly meetings with Community Foundation and other WGC members as deemed necessary.
- e. Fulfills responsibilities as assigned by the Chair.

VII. NOMINATION, ELECTION, AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

- A. Nominations for the position of Chair, Vice Chair and Finance Chair shall be openly solicited from the Circle membership in March via electronic means and sent to the current Chair of the Giving Circle. (If the Vice Chair agrees to succeed as Chair and the Finance Chair is on a second or additional term, nominations will only be for the Vice Chair).
- B. Prior to the end of each two-year term, the Chair convenes with the Vice Chair, Past Chair and Chair Emerita to identify a nominee for the vice chair position.
- C. The full slate of officers shall be presented first to the Leadership Circle, and then presented to the membership via electronic means no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
- D. The membership shall vote on the slate at the Annual Meeting with approval by a majority of the attending members.

VIII. COMMITTEES:

- A. The operational work of the Giving Circle is carried out by a set of committees, each led by a committee chair as appointed by the Circle Chair.
- B. The Committees shall include:
 - 1. Membership: Responsible for recruitment and engagement of members.
 - 2. Communications: Responsible for both internal and external communication of Circle business, including digital, print, and media channels.
 - 3. Program: Responsible for planning and executing Circle events.
 - 4. Grants: Responsible for designing and implementing the Giving Circle grant application and award process. The Leadership Circle determines amount available for grants, based upon the market value of the pass through fund and the distribution policy for the quasi-endowment fund, minus the amount needed to support the Giving Circle's operations.

5. Community Outreach: Responsible for Giving Circle interactions with external organizations and community groups.
 6. Development: Responsible for the design and implementation of efforts to encourage continued giving by members who have completed their initial pledges, including the Giving Circle's planned giving program (Pink Circle Society).
- C. Additional committees can be formed and disbanded at the discretion of the Chair.
 - D. Committee chairs serve a two-year term with the option of one additional two-year term. (Exceptions may apply as deemed necessary by the Giving Circle Chair).
 - E. Committee chairs are responsible for notifying the Chair, no later than six months before the end of their first term, as to their intention to serve a second term.

IX. ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting is held each year in May or June. Topics include election of new officers, presentation of grant awards, review of Giving Circle news, membership status, inductions, and accomplishments. The Annual Meeting shall be open to the community.

X. BYLAW CHANGES

Changes to the bylaws shall be made with the approval of the Leadership Circle and the Community Foundation.