



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Tax Exempt and Government Entities

Date:  
12/19/2025  
Employer ID number:

Form you must file:

Tax years:

Person to contact:

Release Number: 202611012  
Release Date: 3/13/26  
UIL Code: 501.03-00, 501.03-30

Dear :

This letter is our final determination that you don't qualify for exemption from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(a) as an organization described in IRC Section 501(c)(3). Recently, we sent you a proposed adverse determination in response to your application. The proposed adverse determination explained the facts, law, and basis for our conclusion, and it gave you 30 days to file a protest. Because we didn't receive a protest within the required 30 days, the proposed determination is now final.

Because you don't qualify as a tax-exempt organization under IRC Section 501(c)(3), donors generally can't deduct contributions to you under IRC Section 170.

We may notify the appropriate state officials of our determination, as required by IRC Section 6104(c), by sending them a copy of this final letter along with the proposed determination letter.

You must file the federal income tax forms for the tax years shown above within **30 days** from the date of this letter unless you request an extension of time to file. For further instructions, forms, and information, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

We'll make this final adverse determination letter and the proposed adverse determination letter available for public inspection after deleting certain identifying information, as required by IRC Section 6110. Read the enclosed Letter 437, Notice of Intention to Disclose - Rulings, and review the two attached letters that show our proposed deletions. If you disagree with our proposed deletions, follow the instructions in the Letter 437 on how to notify us. If you agree with our deletions, you don't need to take any further action.

If you have questions about this letter, you can call the contact person shown above. If you have questions about your federal income tax status and responsibilities, call our customer service number at 800-829-1040 (TTY 800-829-4933 for deaf or hard of hearing) or customer service for businesses at 800-829-4933.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements

Enclosures:

Letter 437

Redacted Letter 4034

Redacted Letter 4038



**Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service**

**Date:**  
10/23/2025

**Employer ID number:**

**Person to contact:**

**Name:**

**ID number:**

**Telephone:**

**Fax:**

**Legend:**

S = Date

T = State

x = Number

y dollars = Amount

**UIL:**

501.03-00

501.03-30

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

We considered your application for recognition of exemption from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(a). We determined that you don't qualify for exemption under IRC Section 501(c)(3). This letter explains the reasons for our conclusion. Please keep it for your records.

**Issues**

Do you qualify for exemption under IRC Section 501(c)(3)? No, for the reasons stated below.

**Facts**

You submitted Form 1023-EZ Streamlined Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

You attest that you were incorporated on S in the State of T. You attest that you have the necessary organizing document, that your organizing document limits your purposes to one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of the IRC Section 501(c)(3), that your organizing document does not expressly empower you to engage in activities, other than an insubstantial part, that are not in furtherance of one or more exempt purposes, and that your organizing document contains the dissolution provision required under Section 501(c)(3).

You attest that you are organized and operated exclusively to further the purpose of testing for public safety. You attest that you have not conducted and will not conduct prohibited activities under IRC Section 501(c)(3). Specifically, you attest you will:

- Refrain from supporting or opposing candidates in political campaigns in any way
- Ensure that your net earnings do not inure in whole or in part to the benefit of private shareholders or individuals

- Not further non-exempt purposes (such as purposes that benefit private interests) more than insubstantially
- Not be organized or operated for the primary purpose of conducting a trade or business that is not related to your exempt purpose(s)
- Not devote more than an insubstantial part of your activities attempting to influence legislation or, if you made a Section 501(h) election, not normally make expenditures in excess of expenditure limitations outlined in Section 501(h)
- Not provide commercial-type insurance as a substantial part of your activities

You formed as a mutual benefit corporation. Your Articles of Incorporation state your specific purpose is to develop, distribute, supply or deliver water for domestic, agricultural, and irrigation uses to members at actual cost plus necessary expenses and to no one except members.

You stated that you are a water company. You provide water to x parcels of land that are within close proximity to a shared well. Each parcel has an equal share of the water and the shares are deeded to the land.

Your specific activities include performing water sample testing as required by the state of T. You take samples to the lab and provide results to the shareholders. You also collect monthly payments which are an average of y dollars per month from the shareholders for water usage. This fee is based on average fees charged by other local water districts in the area and also covers the electrical expense of delivering water to the parcels. You keep a small reserve for potential repairs to the system.

#### **Law**

Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) provides for the recognition of exemption of organizations that are organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, educational, or other purposes as specified in the statute. No part of the net earnings may inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

Treasury Regulation Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(a)(1) states that to be exempt as an organization described in IRC Section 501(c)(3), the organization must be both organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the exempt purposes described in this section. If an organization fails to meet either the organizational test or the operational test, it is not exempt.

Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(b)(1)(i) provides that an organization is organized exclusively for one or more exempt purposes only if its articles of organization limit the purposes of such organization to one or more exempt purposes; and do not expressly empower the organization to engage, other than as an insubstantial part of its activities, in activities that are not in furtherance of one or more exempt purposes.

Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(c)(1) provides that an organization will be regarded as "operated exclusively" for one or more exempt purposes only if it engages primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of such exempt purposes as specified in IRC Section 501(c)(3). An organization will not be so regarded if more than an insubstantial part of its activities is not in furtherance of an exempt purpose.

Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(d)(1)(ii) states that an organization is not operated exclusively for one or more exempt purposes unless it serves a public rather than a private interest. It must not be operated for the benefit of designated individuals or the persons who created it.

In Revenue Ruling 69-175, 1969-1 C.B. 149, an organization formed by parents of pupils attending a private school to provide school bus transportation for its members' children was found not to be exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3). It was found in this ruling that when a group of individuals associate to provide a service for themselves, they are serving a private rather than a public interest.

In Rev. Rul. 71-395, 1971-2 C.B. 288, a cooperative art gallery formed and operated by a group of artists for the purpose of exhibiting and selling their works did not qualify for exemption under IRC Section 501(c)(3). The organization served the private purposes of its members.

In Better Business Bureau of Washington, D.C., Inc v. United States, 326 U.S. 279 (1945), the Supreme Court of the United States held that the presence of a single non-exempt purpose, if substantial, will destroy a claim for exemption, regardless of the number or importance of truly exempt purposes.

### **Application of law**

IRC Section 501(c)(3) sets forth two main tests for qualification for exempt status. As stated in Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(a)(1), an organization must be both organized and operated exclusively for purposes described in IRC Section 501(c)(3). You formed as a mutual benefit corporation. Your Articles of Incorporation state your specific purpose is to develop, distribute, supply or deliver water for domestic, agricultural, and irrigation uses to your members. You therefore are not organized exclusively for one or more exempt purposes and mentioned in Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(b)(1)(i).

You are not formed for a public interest as required by Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(d)(1)(ii). You are similar to the organizations in Rev. Rul. 69-175 and Rev. Rul. 71-395 because you were formed to serve the private interests of your members. You were formed to provide water to each member's parcel of land within proximity to the shared well and you take water samples for testing. Water is only provided to members of your organization. All your revenue is from member fees and your expenses are related to the water including testing, electricity and maintenance.

As noted in Better Business Bureau of Washington, D.C., the presence of a single non-exempt purpose, if substantial in nature, will preclude exemption under IRC Section 501(c)(3). You provide water to each member's parcel of land within proximity to the shared well. Your activities serve your members which furthers a substantial nonexempt purpose. Therefore, you are not operated exclusively for one or more exempt purposes as stated in Treas. Reg. Section 1.501(c)(3)-1(c)(1).

### **Conclusion**

Based on the information submitted, you are not organized and operated exclusively for one or more purposes as described in IRC Section 501(c)(3). Rather, you are organized and operated for the substantial nonexempt purpose of providing and testing water for your members. Therefore, you do not qualify for exemption under Section 501(c)(3).

### **If you agree**

If you agree with our proposed adverse determination, you don't need to do anything. If we don't hear from you within 30 days, we'll issue a final adverse determination letter. That letter will provide information on your income tax filing requirements.

**If you don't agree**

You have a right to protest if you don't agree with our proposed adverse determination. To do so, send us a protest within 30 days of the date of this letter. You must include:

- Your name, address, employer identification number (EIN), and a daytime phone number
- A statement of the facts, law, and arguments supporting your position
- A statement indicating whether you are requesting an Appeals Office conference
- The signature of an officer, director, trustee, or other official who is authorized to sign for the organization or your authorized representative
- The following declaration:

**For an officer, director, trustee, or other official who is authorized to sign for the organization:**  
Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this request, or this modification to the request, including accompanying documents, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, the request or the modification contains all relevant facts relating to the request, and such facts are true, correct, and complete.

Your representative (attorney, certified public accountant, or other individual enrolled to practice before the IRS) must file a Form 2848, Power of Attorney and Declaration of Representative, with us if they haven't already done so. You can find more information about representation in Publication 947, Practice Before the IRS and Power of Attorney.

We'll review your protest statement and decide if you gave us a basis to reconsider our determination. If so, we'll continue to process your case considering the information you provided. If you haven't given us a basis for reconsideration, we'll send your case to the Appeals Office and notify you. You can find more information in Publication 892, How to Appeal an IRS Determination on Tax-Exempt Status.

If you don't file a protest within 30 days, you can't seek a declaratory judgment in court later because the law requires that you use the IRC administrative process first (IRC Section 7428(b)(2)).

**Where to send your protest**

Send your protest, Form 2848, if applicable, and any supporting documents to the applicable address:

U.S. mail:

Internal Revenue Service  
EO Determinations Quality Assurance  
Mail Stop 6403  
PO Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

Street address for delivery service:

Internal Revenue Service  
EO Determinations Quality Assurance  
550 Main Street, Mail Stop 6403  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

You can also fax your protest and supporting documents to the fax number listed at the top of this letter. If you fax your statement, please contact the person listed at the top of this letter to confirm that they received it.

You can get the forms and publications mentioned in this letter by visiting our website at [www.irs.gov/forms-pubs](http://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs) or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676). If you have questions, you can contact the person listed at the top of this letter.

**Contacting the Taxpayer Advocate Service**

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) is an independent organization within the IRS that can help protect your taxpayer rights. TAS can offer you help if your tax problem is causing a hardship, or if you've tried but haven't been able to resolve your problem with the IRS. If you qualify for TAS assistance, which is always free, TAS will do everything possible to help you. Visit [www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov](http://www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov) or call 877-777-4778.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements