# Clinton County Foundation Gift Acceptance Policy

# Adopted September 2018

Purpose

The purpose of these fund and gift acceptance policies is to advance the Foundation’s mission of connecting donor interests to community needs and opportunities utilizing community knowledge and leadership. By providing guidelines for negotiating and accepting various types of gifts for different types of funds, these policies are designed to serve the best interests of the Foundation, donors who support the Foundation’s programs through charitable gifts, and a healthy and caring community. These policies are established to assure that each gift to the Foundation is structured to provide maximum benefits to the community, the donor, the Foundation and the beneficiaries of the Foundation’s charitable programs and activities.

Scope

These policies address both current and deferred gifts, with an emphasis on specific types of deferred gifts and gifts of non-cash property. The goal is to encourage financial support for the Foundation without encumbering it with gifts which either generate more cost than benefit, or which may be restricted in a manner that is not in keeping with the Foundation’s charitable purposes or applicable laws governing charitable gifts. These policies also describe the types of funds that the Foundation maintains.

Notwithstanding anything in this policy to the contrary, the Foundation reserves the right to waive any requirements herein with respect to acceptance of specific gifts.

Ethical Standards in Dealing with Donors and Grantmaking

Every person acting for or on the Foundation’s behalf shall adhere to those standards set forth in A Donor Bill of Rights:

 http://www.afpnet.org/files/ContentDocuments/Donor\_Bill\_of\_Rights.pdf,

and the Model Standards of Practice for the Charitable Gift Planner:

 http://www.pppnet.org/ethics/model\_standards.html.

The Foundation is committed to the highest ethical standards of philanthropy and development. In all transactions between potential donors and the Foundation, the Foundation will aspire to provide accurate information and full disclosure of the benefits and liabilities that could influence a donor’s decision, including with respect to the Foundation’s fees, the irrevocability of a gift, prohibitions on donor restrictions, items that are subject to variability (such as market value, investment return, and income yield), the Foundation’s responsibility to provide periodic financial statements with regard to donor funds, and investment policies and other information needed by donors to make an informed choice about using the Foundation as a vehicle of charitable gifts. In addition, all donors will be strongly encouraged to discuss their gifts with their own financial and tax advisors before signing any gift agreement. The role of the Foundation’s staff is to inform, guide, and assist the donor in fulfilling his or her philanthropic goals, without pressure or undue influence.

The Foundation recognizes the paramount role of donors and their gifts to the Foundation in executing its charitable mission. In carrying out the Foundation’s development program, staff will recognize and acknowledge donors in appropriate ways, both publicly and privately, subject to the Foundation’s Policy on Confidentiality. Donors reserve the freedom to determine the degree and type of recognition that they prefer and the Foundation respects the confidentiality of donors who do not wish to be publicly recognized.

Discrimination: The Clinton County Foundation seeks to promote respect for all people. The Clinton County Foundation will support gifts that do not intend to deny benefits on the basis of race, age, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation, gender, physical or mental disability, or religion. It is not the intent of this policy to deny support for programs that serve specifically defined populations or programs that seek to guarantee equality of opportunity to, and to reduce underrepresentation and underutilization of, minorities and women.

Funds

The Foundation offers several different types of funds. These include:

Unrestricted Funds. Gifts to these funds help the Foundation help our community. The Foundation makes distributions to support effective work of charitable organizations throughout the area we serve.

Field of Interest Funds. These funds support a charitable purpose designated by the fund’s donor or donors. Distributions are determined by the Foundation consistent with the fund’s purposes. Where appropriate, the Foundation may create an advisory committee to make recommendations for distributions.

Designated Funds. These funds support a charitable organization designated by the fund’s donor or donors. Distributions generally are determined by applying the Foundation’s spending policy to the assets held in the fund.

Agency Endowments. These funds are created by charitable organizations that designate themselves as the fund’s beneficiary. Distributions generally are determined by applying the Foundation’s spending policy to the assets held in the fund.

Scholarship Funds. These funds provide financial assistance to students at schools, colleges, and universities. Scholarship funds can also support vocational training and assistance in paying for special courses. Donors recommend eligibility criteria and may serve on selection committees.

Donor Advised Funds. Donors recommend grants to charitable organizations.

Disaster Relief and Emergency Hardship Funds. Contributions to these funds help people in time of need and help our community recover when disasters strike. The Foundation makes distributions from these funds to support effective organizations that provide assistance to individuals and community organizations.

Variance Power

Sometimes a fund just doesn’t work anymore. Scientists discover a cure for polio. A charitable organization goes out of existence. The Foundation has the ability to address these situations through its variance power. This power gives the Foundation’s board the ability to make changes to a fund when its purpose is no longer necessary, can no longer be fulfilled, or has become inconsistent with the charitable needs of the community. This power to update funds helps protect donors by avoiding the need for complex and costly legal proceedings.

