



OUR STAFF EXPERTS CONDUCT “SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS” INTO YOUR QUESTIONS.

Dear CSI,

I have a board member who brings snacks to the board meeting, uses her own phone a lot to make fundraising calls, and is always willing to run errands for the organization. She has asked me for a letter outlining all these expenses so that she can deduct them from her taxes. What should I put in the letter?

ED

Dear ED,

Send your board member a letter thanking her for her support of the organization and listing what she has contributed (and avoid the temptation to use the words contributions or donations). All you should do is document the facts in the letter. It is not your responsibility to put a value on these in-kind contributions or to indicate what she can or cannot deduct. She can work that out with her accountant.

In general, these are the “out-of-pocket” expenses that are deductible:

- Expenses directly connected with services given to the organization
- Unreimbursed expenses
- No personal, living or family expenses

Examples of deductible items include:

- Mileage (at 14 cents a mile)
- Office supplies bought for a project
- A uniform the volunteer buys that has to be worn while on duty

And, as the calendar year has ended, this would be a good time to refer all your board members to the IRS Publication #526, *Charitable Contributions*, (www.irs.gov) for more details on filling out their 1040 forms.