

Kehila Tzedakah Guidelines

approved by the Board, November 12, 2013

Kehila [publically states](#) that we repair the world:

- Through *chesed* (loving kindness and all our best inclinations) we take care of our Kehila community members in times of illness or trouble.
- Through *tikkun olam* (healing the world) we give of ourselves in social action — feeding, clothing and sheltering those less fortunate, advocating for those in need, cleaning and preserving the environment.
- Through *tzedakah* (giving to the poor) we pool our members' donations and select local, national, international, Jewish, and nonsectarian causes to support.
- Through community and personal commitment to the Earth, *haAdamah*, we seek to repair and care for the environment.

Allocating donations

- Donations should be allocated to organizations and needs that are aligned with Kehila's values. They can include *tikkun olam* and can be local, national, Jewish, Israel focused or international.
- The allocations should reflect a balanced portfolio of the many concerns and needs that Kehila holds.
- Kehila members are encouraged to suggest organizations appropriate for receiving allocations from the Tzedakah fund.
- Allocations may be made to address emergencies, e.g. natural disasters. Ideally the funds would be allocated through organizations that have a strong track record of philanthropy consistent with Kehila's values.
- Allocations should be handled in such a fashion that they do not create the appearance of a conflict of interest. For example, if a Kehila member serves on the Board of an organization receiving an allocation, that information should be disclosed in the interest of transparency.
- Allocations may leverage/complement volunteer work that Kehila members participate in, e.g., Shepherd's Table.
- Modest allocations may also be made to organizations in which a Kehila member has a special one-time interest—e.g. a bar mitzvah project. In those cases the Kehila allocation should not normally exceed \$180. This amount may be periodically reviewed and updated by the Committee.
- The Committee supports the idea of matching Tzedakah funds collected by Kehila Sunday School classes and will work with the School head to facilitate this idea.
- Donations should normally be allocated to organizations with a clear tax-exempt status, e.g. 501(3)(c) status and that have a high rating on Charity Navigator or similar resources
- Allocations cannot be made for a political campaign or other partisan activity.
- Allocations should be made throughout the year. The Committee may wish to keep a reserve fund in order to be responsive to emergencies, but should keep this reserve at no more than \$2000.

Processing Tzedakah donations

- Donations should be acknowledged as soon as possible.
- Purpose of the donation (in honor of, in memory of, etc.) should be noted in the Newsletter.
- Donations should be provided to the Treasurer for deposit as soon as possible. If a donation is made to the Rabbi's discretionary fund, the Rabbi should be informed.
- The committee member processing donations should retain a list of those donations.
- Processing of Yiskor donations is handled directly by the High Holiday committee.
- A list of organizations to which Kehila has made allocations will be posted on the Kehila web site.