



**ACCOUNTING
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
MANUAL (DRAFT)**

Version of March 2014

- Board of Trustees
- Executive Director
- Regional Director of Finance Administration
- Administration Assistant

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Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to describe the accounting policies and procedures currently in use at Panos Caribbean and to ensure that the financial statements and procedures conform to generally accepted accounting principles; assets are safeguarded; guidelines of grantors and donors are complied with; and finances are managed with accuracy, efficiency, and transparency.

All Panos's staff with a role in the management of fiscal and accounting operations is expected to comply with the policies and procedures in this manual.

These policies will be reviewed annually and revised as needed by the staff and approved by the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees.

Division of Responsibilities

The following is a list of personnel who have fiscal and accounting responsibilities:

Board of Trustees

1. Formulates and approves organizational policies and fiduciary standards
2. Reviews and approves the annual budget
3. Reviews annual and periodic financial statements and information
4. Recruits the Executive Director and reviews her/his performance annually
5. Establishes the organisation's salary scale and determines the salary of the Executive Director
6. Appoints authorized signing agents on Panos bank accounts. (Approval of appointment is by at least two board members).
7. Reviews and approves all contracts over (USD 100,000)
8. Reviews and approves all non-budgeted expenditures over (USD 20,000)
9. Reviews and advises staff on internal controls and accounting policies and procedures
10. Appoints the external auditor, and reviews and approves the annual audit reports

Executive Director

1. Reports periodically to the Board and Executive Committee on the organisation's operations and financial performance
2. Ensures that Panos Caribbean complies with all legal, accounting and statutory obligations in accordance with the laws of the countries in which it operates
3. Ensures that the organization operates in accordance with approved policies and fiduciary standards
4. Reviews and approves all financial reports including cash flow projections
5. Sees that an appropriate budget is developed annually
6. Reviews and signs issued cheques/wire transfers and/or approves cheque signing procedures
7. Reviews and approves all contracts (except those for which the Board retains responsibility, as per #7 above)
8. Reviews and approves all grant submissions
9. Approves inter-account bank transfers
10. Is on-site signatory for all bank accounts
11. Oversees the adherence to all internal controls

Division of Responsibilities cont'd

Regional Director of Finance and Administration (RDFA)

1) Bookkeeping

- Keeps the books of Panos Caribbean, in accordance with the Annual Budget as adopted by the Board of Panos Caribbean, and using appropriate separate accounts for all projects and activities in financial reports as appropriate
- Reviews all bank statements, for any irregularities, and approves completed monthly bank reconciliations

2) Financial reporting

- Oversees the preparation of financial progress and final reports as mandated by the grants and other collaborative agreements of Panos Caribbean
- Submits monthly and quarterly integrated management reports

3) Statutory and Financial Reporting

- Ensures that Panos is tax compliant and that all statutory obligations are filed and paid on time.
- Ensure that Panos is compliant with its filing at Company's Office/Registrar

4) Management

- Supervises the work of staff, consultants and contractors related to Finance and Administration of Panos Caribbean
- Assists programme staff in budgeting matters when appropriate
- Generates invoices for outstanding project balances

5) External relations

- Acts as Panos Caribbean contact point for auditors, as contracted by either donor agencies (for project audits) or the Panos Board (for annual external audit)

Division of Responsibilities cont'd

Administrative Assistants (each territory)

1. The Administrative Assistants report to the RDFA. The deliverables are:
 - a) Postings of all cheques and deposits for all operating accounts in the accounting system;
 - b) Monthly bank reconciliations for all checking accounts in the accounting system;
 - c) Quarterly financial report on projects;
 - d) Prepare payment vouchers and cheques for signature, prepare wire transfer forms, maintain journal entry file, alert on need for currency exchanges;
 - e) Trial balance, as generated by the QuickBooks system.
2. Represent Panos Caribbean to partner institutions and funders regarding financial and administrative issues;
3. Provide general support to the Panos staff to facilitate the successful management of programmes, including sorting out correspondence, typing, making copies, printing, filing documents (physical and electronic), receiving phone calls;
4. Assist staff in the preparation of meetings and workshops;
5. Help coordinate visits from Panos Caribbean staff coming from another country;
6. Attend country staff meetings, take minutes and share them with staff members;
7. Process country timesheet information against the projects and general accounts;
8. Take care of the Petty Cash in consultation with Country Coordinator and following budgetary lines;
9. Manage procurement, according to Panos Caribbean and donor guidelines;
10. Maintain payroll information for staff and act as focal point with payroll service;
11. Provide support during the preparation of training activities;
12. Manage the needs of the office including ordering supplies/equipment and housekeeping;
13. Ensure that office equipment and communications systems are properly maintained and serviced;
14. Any other duties as assigned.

