

Frequently Asked Questions

What is CCHD?

What differentiates the Catholic Campaign for Human Development from other Church charities programs?

What kind of initiatives does CCHD fund?

How do initiatives get funded?

Why doesn't CCHD fund Catholic programs or initiatives exclusively?

What about allegations CCHD funds groups openly in conflict with positions advocated by the Catholic Church?

Out of the 250 grantees for 2009, how many groups have been found non-compliant?

Why does CCHD fund organizations that work in coalitions?

Can anyone find out who is being funded by CCHD?

What is CCHD?

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development was founded in 1970 by the Catholic bishops of the United States as the Catholic Church's domestic anti-poverty program. For nearly 40 years, CCHD has helped make long-term changes in the economic condition of communities across the United States.

What differentiates the Catholic Campaign for Human Development from other Church charities programs?

CCHD is a complement to the direct-assistance mission of Catholic Charities agencies and other Church emergency relief programs. It helps make long-term changes in the economic condition of communities by supporting projects that address the root causes of poverty, such as racism, unemployment, and lack of education or economic opportunities.

What kind of initiatives does CCHD fund?

CCHD funds programs where poor and marginalized people are empowered to make decisions, seek solutions to local problems, and find ways to improve their lives and neighborhoods. Economic development initiatives help poor and low-income people develop new businesses, create new jobs, and develop assets that are owned by families and communities. CCHD also provides educational opportunities for Catholics to learn about poverty and interact with those affected by it, and reflect on a faith response to it.

How do initiatives get funded?

Applicants seeking CCHD funding first submit a pre-application that is reviewed by both national CCHD grants staff and the local CCHD diocesan director. Eligible applicants are invited to submit a full application.

The full application is again reviewed by national CCHD grants staff and the CCHD diocesan director. The review process includes a site visit, usually by the diocesan director, and sometimes by national CCHD grants staff as well. National and diocesan CCHD staff discuss the application and submit their joint recommendation to the local bishop for his endorsement. If the local bishop endorses the proposal, it is forwarded to the Bishops' Subcommittee of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. The Subcommittee must approve all applications before they can receive national CCHD funding.

Additionally, some projects are funded directly by local dioceses, also with approval from the local bishop, using funds from the 25 percent of the annual CCHD collection retained by each diocese to support smaller initiatives.

Why doesn't CCHD fund Catholic programs or initiatives exclusively?

As long as the mission and actions of the groups requesting funding are not at odds with Catholic teaching, the bishops believe Catholics can partner with others in the community to address the root causes of poverty and injustice, and advance the cause of human dignity and development. CCHD guidelines explicitly state that in order to apply for CCHD funding, the mission and actions of agencies seeking funding cannot be at odds with Catholic teaching.

CCHD is deeply integrated into the life of the Catholic community. For example, in 2008 CCHD funded initiatives that involved 683 Catholic priests, 776 Catholic parishes, 18 Catholic Charities agencies, and 51 religious communities. Some of the programs funded include partnerships with other communities of faith and secular groups.

What about allegations CCHD funds groups openly in conflict with positions advocated by the Catholic Church?

CCHD is always examining ways to strengthen and improve monitoring efforts to ensure all grantees comply with CCHD criteria. This is an ongoing process, involving both local dioceses and national CCHD staff. Others may bring to our attention concerns about groups or initiatives that CCHD is either considering for funding, or currently funding. The CCHD Subcommittee and staff take seriously any allegation that groups are not in compliance with Catholic teaching, or are participating in partisan political activity. CCHD immediately investigates each allegation in consultation with the local diocese and, if the allegations are confirmed, discontinues funding immediately, and pursues reimbursement of any funds already distributed.

Out of the 250 grantees for 2009, were any groups found non-compliant?

Out of the 250 grantees in 2009, CCHD investigated allegations against, and defunded, three groups.

In one case, a group found to support abortion had already been de-funded. In the other two cases, the groups had taken actions in conflict with CCHD's guidelines after they accepted CCHD funds. Without the knowledge of the local diocese or CCHD, they produced voter guides that took positions on referenda opposed to Catholic teaching on same-sex marriage and, in one case, on parental notification and abortion. As soon as these facts were confirmed, and in consultation with the local diocese, the groups were de-funded, and all funds were returned. CCHD investigated charges against other groups, and in consultation with the dioceses in question, found allegations to be inaccurate, or based on a misunderstanding.

In all cases, CCHD took prompt, decisive action consistent with CCHD policies and practices. CCHD withdraws support promptly when allegations of political partisanship or mismanagement of funds are substantiated.

Why does CCHD fund organizations that work in coalitions?

CCHD does not fund organizations whose work includes any effort contrary to Church teaching. As Catholics, however, we are called to be engaged in the world.

From time to time, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, individual dioceses, and CCHD-funded groups enter into coalitions with both secular and ecumenical organizations to advance a specific, shared goal, for example, poverty reduction, environmental protection, or immigration reform. While the coalition members share a specific collective goal, individually, not all coalition members will have identical policy agendas.

In no way does the participation of the USCCB in such a coalition constitute an endorsement of all the activities of each coalition member. Likewise, the participation of CCHD-funded groups in coalitions does not constitute an endorsement of all of the various policy goals of each coalition member. Rather, by participating in a coalition, the USCCB or a CCHD-funded group simply seeks to advance one shared policy goal, not the entire agenda of each coalition member.

CCHD does not consider loose and temporary associations, or a reference to other organizations by a CCHD-funded organization in their publications or Web sites, as a violation of CCHD policies unless we determine the reference represents a specific endorsement of that organization's activities which contradict Church teaching.

Can anyone find out who is being funded by CCHD?

CCHD is committed to transparency. Anyone interested can go online and find a list of recent grantees and other information about CCHD at www.usccb.org/cchd/grants, or call the Catholic Campaign for Human Development at 202-541-3210.