Authority to Accept Gifts

Acceptance by Officers & Designated Employees. Any of the Foundation’s officers or employees designated by the Foundation’s SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS Committee may accept, for and on the Foundation’s behalf, any of the following:

• Cash

• Checks

• Marketable securities

• Life insurance and annuity policies

Emergency Gifts. Notwithstanding the Scholarships and Grant Committee’s authority above, gifts requiring immediate action (such as gifts in late December) may be exempted from full Committee review if, in the President’s judgment, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scholarships and Grant Committee, that gift may be accepted without in any way jeopardizing the Foundation’s exempt status.

Timing of Review. Gifts requiring Committee review will be handled promptly. Foundation staff will immediately notify donors if a gift is not accepted.

Authority to negotiate and sign gift agreements

Subject to the SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS Committee’s review and approval authority, the Foundation’s President and/or Executive Director, will have the authority to handle inquiries, negotiate with donors, assemble documentation, retain expert and technical consultants, and execute agreements on the Foundation’s behalf.

Purpose of gifts

The purpose of each gift to the Foundation must fall within the Foundation’s broad charitable purposes. The Foundation cannot accept any gift that will be directly or indirectly subject to any material restriction or condition by the donor that prevents the Foundation from freely and effectively employing the gift assets or the income from such assets to further its charitable purposes. In addition, the Foundation reserves the right to reject any gift that might place the other assets of the Foundation at risk or that is not readily convertible into assets that fall within the Foundation’s investment guidelines. The Foundation may also decline a gift if it is not able to administer the terms of the gift in accordance with the donor’s wishes.

Minimum gifts

Subject to the policies set forth in this document, the Foundation may accept gifts to existing funds of any size. The minimum gift for a new unrestricted or donor advised fund is $500.

Exceptions are subject to the approval of the Foundation’s President or Executive Director

Investment of gifts

The Foundation reserves the right to make any or all investment decisions regarding gifts to it in accordance with its Investment Policy, as amended from time to time. In making a gift to the Foundation, the donor gives up all rights, title and interest to the assets contributed. In particular, the donor relinquishes the right to choose investments and investment managers, brokers, or to veto investment choices for the contributed assets.

Costs of accepting and administering gifts

Generally, costs associated with the acceptance of a gift, such as the donor’s attorneys’ fees, accounting fees, and appraisal and escrow fees, are borne by the donor. The direct costs of administering gifts are generally paid out of the assets of the individual funds. Custodial, investment, and administrative fees are paid from the respective funds in accordance with the Foundation’s guidelines and fee schedules. The Foundation reserves the right to assess a set-up fee.

Fundraising by donors

Because the Foundation is legally responsible for all fundraising undertaken on its behalf, fundraising undertaken by donors in connection with funds of the Foundation must be approved in advance by the Foundation pursuant to the Foundation’s policy on fundraising by donors. All such fundraising activities are also subject the Foundation’s supervision.

 Insurance

The Clinton County Foundation may require charitable organizations supported by gifts maintain sufficient liability insurance.

Types of gift assets

Generally, gifted assets will be either 1) “liquid” assets such as cash or marketable securities, or 2) “illiquid” assets defined as everything that is not cash or marketable securities. With respect to non-cash assets, it is the Foundation’s general policy to liquidate all gifts promptly. On occasion, the Scholarships and Grants Committee may decide that it will not liquidate certain gifts immediately. Factors the Committee will consider include:

• Market conditions – a gift may be retained for a reasonable period of time if the likely sales price would be substantially less than the asset’s real value. Similarly, a large block of stock might be sold over a period of time in order not to artificially depress the price.

• Use by the foundation – the Foundation may elect to keep gifts that it will employ directly in furtherance of its exempt purposes. For example, the Foundation might keep real property that it will use as its offices.

• Desirability as an investment – on rare occasions, the Foundation may be given property that it wishes to retain as an investment. Considerations in this decision include the projected return and how the asset fits into the Foundation’s investment portfolio.

If a fund’s illiquid assets do not generate a sufficient return to permit grantmaking that is consistent with the assets’ value, the Foundation will seek an additional gift of cash or marketable securities to allow the fund to begin making distributions.

Subject to Board approval, the Foundation may accept the following types of gifts:

Liquid assets

Cash

The Foundation accepts gifts of cash

• In currency of the United States;

• By checks made payable to the Foundation or the component fund; or

• By credit cards or wire transfer to the Foundation’s account(s).

Publicly-Traded Securities.

General. The Foundation accepts gifts of marketable, publicly-traded stocks and bonds. As a general rule, publicly-traded stocks and bonds contributed to the Foundation will be redeemed or sold as soon as practicable. All proceeds from such redemption or sale less commissions and expenses are then credited to the component fund to which the stocks or bonds were originally contributed. The Foundation may accept gifts of publicly-traded stocks and bonds in any amount to any existing fund. However, gifts to establish a new component fund at the Foundation must meet the applicable minimum funding requirement.