Accounting by Territory

Panos utilizes remotely accessible accounting software that allows for contemporaneous entry of transactions in all the organizations offices, both locally and internationally. It is essential that all transactions entered in the accounting software are properly assigned to the specific territory.

The accounting software has been configured to indicate each territory as a “Class”. All entries in the system must therefore be posted to a specific “Class” to indicate the particular territory.

To ensure all transactions are recorded and accounted by territory, the correct class must be selected for **every** entry in the accounting software. This applies also to time reporting.

Each user has the responsibility to ensure the correct class is selected when inputting entries inclusive of time recording.

The RDFA, as part of the internal control function, will review accounting information in the accounting software and enforce corrective measures to ensure compliance with this policy and make adjustments where necessary.

Chart of Accounts and General Ledger

Panos has designated a Chart of Accounts specific to its operational needs and the needs of its financial statements. The Chart of Accounts is structured so that financial statements can be shown by natural classification (expense type) as well as by functional classification (program vs. fundraising vs. administration) and by funding source. The RDFA is responsible for maintaining the Chart of Accounts and revising it as necessary.

The general ledger is automated and maintained using Panos accounting software. All input and balancing is the responsibility of the RDFA with final approval by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director should review the general ledger on a periodic basis for any unusual transactions.

Receipts

Receipts generally arise from:

Contracts and Grants
Direct donor contributions
Fundraising activities
Intra-Company Transfers

The principal steps in the receipt process are:

1. The RDFA must prepare invoices for grants to be received (using the accounting software);
2. Grant and any other income must be accounted for by territory. To ensure this, the RDFA must select the correct class (territory) when generating an invoice;
3. The RDFA must ensure the applicable foreign exchange rate is inputted in system when generating invoices that are not in Panos functional currency (US\$),
4. The Administrative Assistant must check the grant contract for the stipulated (expected) date of deposit as indicated by the grantor;
5. The Administrative Assistant must liaise with the Project Administrators to confirm the date of deposit for each project;
6. The Administrative Assistant must monitor bank accounts for actual deposits;
7. Once funds have been received, the Administrative Assistant must inform the Regional Coordinator, RDFA and the Donor via Electronic receipt (where applicable);
8. The Administrative Assistant must update the accounting system with deposits (real time) by entering the receipt in the system;
9. The Administrative Assistant must book any bank transfers in the accounting system accordingly (real time);
10. The Administrative Assistant must account for deposits in each territory and should select the correct class (territory) when updating the accounting system.

Accounts Receivable

1. Invoices should be generated in the accounting system when there is an executed grant contract;
2. All invoices generated should be numbered sequentially and the correct class (territory) selected. (The accounting system has been configured to automatically generate sequentially numbered invoices);
3. The Administrative Assistant should monitor the receipt of funds via internet banking and notify the Regional Coordinator and RDFA accordingly upon receipt of funds;
4. The Administrative Assistant will update the accounting system with funds received by using the “Receive Payments” function in the system;
5. The Regional Coordinator should review aging accounts receivable reports on a weekly basis and follow up on overdue receivables;
6. Funds received should be recorded in the particular currency it was received. The Administrative Assistant must ensure the applicable prevailing foreign exchange rate is entered in the accounting system when updating the deposits in the accounting system.

