

Supporting Organizations

Chapter 17: Synod—International Center and District Offices

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17.100: International Center (Synod Office)

The international office of the Synod is located in St. Louis, Missouri. The church body comprises more than 5,800 individual congregations walking together in a shared mission: vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world. This singular goal is accomplished by sharing the load. With God's help and blessing we do together what we cannot do alone.

The support received from congregations through the district is used to provide services that are best rendered through a single office, such as mission education; congregational programs for Sunday schools, parochial schools and vacation Bible schools; evangelism; youth programs; training of professional church workers; international information services; national social services; retirement and insurance programs; and pooled-investment services for trusts, annuities and other planned-giving instruments.

17.110: *The Lutheran Annual*

The Lutheran Annual is the official roster of members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and also includes listings of the agencies of the Synod and other organizations associated with the work of the Synod. The information presented in the Annual contains the latest names, addresses and numbers for churches, educational facilities, and all ordained and commissioned. The *Annual* is published yearly by Concordia Publishing House and can be obtained by calling CPH at 800-325-3040 or visiting cph.org.

17.120: *LCMS Handbook*

The *Handbook* contains the Constitution, Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Revised editions of the Handbook are published triennially by the LCMS Commission on Constitutional Matters following Synod conventions.

The current edition of the *Handbook* can be accessed online at lcms.org/bod or you may order a bound copy by contacting Concordia Publishing House at 800-325-3040.

17.130: International Center Budget

The unrestricted budget is developed based on district pledges for the work we do together, and the restricted budget is based on anticipated income given directly for items such as national and international missions, college and seminary support and KFUO radio. Annual Budget Summaries are available at lcms.org/bod.

17.140: Communication Services

LCMS Communications serves the Synod's congregations by telling the stories of our working and walking together as Lutherans, conveying the endless opportunities and achievements that are gifts from God.

These efforts involve "partnerships" of many kinds, as we work closely with the Office of the President and the Offices of National and International Mission, Pastoral Education, Church Relations, districts and many other LCMS entities.

We help the Synod — all of us together — get the word out strategically about our ministries using all venues at our disposal, including print, Web, video, photography, public and media relations, social media and blogs.

As a department, we strive to educate, inform, interpret and highlight our Synod's purpose, program and positions to promote increased awareness and understanding of the mission and ministry of our church.

The Lutheran Witness

The Synod's official magazine, *The Lutheran Witness*, features articles that help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran perspective. It seeks to teach a biblical and confessional understanding of topics including family, culture, worship and other questions that confront us.

The Lutheran Witness also offers observations from the Synod President, a monthly Bible study and a regular column of observations concerning items in the news. *The Lutheran Witness* is published 11 times a year — monthly, with a combined June/July issue. *The Lutheran Witness* offers additional content online at witness.lcms.org.

You may subscribe online, by e-mail, or by phone.

- Subscribe online at witness.lcms.org.
- Email lwsubscriptions@cph.org.
- Call 800-325-3040 (option 2) to speak to a customer service representative.

Reporter

Reporter is the Synod's official newspaper. It provides news, commentaries and other resources for rostered church workers, ministry and laypersons. To view the newspaper's online version, *Reporter Online*, which provides additional stories and more detailed versions of some print *Reporter* stories, visit blogs.lcms.org.

Subscribe to *Reporter* and at blogs.lcms.org/subscribe-to-reporter.

Lutherans Engage the World

Lutherans Engage the World is a quarterly publication that shares with its readers the life and work of the LCMS across the globe and in the United States. The articles present both excellent photography and a compelling narrative to present the work of witness and mercy done by the people of the Synod.

The magazine is available online at engage.lcms.org, via Apple News app at engage.lcms.org/apple-news-app, by print subscription at engage.lcms.org/subscriptions-individual/, and bulk subscription (call 888-843-5267).

Life Together with President Harrison

Through this monthly digital news digest, President Harrison shares highlights from Synod publications and multimedia outlets. It is filled with useful news about ministries and resources that help equip pastors, church workers and laity in their life together.

