Charities Review Council

Meets Standards Seal
Style Guide
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Welcome to the Charities Review Council’s Meets Standards Seal Style Guide.

The Meets Standards seal is the single-most visible representation of our collective commitment to accountable and ethical practices. Consistent and proper usage of the Meets Standards seal helps build and maintain recognition and strengthen public trust in the nonprofit sector. We encourage you to display the Meets Standards seal prominently.

Only organizations that have participated in the Charities Review Council’s Accountability Wizard and have met all standards are granted the use of the Meet Standards seal. Your organization is one of them. Thank you for participation in the Accountability Wizard and congratulations for meeting all standards.

The purpose of this Style Guide is to be a resource on the accurate use of the Meets Standards seal in various marketing and promotional materials. The Style Guide provides requirements for sizes and placements; recommendations for where you can use the Meets Standards seal; and a messaging guide that provides guidelines for how to talk about and write about participating in the Council’s Accountability Wizard charity review and meeting its Accountability Standards.

If you have any questions about the Meets Standards seal or need further assistance to implement this Style Guide, please contact Helen Ng, Charities Review Council Marketing & Communications Manager at (612) 224-7030, ext. 11 or hng@smartgivers.org.
The Meets Standards seal can be used in multiple media and vehicles. Here are a sampling of where you can proudly display the Meets Standard seal:

- Advertising (Newspaper/Magazine)
- Advertising (Radio/TV/Web)
- Annual reports
- Billboard/transit ads
- Brochures
- Business cards
- Letterhead and envelopes
- E-mail signature line
- E-newsletters
- Fliers
- Letters to the editor
- Marketing partnerships
- News releases
- Newsletters
- Posters
- Postcards
- Presentation
- Published articles and reports
- Public service announcements (PSAs)
- Signage such as table tents, banners etc.
- Special events/fundraiser promotional materials such as program books
- Theater programs
- Videos/DVDs
- Web sites
GENERAL USAGE

- The Charities Review Council Meets Accountability Standards Seal, should never be redrawn, respaced, or altered in any way. It should never be used as part of any other symbol or logo.

- The seal should always appear in its pure form and stand on its own with clear spacing surrounding it on all sides.

- To ensure the logo’s integrity, clarity, and impact, the seal should never be reproduced smaller than 3/4” in diameter.

- The right to use the seal is granted only after a nonprofit organization has participated in the Accountability Wizard review, has met all standards and signed the licensing agreement. The Meets Standards seal is valid for the three years of your Accountability Wizard review, provided that all standards continue to be met.

- You can download electronic versions of the Meets Standards seal and additional copies of this Style Guide by logging onto the Accountability Wizard secured login area for registered Accountability Wizard users. (www.SmartGivers.org/Wizard)

- When posting the seal on your website, the image MUST link to the URL of your organizations final report. The URL includes your EIN number without the dash. (e.g.: www.SmartGivers.org/SmartGiversReview/XXXXXXXXX)
CLEAR SPACE

It is important that a minimum clear space be maintained around the seal to maintain its integrity as a design element. As a general rule, allow a distance equivalent to the height of the letter “S” in the word Standards as a clear zone. The clear space is measured from the top, right, left and bottom-most points of the seal. The seal should be located at least 1/4” from the trim or folds of any publication. No other design elements may be positioned within this space, including typography, photography and illustration.

RESIZING

The seal should always be visible and clear when using it, therefore any resizing to be made bigger should be done using the corner tabs to avoid pixilation.

Do not use side tabs for resizing as they do not maintain the aspect ratio, thus causing pixilation. Pixilation is a blurring of the image so that it no longer appears crisp.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVAILABLE FORMAT</th>
<th>MINIMUM SIZE</th>
<th>ACCEPTABLE USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMYK EPS logo</td>
<td>3/4” in diameter</td>
<td>For use only in CMYK or black &amp; white printed materials. It is acceptable to use the seal in a single color provided the color is black. It is acceptable to use the seal in a single color provided the color is part of your color palette. The seal may not be screened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPG logo</td>
<td>144 X 144 (pixels)</td>
<td>For use in any on-screen displays and Web sites. The seal may not be screened.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MESSAGING GUIDE

The Messaging Guide provides guidelines for how to talk and write about participating in the Council’s Accountability Wizard charity review and meeting the Accountability Standards. Language is an important component of the seal and the use of clear, approachable language is imperative when explaining it. You can use the following language to accompany the seal. Please refer to the following examples when developing copy for your advertising materials. There are three different types to suit various needs, such as printed materials, grant proposals and corporate partnerships.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR PRINT AND ON-SCREEN MATERIALS

The following statements are suitable for use in promotional materials such as brochures, Web sites, newsletters, news releases, etc.

Sample #1:
Thank you for your support of {CHARITY ABC}. We honor the trust you have placed in us and are committed to spending your gift responsibly. We have been reviewed by the Charities Review Council and are proud to have met its Accountability Standards. To read our charity review report, visit the Charities Review Council at www.SmartGivers.org.

Sample #2:
Thank you for your support of {CHARITY ABC}. We honor the trust you have placed in us and are committed to spending your gift responsibly. We have been reviewed by the Charities Review Council and are proud to have met its Accountability Standards. The Charities Review Council helps Minnesotans make informed giving choices by providing tools and information about charities. To read our charity review report, visit the Charities Review Council at www.SmartGivers.org.

Sample #3:
{CHARITY ABC} has been reviewed by the Charities Review Council and is proud to have met its Accountability Standards. To read our charity review report, visit the Charities Review Council at www.SmartGivers.org.
SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR CORPORATE PARTNERS
The following statement is suitable for a partner corporation to describe their partnership with your organization. The corporation may use the Meets Standards seal on their marketing materials but only in conjunction with your organization. However, all criteria laid out in this Style Guide applies to the corporation as well.

Sample #1:
{CORP XYZ} is proud to support the work of {CHARITY ABC}. {CHARITY ABC} has been reviewed by the Charities Review Council and has met its Accountability Standards.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE IN GRANT PROPOSALS
The following statement is suitable when describing your organization’s mission and goals; strengths and accomplishments; and/or long-term funding strategies. Tailor it to fit your needs.

Sample #1:
{CHARITY ABC} is committed to organizational accountability. We voluntarily participated in a Charities Review Council’s Accountability Wizard review and have met all Accountability Standards. Our final report was completed on {DATE}. To read our review report, visit the Charities Review Council at www.SmartGivers.org/SmartGiversReview/{INSERT YOUR EIN}. 
The seal is no smaller than 3/4” in diameter.

Resizing was done properly using the corner tabs. The seal is not blurred and still has a crisp look to it.

The seal has not been screened or lightened.

Minimum clear space has been maintained. See page 4 for details.

The use of the seal is in accordance to the signed license agreement and this Style Guide.