Appraisal. No appraisal is required so long as the stock or bond is not subject to any restrictions, including those imposed by contract or the Securities Exchange Commission. Where appraisal is not required, the value of the gift is determined by calculating the mean of the high and low prices of the securities on the date of the gift.

Life Insurance

General. The Foundation may accept gifts of life insurance policies so long as: (a) the policy is not encumbered (i.e., there is no outstanding loan against the policy); (b) the Foundation is made the policy’s owner. and primary beneficiary; (c) there may not be an irrevocable beneficiary designation on the policy; (d) The insurance company will have an A. M. Best rating of A or better; and (e) the policy will must be a permanent life insurance policy, for example a universal life or whole life policy. Term Life insurance policies will not be accepted as gifts by the Foundation. Joint life policies are acceptable as long as they are permanent policies.

When continued premium payments can are no longer feasible be made because there is due to insufficient value in the policy to keep it in force, or because the Foundation chooses to discontinue premium payments, the policy will may be surrendered or a reduced death benefit may be requested. The Foundation may accept gifts of a life insurance policy in any amount to any existing fund. Gifts of a life insurance policy to establish a new component fund at the Foundation must meet the applicable minimum funding requirement.

Verification Appraisal. Each gift of life insurance policy giving rise to a charitable deduction of more than $5,000 must be appraised in accordance with federal tax law. Documentation must be provided by the issuing insurance company providing evidence of the current values of the life insurance policy as well as a projection of the future performance of the policy based on both current and guaranteed factors. A review—by the insurance company of the value of the policy will be made as part of the gift acceptance.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF ILLIQUID ASSETS

In connection with the acceptance of many types of illiquid assets, the Foundation may incur costs such as unrelated business income tax, fees or commissions associated with the sale or liquidation of assets, asset management and holding costs, consultant fees or other expenses outside the normal scope of the Foundation’s administrative costs. Accordingly, as a condition of the Foundation’s acceptance of the gift, the Foundation may require a pledge or other written agreement between the donor and the Foundation that provides for the payment of all or a portion of any such costs or expenses, including unrelated business income taxes, to the extent there is insufficient cash in the donor’s fund to which the asset(s) have been donated to cover such costs.

DEFERRED GIFTS & PLANNED GIVING.

These are gifts whose benefit does not fully accrue to the Foundation until some future time, or whose benefits aresplit with non-charitable beneficiaries. Foundation representatives are authorized to solicit direct charitable gifts through wills, as well as contributions to establish gift annuities or charitable trusts. The Foundation will work closely with donors and confer with financial advisors, at the request of the donors, to realize these gifts. In cases where the gifts are complex, the President/director may request review by the Finance Committee.

Bequests

The Foundation accepts bequests from donors who have directed in their wills that certain assets be transferred to the Foundation and honors the wishes of the donor as expressed, but reserves the right of refusal as necessary and appropriate. Sample bequest language for restricted and unrestricted gifts is available from the Foundation, to donors and/or advisors, upon request. The Foundation may not be named as Executor for a donor in his/her will and will not serve if named. The Foundation may create a named fund in memory of the donor, if there is no stipulation for anonymity.

Retirement Plans or IRA Accounts

Donors may make lifetime gifts of retirement assets or name the Foundation as the beneficiary of their plan. Retirement plans include, but are not limited to, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA), 401(k), 403(b), and defined contribution plans.

Life Income Gifts

The Foundation will work closely with donors to implement planned giving options that provide income to a donor or his/her designees, as well as financial benefit to the Foundation (split-interest gifts). Options include:

 CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS (CRT). This trust makes payments to one or more beneficiaries for their lifetimes, or for a fixed term, or a combination of both. Assets are put into a trust, beneficiaries are paid, and when the trust term ends, the remainder in the trust passes to the Foundation for its charitable purposes. The donor names a Trustee to manage the trust and determines whether the payout will be fixed (a charitable remainder annuity trust (CRAT)) or variable (a charitable remainder unitrust (CRUT)). Trusts can be set up during the donor’s lifetime or by will. The Foundation encourages donors to consult their own legal counsel and tax advisors to create a charitable remainder trust. At the donor’s request, the Foundation will confer with his/her advisors to assist in establishing the trust from which it will ultimately benefit. The Foundation will not serve as Trustee of the trust.

CHARITABLE LEAD TRUST (CLT). This trust first makes distributions to the Foundation for a specified period, with the remainder reverting to the donor or another beneficiary at the end of the period. It may be set up during one’s lifetime or in a will. The Foundation will work closely with the donor and/or his advisor to create the trust, but will not serve as Trustee.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY (CGA). This planned gift is based on a gift of cash or securities in exchange for lifetime income, either immediate or deferred, to the donor. It is a contract between the donor and the Foundation and is backed by our total assets. The gift is in part a charitable gift and in part the purchase of an annuity.

LIFE ESTATE. A donor may wish to contribute a personal residence or farm to the Foundation and retain the right to use the property until death. Upon the donor’s death, the Foundation owns the entire interest in the property.