Subscribe to receive monthly email updates at mailchi.mp/lcms/life-together-email-subscriptions.

Journal of Lutheran Mission

This e-publication from the LCMS offices of National and International Mission addresses the newest and oldest trends in missiology. It highlights how the Lord is using His people to share the good news of the Gospel both at home and to the ends of the earth.

You can find it at lcms.org/news/publications/journal-of-lutheran-mission.

Additional Ministry Newsletters can be located at lcms.org/news/newsletters

Online Presence

The website for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is lcms.org.

The purpose of the LCMS website is captured in its mission statement: “To create and maintain a dynamic Internet presence that communicates the saving grace of our Savior, Jesus Christ; provides information for mission and ministry; and interactively links members with Great Commission opportunities.”

The site has links to the beliefs and heritage of our church body, mission and outreach resources, devotionals, news and information about the Synod, departmental resources and catalogs, and information on important social issues affecting congregations. Also included are links to our colleges and seminaries, district offices, congregations, church workers and related LCMS entities, auxiliaries and Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs).

Among its features are:

■ How We Serve:

This menu includes mission and ministry information about Mercy, National, International, Education, Special Initiatives and *Making Disciples for Life*.

■ News:

The latest stories, features, ministry news and resources are available here, including access to printed and online subscription information.

■ myLCMS:

This website login feature allows users to create an account by which they can subscribe to various eNewsletters, update contact information and view their giving history.

■ Locators:

Find LCMS congregations, church workers, schools and district offices easily. Ten-year statistics for individual congregations, including giving levels and baptized and confirmed membership figures are accessible here. Information about the 35 LCMS districts includes links to their websites at lcms.org/districts.

Social Media

The LCMS has official pages on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram and LinkedIn. These can be found at facebook.com/TheLCMS and twitter.com/TheLCMS.

For a complete list of LCMS social media accounts, visit lcms.org/socialmedia.

LCMS Related Entity Websites

• Concordia Plan Services

Get the latest information on health-care coverage, retirement benefits and more at concordiaplans.org.

• Lutheran Church Extension Fund

Find out how your congregation can use the services of LCEF to obtain a loan for construction or capital fundraising, architectural or demographic services. Visit lcef.org.

• LCMS Foundation

Through the Foundation’s Mission and Ministry Giving Catalog, your congregation can discover how its contributions are making a difference in the lives of many. Visit lcmsfoundation.org.

• LuthEd

Schools looking for resources and information from the LCMS School Ministry Office can connect with this site to keep up to date with Lutheran education! Visit LuthEd.org.

• LCMS Information Support Network (LISN) for Church Workers (LCW)

Ordained ministers are able to update their contact and other information through the LCW in order to keep their official record current. Pastors may access this site at LCW.lcms.org.

• Church Worker Update (CWU)

Commissioned ministers are able to update their rostered information through the CWU in order to keep their official record current. This information also populates the Commissioned Minister Information Form, which is what calling bodies use to search for commissioned workers to fill open, called positions. Learn more at CWU.lcms.org.

• Commissioned Minister Information Form (CMIF)

CMIF system allows for the search of information on commissioned ministers to fill called positions. Contact your district office to find out more about how your congregation or school can use this tool to search for commissioned ministers to fill called positions in your ministry. Visit CMIF.lcms.org.

• LCMS Information Support Network (LISN) for Congregations

Congregations are able to update their contact information, worship times, lay leaders, annual statistics and more to the Rosters, Statistics, and Research Services office through LISN at lc.lcms.org.

• LCMS Information Support Network (LISN) for Schools

Early childhood centers, elementary and high schools are able to update their contact information, current teaching staff, and report annual statistics through lisn.lcms.org.

17.150:

LCMS Church Information Center (CIC)

The CIC links people with questions to people with answers and is just a call or click away. Contact the center by phone at 888-843-5267 (THE-LCMS) or by email at infocenter@lcms.org.

LCMS Logo & Brand Center

LCMS logos may be used by the Synod's congregations, districts, schools and certain other entities in conformance with the LCMS Brand Manual. Read the LCMS Branding Reference Guide and request digital logo files at lcms.org/logos.

17.200:

Synod Membership

Member congregations of the Synod have the responsibility of keeping informed about what it means to be a member of the Synod. This responsibility is similar to the individual's membership in the congregation.

Congregations and church groups seeking information regarding Synod's national and international work in order to provide designated gifts are encouraged to either contact the staff in LCMS Mission Advancement at 888-930-4438 or mission.advancement@lcms.org. To give online go to lcms.org and click on *Make a Gift* in the menu bar. Giving opportunities are available for national and international work and missionaries, pastoral formation care, projects and ministries, as well as for special campaigns.

These catalogs give a congregation the ability to select partnership opportunities that most closely match their

vision for spreading the Gospel. Opportunities within the catalogs change over time and are kept current by Mission Advancement.

The finances of the national office, including the annual budget summaries for spending designated and undesignated offerings received as well as the annual audited financial statements for the LCMS, are made publicly available at lcms.org/bod. This section also includes the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors, the Handbook of Synod, and important governance policies.

17.210:

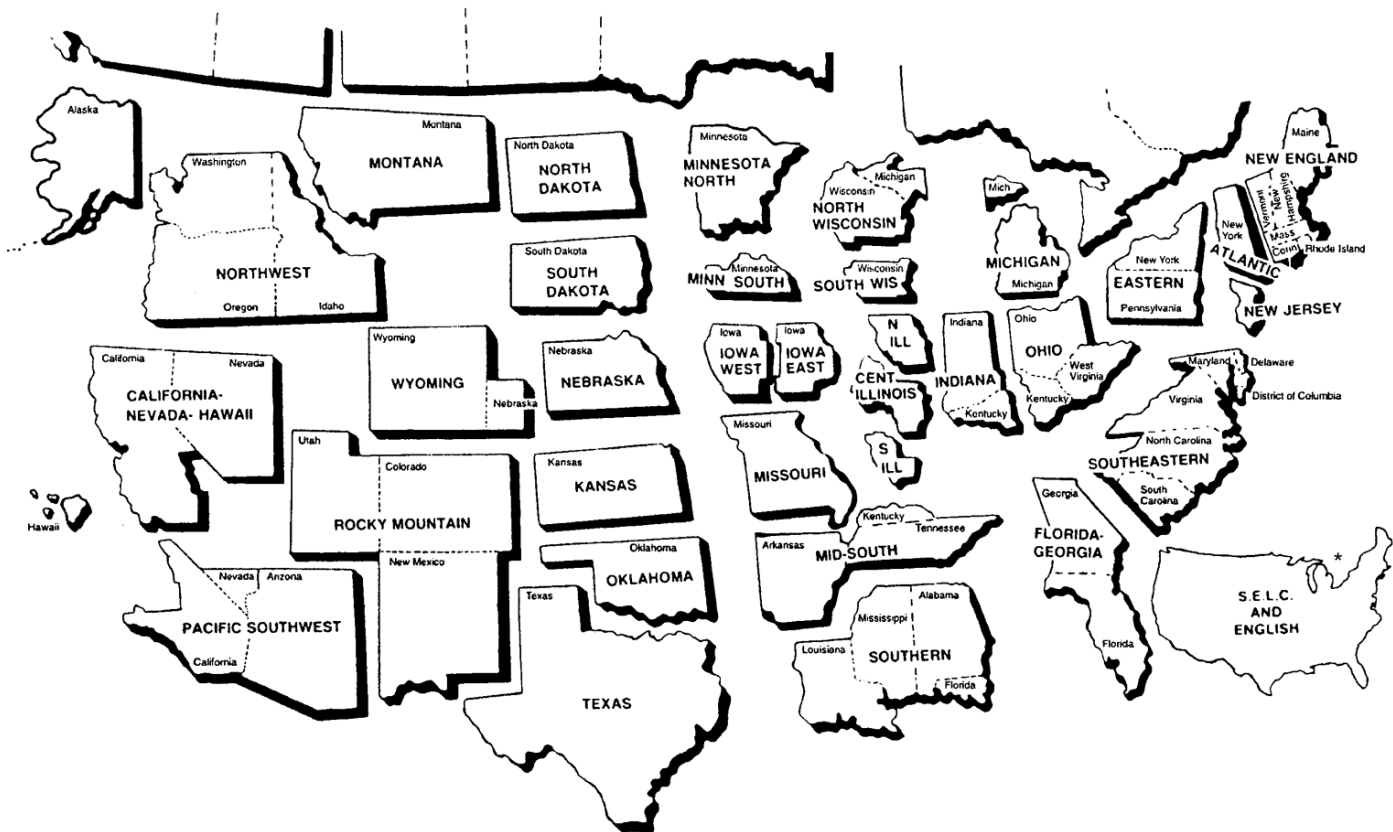
Congregation Statistics Report

Each year The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod asks each congregation to file a Congregation Statistics Report for the preceding year. This report is a vital source of information for planning and oversight of current and future ministry efforts by the Synod and its districts. Timely, accurate submission of data is very important.

Information gained from use of this data is used by Lutheran Church Extension Fund to evaluate loan requests. Concordia Plan Services uses the information in compiling data for the online compensation tools for pastors, church workers and teachers. Districts also use demographic studies that incorporate this data when assisting congregations in planning local ministries.

Because of the value of this data and because it is an expectation of membership (Bylaw 1.3.4), treasurers are encouraged to assist the congregation in submitting this report.

Go to page 17-7



2023 CONGREGATION STATISTICS REPORT

CONGREGATION STATISTICS REPORT

Instruction Sheet

Due Date: February 28, 2024

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete numbers **1** through **20** on the following page.

This report is a vital source of information for planning and action by the Synod and its districts. Information gained from use of this data is now being used by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund committee to evaluate loan requests. Districts also use demographic studies which incorporate this data when assisting congregations in planning local ministry.

