

Electronic Forms Instructions

These are basic instructions regarding the electronic forms we produce.

We will be producing forms in two basic formats: Adobe Acrobat (pdf); and Visiform (vft/exe). Forms that are intended to be printed will be released only in the Adobe Acrobat format. Forms that may be completed and then emailed will be produced in both formats. The reason some forms are being produced in multiple formats is because of an issue with Adobe Reader — the free viewer for Acrobat Documents — which does not allow completed forms to be saved. Since they cannot be saved, they cannot be emailed. However, in general, the Acrobat format appears to be a better format, so when the ability to email a completed form is not an issue, the forms will be in Acrobat format only.

At one time we released several forms in Word format. These forms are no longer supported. You should use the Visiform forms instead. You may continue to use the Word forms, but you are urged to use the new forms. If any changes are made to the forms, you may not be able to use the Word forms anymore.

Acrobat forms

To use the Acrobat forms, you need the current version of the Adobe Reader — currently version 6. If you do not have the current version, you should download it from <www.adobe.com>. It is a free download. If you have an old computer and cannot use the current version, let us know and we will see if we can help.

You can save — and thus email — completed Acrobat forms, but this requires a full (purchased) version of Adobe Acrobat. If you have an older version of Adobe Acrobat installed on your computer, you may be able to download and install the current version of Adobe Reader — so that you can open the files — and still be able to save completed forms. I have not tried this, but there have been several hints that it will work. If you try it, please let us know whether or not it works.

VisiForm forms

We have started using a new program for our forms that are to be emailed. This program allows complete forms to be emailed either directly from the form or by saving the completed form and attaching it to an email. The forms from this program come in two different formats: “exe” and “vft”.

The “exe” format of the forms are “self-viewing” form. The form is attached to a program that allows it to be viewed and completed without installing anything on your computer. You should email the completed form directly by using the submit button in the form viewer. There are two minor problems that have arisen regarding this format. First, some email programs — like Microsoft Outlook — will not show “exe” files attached to email. This causes problems in getting these forms to you, but can be worked around. The second problem is that the “submit” button method does not appear to work with AOL email. It may not work with HotMail either, but we haven’t been able to check yet. If you use AOL or have other problems with sending the form with the “submit” button, you will need to use the “vft” format of these forms.

The “vft” format forms require a viewer program to be installed on your computer. The viewer program is free and can be downloaded from <www.primarysoftware.com>. The viewer program looks similar to the viewer for the “exe” format of the form. You will also be able to send the form directly from the viewer using a “submit” button. The main difference is that you will be able to save the file in the “vft” format, manually open your email, and attach the “vft” file to your email. Although the “exe” form will attach a “vft” file to an email, it will not save forms in that format, and the “vft” format is considerably smaller than the “exe” format — it does not have the viewer program attached.

Printing forms

When printing forms that are more than one page, please print the forms back to back — it saves paper and staples. If both the front and back are both in either portrait or landscape layout, please make sure that the top of both pages remains at the top when the page is flipped horizontally. If the front and back are different — one portrait and one landscape — please make sure that, when you flip the page by grasping the bottom with your left hand and flipping it over by causing the bottom of the page to end up on the left-hand side, the top of both pages stays on the top.

Emailing forms

The Monthly Report, Annual Officer Report, Consolidated Officer Report, Address Change, and Officer Change forms should be emailed to membership.

Problems

If you have any problems with the forms, if you spot an error on a form or in a field, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact this office.