Procurement

The following procedures have been implemented to ensure that the organization meets its policy objective of managing and expending its grant funds:

1. Non-budgeted expenditure in excess of US\$20,000 are to be reviewed and approved by the board;
2. Expenditures above \$2,000 are to be reviewed and approved by any two of the following: RDFA, Regional Coordinator or the Executive Director;
3. Expenditures between \$1,000 and \$2,000 are to be reviewed and approved by the RDFA and the Administrative Assistant
4. Expenditures below \$1,000 are to be reviewed and approved by the Administrative Assistant and/or Project Administrators;
5. Quotation/Bids are to be obtained as follow:
 - a. Purchases in excess of US\$15,000 - tender
 - b. 3 quotations are required for all purchases from restricted funds
 - c. Purchases from preferred supplies should be justified by noting on the vendor bill the reason why the purchase was made from that preferred supplier
6. Programme Officers are responsible for obtaining Quotation/Bids in accordance with PANOS' and donor's procurement policies;
7. Programme Officers submit Quotation/Bids for review to the RDFA and approval by the Regional Coordinator/Board;
8. RDFA ensures expenditures are in line with the approved project budget;
9. RDFA must ensure that a file is maintained to document all stages of the procurement process (including failed bids and rejected quotations) for specific expenditures in accordance with thresholds above to facilitate audit reviews etc;
10. Programme Officers forward the approved quotation/invoice to the Administrative Assistant who will update the accounting system with vendor bill;
11. Administrative Assistant must select the correct territory when inputting the final vendor bill in the accounting system;
12. The Administrative Assistant should ensure the vendor bill is entered in the correct currency and the applicable prevailing foreign exchange rate is updated in the system.

Disbursements

The following procedures are to be actioned after compliance with procurement procedures and approval against the budget line:

1. The Administrative Assistant checks the expenditure against budget and ensures the expenditure is duly approved,
2. Administrative Assistant generates cheque requisition and process payments using any of the following methods as appropriate:-
 - a. Check printing:- print cheques from the accounting system.OR
 - b. If payment is to be made via wire transfer, the Administrative Assistant will request the vendor banking information
 - c. Initiate wire transfer and notify Regional Coordinator/Executive Director for approval.
3. The Administrative Assistant is to apply the payment against the specific vendor bill previously entered in the accounting system (see Procurement above) and indicate the payment method (cheque or wire transfer)
4. In instances where there is no bill (such as reimbursables), the Administrative Assistant must select the correct expense, project and class;
5. The Administrative Assistant is to ensure the prevailing foreign exchange rate is used for payments in currency other than the US\$.
6. The Administrative Assistant submits a cheque requisition, supported by the appropriate invoice and other support(service order or service reports, goods received notes, etc) and printed cheque to Regional Coordinator/Executive Director/RDFA for approval
7. Cheque requisition forms (refer to annex for approved form) should include the project codes to which the expense will be applied. This is to ensure the account and grant/project is charged to the correct expense and line item. It is the responsibility of the person approving such requisitions to ensure that coding is complete and accurate.
8. All cheques must be signed by two (2) appropriately authorized personnel. See Authorised Cheque Signors List.
9. No authorized signor is to approve/sign checks that are payable to him/her.
10. The Administrative Assistant will disburse cheques to vendors/Programme Officer as soon as cheques have been signed. A cheque delivery log (log book) should be maintained. The log book must be signed by the person receiving the cheque as evidence of delivery. The log book would record 1. Date of delivery 2. Cheque payee 3. Name of person collecting cheque (evidenced by appropriate identification) 4. Cheque Number 5. signature of the person receiving the cheque.
11. Supporting documentation for each cheque payment should be filed by the Administrative Assistant in appropriate vendor files and scanned into the accounting system.
12. Per diems must be written up by all staff to record all expenses incurred during field trips or to account for cash advances for related expenses. These forms must be signed by the approved officer in accordance with the policies/procedures indicated above.

Petty Cash Fund

Petty cash funds are maintained by the organization. The funds are to be used for miscellaneous or unexpected purchases and the same approval procedures apply as mentioned in the disbursement section.