1. Fill in the total Baptized Membership as of December 31st. This is not a sum of questions **2a** and **2b**. It is the total number of Baptized Members in your congregation, including those who are also confirmed members. **This is a required field.**
2. Enter the number of baptisms that took place during the past year: infants/children on line **a**, and adults on line **b**.
3. Fill in the total Confirmed Membership as of December 31st. This is not a sum of questions **4a** through **4m**. It is the total number of Baptized Members in your congregation that are confirmed. **This is a required field.**
4. Enter the number of gains (**4a-4f**) or losses (**4g-4m**) of confirmed members in each category that occurred by the end of the year.
5. Enter the average weekend worship attendance. Do not include Lenten, Advent, or other festival services. Of the number entered in line **A**, please enter the number of people in attendance in person on a typical Sunday who are NOT members (baptized or confirmed) of your congregation. In addition to visitors, please also include regular attendees who are not yet members and even those who are members of another LCMS congregation. **This is a required field.**
- 6-7 Enter the amount rounded to the nearest dollar. **If submitting financials both receipts and disbursements are required.**
 - 6a Total Contributions - Enter the total of contributions (weekly offerings) including building funds and other special contributions which include gifts for missions and ministries of the congregation, the District or Synod. This income excludes subsidy, dividends/interest, rent/fees, etc.
 - 6b Total Other Income - Enter the amount of other income the congregation received from subsidy, dividends or interest, rents, fees and other receipts like school tuition (day school or preschool), subscriptions, loans, endowment funds, etc.
 - 7a AT-HOME Expenses - Enter the sum of all funds spent for salaries, benefits, operating expenses, capital expenses, debt service, school/preschool expenses, registrations, subscriptions (including Lutheran Witness), payments for health and pension programs, conference and convention registrations, etc.
 - 7b AT-LARGE District/Synod Contributions - Enter the total amount disbursed to your District for District/Synod budget. Usually this is the amount given to a pledge of support for district and national work of the church. Doesn't include gifts for use of a specific ministry.
 - 7c Other AT-LARGE Contributions - Enter the total amount disbursed for other purposes, i.e.; World Relief, colleges/seminaries, Wheat Ridge, local ministries beyond the congregation, etc.
- 8-18 Enter the enrollment on the appropriate line for each age or class group. A special class group is for people with physical or developmental disabilities as stated in the Lutheran Annual. This does not include enrollment of pre-schools, elementary, or high schools associated with the congregation.
19. Enter the last Vacation Bible School enrollment figures.
20. For each group listed, please enter the percent of baptized (including confirmed) members of your congregation of that age. If possible, calculate each percentage by counting the total number of members in an age group, and then dividing that by the total number of members in the congregation. If you do not know the exact ages of your members, please estimate as accurately as possible. **Please ensure the total of all numbers entered adds to 100%.**

