

Singing Out Policy: Financial Assistance

Policy Purpose: Guidelines in the management of membership fee subsidies

Policy Statement: Singing Out's mandate/mission is based on an organizational culture that is inclusive for all who wish to participate. Financial barriers are not therefore intended on limiting participation. Balancing the needs of individuals who require financial consideration from time to time in a fair and transparent manner will be documented in a FA policy.

Policy Overview:

FA is intended to provide individuals with temporary financial relief from membership fees. This isn't meant as a permanent subsidy and is to be reassessed at a minimum on a term by term basis. Members receiving FA are required to notify the treasurer if their capacity to change their status through full reinstatement of fees or increases to the amount being paid.

FA is for those individuals facing financial difficulty as a result of employment interruption, attending post-secondary education full –time without financial means, chronic medical or other life conditions.

Singing Out is a largely self-funded organization and a voluntary activity for its members. Membership dues are a requirement of belonging

Approval Criteria:

1. Prospective members/members will be required to identify their need for financial consideration to the treasurer who is responsible to manage the FA process. This is done by indicating FA on the membership form and/or communicating in advance with the Treasurer
2. The treasurer will communicate, privately, with the individual to assess their eligibility for subsidy
3. The treasurer will apply the following criteria to base an eligibility determination:
 - a. Is the individual employed full or part-time or currently unemployed?
 - b. Is the individual a student full or part-time ineligible for or where other subsidies in the choir (student rate, bursary) are insufficient to address financial need?
 - c. Does the individual have any extraordinary circumstances (e.g. medical, life circumstance) that are causing a permanent and/or temporary financial inability to pay the full membership dues?

Subsidy Amounts through FA:

The treasurer will confirm the subsidy approved. The following will be the membership subsidy available:

1. Up to 35% of dues can be waived where an individual is unemployed/underemployed,
2. Up to 35% of dues can be waived where an individual is a student without means
3. Up to 50% of dues can be waived for an individual relying on government aid (social assistance, ODSP)
4. Members can request a payment schedule outside of the current payment schedule to assist them manage the dues (full fee or FA members) to a maximum of 3 payments. The first to be scheduled at the start of term, the 2nd mid-term and the final no later than two weeks prior to the concert
5. Exceptions to the above require the treasurer to consult with the Board of Directors.
6. If the treasurer is a FA applicant, the Vice President will review their application.
7. The Chorus Administrator (Treasurer when an administrator is not hired) is to compile a confidential summary of FA members for accounting purposes each term reporting monthly to the Board on FA numbers.
8. Information regarding members in receipt of FA will be kept confidential
9. **Audit:** Singing Out reserves the right to request supporting documentation to support the request for FA. Confidentiality with such requests and documents will be exercised.

Originally Approved: Board of Directors

Date: January 22, 2015

Amendment Approved Board of Directors July 23, 2017