1. The petty cash fund should never exceed US\$300 or its equivalent.
2. The Administrative Assistant is the custodian of the petty cash fund.
3. A single disbursement of petty cash shall never exceed US\$50 or its equivalent.
4. When a request for petty cash is made to the Administrative Assistant, the item will be logged on a petty cash voucher. A description of the item should be recorded together with the amount on the petty cash voucher.
5. A vendor receipt must be received by the Administrative Assistant for the amount of the petty cash request in order for the request to be approved.
6. The recipient of the petty cash funds must sign the petty cash voucher to indicate receipt of the funds. The paid receipt should be attached to the petty cash voucher.
7. All receipts paid should remain in the locked petty cash box until it is time to replenish the fund. At that time, the petty cash vouchers and associated receipts are attached to the cheque requisition form and the Petty Cash reconciliation Sheet. (This sheet reconciles cash used plus cash on hand with the float – see annex for form).
8. When the petty cash requisition is submitted for replenishment the petty cash reconciliation sheet should indicate the total amount needed to replenish the fund.
9. The Administrative Assistant should update the accounting system weekly with all disbursements and fund should reconcile to the general ledger
10. Also, a petty cash report from the accounting system listing the various expense accounts being charged and the amount charged to each account should accompany the check requisition.
11. The petty cash box is to be locked at all times when the Administrative Assistant is not disbursing or replenishing the fund.
12. At least once annually, the Executive Director or RDFA should conduct a "surprise" review of the fund. When this is done, he/she should count, while the Administrative Assistant is in attendance, the total monies on hand and the total amount of receipts in the petty cash box. The two amounts should equal exactly US\$300 or its equivalent. Any discrepancies should be discussed and resolved immediately.
13. It is a policy of Panos not to cash cheques of any kind through the petty cash fund.

Grant

1. When a new grant is received or renewed, a copy of the executed grant must be forwarded to the RDFA who then forwards it to the Administrative Assistant in the respective offices for filing and dissemination
2. The Administrative Assistant should set up a permanent file for the grant and maintain the contract along with any other financial correspondence regarding the grant.
3. It is the responsibility of the RDFA to review the grant contract and extract any fiscal items which must be complied with. Typically, for project sponsors who request specific reporting criteria.
4. It is a policy of Panos Caribbean to adhere to any restrictions imposed by its funders, both governmental and private. Therefore, the Administrative Assistant is expected to bring to the attention of the Executive Director (ED) or Regional Director of Finance and Administration (RDFA), any instances of non-compliance.

Internal Control

Internal Control is the system of checks and balances, operated in the organization to ensure that assets are secured and accounted for, the risk of fraud is minimized and the accounting system is operated in such a way as to ensure the accuracy and truthfulness of the accounting records and the resulting financial statements and reports.

The following are the key internal control objectives for PANOS:

1. Ensure that all grants are received and properly recorded, and that compliance with the terms of any related restrictions is adequately monitored;
2. Ensure that expenditures comply with grant conditions;
3. Budgets are carefully monitored;
4. Executive Director approves all activity;
5. Ensure that controls are effective at all times in lieu of external audit;
6. Accounting records are to be maintained for each project and be available to donors when requested;
7. Donor request for access to accounting records must be communicated through the Executive Director;
8. Each month the RDFA and Executive Director should review bank reconciliations, schedules of accounts receivable and the aging of accounts payable, executed contracts and budgets, to support the balances shown on the balance sheet and income statement as follows:
 - a. Cash accounts- these balances should agree with the balances shown on the bank reconciliations for each month. Petty cash the balance in this account should always equal the maximum amount of all petty cash funds.
 - b. Grants and contribution receivable- these amounts should agree to donor reconciliation schedules
 - c. Other assets- these amounts in these accounts should equal advance payments paid to vendors or third parties at the end of the accounting period.
 - d. Property and equipment- these amounts in this account should equal the totals in the detailed asset register when additional purchases are made.
 - e. Deferred revenue- these amounts should agree to donor reconciliation statements.
 - f. Other payables- these amounts should agree to donors and vendor schedules
 - g. Restricted and unrestricted funds- these amounts should agree to the executed contracts or budgets.
 - h. Income and expenses- The amounts charged to the various cash accounts should be reconciled with funding requests, funders reports, draw down schedules, budgets and contracts.

Foreign Exchange

Panos' functional currency is US\$. This is the currency that is used in the primary economic environment in which Panos operates (its functional currency).

In preparing the financial statements of the Company, transactions in currencies other than the Panos' functional currency are recorded at the rates of exchange prevailing on the dates of the transactions.

At each reporting date, monetary items denominated in foreign currencies are re-translated at the rates prevailing on the reporting date.