Return the completed original form by February 28, 2024 to

Exhibit 17-A(I)

CONGREGATION STATISTICS REPORT

(Use this worksheet to collect the statistics necessary to complete the online form.)

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE		FINANCIAL INFORMATION																																																					
BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP 1. Total Baptized Membership (Required)..... 2. Baptized During the Year a. Baptisms of Infants/Children..... b. Baptisms of Adults.....		7. DISBURSEMENTS (Round to whole dollars) a. Total Contributions: \$ b. Total Other Income: \$ c. At-Home Expenses: \$ d. At-Large District/Synod Contributions: \$ e. Other At-Large Contributions: \$																																																					
CONFIRMED MEMBERSHIP 3. Total Confirmed Membership (Required)..... 4. GAINS: a. Adults Confirmed..... b. Juniors Confirmed (Parents Members)..... c. Juniors Confirmed (Parents Non-Members) d. Profession of Faith..... e. Transfer from Other LCMS..... f. Receive from Other Lutheran..... LOSSES: g. Deaths..... h. Transfer to Other LCMS..... i. Release to Other Lutheran..... j. Join Non-Lutheran..... k. Moved Without Transfer..... l. Excommunicated..... m. Other.....		CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ENROLLMENT <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sunday Bible Classes</th> <th>Weekday Classes</th> <th colspan="2">VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a. Members</th> <th>b. Non-Members</th> <th>19. Members</th> <th>Non-Members</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8. Cradle/Nursery</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9. 2 yr/Parents</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10. Age 2-3</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>11. Age 4-5</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>12. Grade 1-2</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>13. Grade 3-4</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>14. Grade 5-6</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>15. Grade 7-8</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>16. Grade 9-12</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>17. Adult</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>18. Special Class</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Sunday Bible Classes	Weekday Classes	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL		a. Members	b. Non-Members	19. Members	Non-Members	8. Cradle/Nursery				9. 2 yr/Parents				10. Age 2-3				11. Age 4-5				12. Grade 1-2				13. Grade 3-4				14. Grade 5-6				15. Grade 7-8				16. Grade 9-12				17. Adult				18. Special Class			
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WEEKLY CHURCH ATTENDANCE 5. a. Average Weekly Church Attendance (Required) b. On a typical Sunday, how many of the above numbers are not members of your congregation?		MEMBERSHIP DEMOGRAPHICS (Total membership includes all baptized and confirmed members.) 20. Estimate the percentage of your total membership: a. Under 15 _____ % b. 15-18 _____ % c. 19-34 _____ % d. 35-49 _____ % e. 50-64 _____ % f. 65+ _____ % = 100%																																																					

See Exhibit 17-A(1) for instructions for filing this report which is due February 28. Congregation statistics may be entered online at *lc.lcms.org* using login information received from LCMS Rosters and Statistics department in January. Paper versions of the form are available upon request. Please direct questions to *roster.stats@lcms.org* or 888-843-5267.

17.212:

Treasurer's Responsibilities

The congregation treasurer is usually responsible for completing the Financial Information section of this report. A sample of that section of the current report form is attached (see Exhibit 17-A[2]). All figures are to be rounded to the nearest dollar. The following instructions are provided for completion of the financial data. These instructions are for the current form (Exhibit 17-A[2]) and may be revised in succeeding years.

Item 6. Receipts during the last fiscal year

Item 6a, Total Contributions:

Enter the total of contributions (weekly offerings) including building funds and other special contributions. Special contributions include gifts for missions and ministries of the congregation, the district or Synod. The key word is "contributions," that is, this income excludes subsidy, fees, rental, etc.

Item 6b, Total Other Income:

Enter the total other income the congregation received from subsidy, dividends or interest, rents, fees and other receipts. Some examples would include school tuition (day school or preschool), subscriptions, loans, endowment funds, etc.

Item 7. Disbursements during the past fiscal year

Item 7a, Total At-Home Expenses:

Enter total expenditures for work "at home." Amounts expended for salaries, benefits, operating expenses, capital expenditures, debt service, school/preschool expenses, registrations, subscriptions, payments for health and pension programs, conference and convention registrations, etc., are all included in this line item even though the remittance may have been made to the district or the Synod.

Item 7b, At-Large District/Synod Contributions:

This is the amount contributed to a district for the unrestricted work of the district and Synod. Usually this is the amount given to a pledge of support for district and national work of the church. It does not include gifts for use of a specific ministry such as Together in Missions (TIM), Lutheran World Relief and similar gifts.

Item 7c, Other At-Large Contributions:

This is the amount contributed by the congregation to missions and ministries outside of its "work at home". Other than contributions to the general fund of the district, it may include TIM, Lutheran World Relief, social service agencies, Lutheran Braille Workers, local services to disadvantaged or homeless persons, etc. Again, the key word is

"contributions." These may include gifts from the budget, special offerings, door offerings, etc.

17.213:

Information Sources

The suggested accounting system included in Chapter 21 provides a ready source for all information required on this report, Exhibit 17-A(2). Most computerized accounting systems will provide this data with a minimum effort.

Treasurers working with a single-entry accounting system may wish to create and keep an informal record of at-large expenditures to facilitate completing the report.

17.300:

District Offices

Every district of the Synod operates a district office and employs staff who provide and assist congregations and schools as they carry out their functions and ministries. The areas of service and the staff person normally responsible to assist the congregation in that area are listed in the chart on the next page.

17.310:

District Budget

The district budget is based on the pledges of the congregations and may include other support and revenue. A summary of your district program is available through the district office.

17.320:

Remittances to District

The treasurer of the congregation shall make a regular payment to the district for various funds the congregation receives. These funds consist of mission funds, gifts designated for a particular entity of the Synod, gifts identified for a particular agency or organization outside the Synod and payments for loans granted by the district Church Extension Fund.

17.330:

Remittance Advice Forms

The district treasurer will supply the church treasurer with remittance forms and instructions for completing them. These forms should accompany each check mailed to the district office.

17.340

Remitting Funds Electronically

Congregations may elect to remit funds electronically to the district through the use of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) StewardAccount® or other electronic transfer tools. This includes setting up recurring donations (payments) to aid in consistency and less postage. More information is available on the LCEF and district website or by calling them.

Organizational Chart

AREA OF SERVICE	RESPONSIBILITY
Pastoral calling process	District president
Theological matters	District president
Congregational concerns	District president
Pastoral counseling	District president
New congregations—missions	Executive
Social ministry	Executive
Campus ministry	Executive
Principal/teacher calling process	Executive
Principal/teacher counseling	Executive
Christian day schools	Congregational Services Executive
Sunday schools	Congregational Services Executive
Vacation Bible schools	Congregational Services Executive
Adult Bible classes	Congregational Services Executive
Youth ministry	Youth counselor
Scholarship and recruitment	Education Executive
Stewardship awareness	Stewardship Personnel
Evangelism programs	Evangelism/Congregational Services Executive
Elders programs	District president
Musicians	Congregational Services Executive
Worship helps	Congregational Services Executive
Financial & Treasurers information	Business manager
Financial secretary	Stewardship counselor/business manager
Church Extension Fund	LCEF vice-president/CEF director/business manager