Non-monetary items that are measured in terms of historical cost in a foreign currency are not retranslated.

Exchange differences arising on the settlement of monetary items and on the retranslation of monetary items are to be included in the statement of comprehensive income for the period.

Exchange rate needs to be updated in the accounting system on an ongoing basis.

Non-US dollar transactions are to be correctly entered in the currency in which the transaction is originated (this applies to both outflow or inflow of funds)

Bank Reconciliations

Bank reconciliation involves agreeing the balance of cash as shown by the bank statement(s), with that as shown by the cash book(s). It is to be prepared at the beginning of each month, on the bank balance and cash book(s) balance as at the end of the previous month. It is important that all transactions contributing to any difference between the two balances are identified, and where necessary remedial action is taken.

1. Administrative Assistants in each location has the responsibility to ensure that all bank statements received are remitted promptly to the RDFA. The RDFA reviews the statements for unusual balances and/or transactions.
2. The RDFA review the contents for inconsistent check numbers, signatures, cash balances and payees and endorsements at a minimum. After this cursory review is conducted, the official should initial and date the bottom, right hand corner of the first page of each bank statement reviewed.
3. The reviewed bank statement should then be forwarded to the Administrative Assistant (an individual without check signing rights) to reconcile the bank accounts using the reconciling feature in the accounting software.
4. The Administrative Assistant should reconcile each account promptly upon receipt of the bank statements, no later than 7 days after receipt. In the event it is not possible to reconcile the bank statement the RDFA and the Executive Director should be notified by a written memo.
5. The Administrative Assistant will check off the bank statement entries with the cashbook within the Accounting software, entries appearing on the bank statement which are not shown in the cash book should be investigated, and if correct should be immediately entered into the cash book such as bank charges, gross interest income and withholding tax.
6. When reconciling the bank accounts, the following should be done:
 - A comparison of dates and amounts of daily deposits as shown on the bank statements with the deposits in the cashbook.
 - A comparison of inter-organization bank transfers to be certain that both sides of the transactions have been recorded on the books.
 - An investigation of items rejected by the bank, i.e., returned checks or deposits.
 - A comparison of wire transfers dates received with dates sent.
 - A comparison of canceled checks with the disbursement journal as to check number, payee and amount.
 - An accounting for the sequence of checks both from month to month and within a month.

Bank Reconciliations cont'd:

6. When reconciling the bank accounts, the following should be done cont'd:
 - An examination of canceled checks for authorized signatures, irregular endorsements, and alterations.
 - A review and proper mutilation of void check.
 - Investigate and write off and deposits which have been outstanding for more than six months.
7. After completing the bank reconciliation the Administrative Assistant will scan the applicable bank statement, along with all documentation to the accounting system.
8. The Administrative Assistant will notify the RDFA via email that bank reconciliations have been completed.
9. The RDFA will review and approve bank reconciliations
10. The RDFA will include bank reconciliations in the monthly report to the Executive Director

Property, Plant and Equipment

An inventory of all property, plant equipment will be maintained. The inventory documentation will contain sufficient information for insurance and grant requirements. This inventory should be maintained in the current Quickbooks Accounting system database.

Panos has established a capitalization threshold of US\$300 for property expected to benefit the operations of the organization for multiple years to be considered a fixed asset.

- All furniture and equipment purchases must be pre-approved by the Executive Director
- All property with an acquisition cost or donation value in excess of (Capitalization threshold)are to be capitlazed
- Capital assets include buildings and improvements.
- Property purchased meeting the fixed asset definition are to be tagged with a pre-numbered asset tag and added to the list of assets maintained by the Administrative Assistance. This list is categorized by type of fixed asset, i.e. buildings, furniture and equipment, plant assets, etc. and includes the asset number, date of installation, cost including taxes, shipping and installation fees, and life expectancy for depreciation purposes. A copy of the invoice(s) should be maintained with these asset records until asset is sold or deleted.
- Every year a physical inventory of all furniture and equipment is to be completed prior to year end. Any discrepancies are brought to the attention of the Executive Director or the RDFA for appropriate action.
- Equipment to be retired is documented with an explanation for release. The listing of equipment to be retired is authorized by the Executive Director. Any salvage value received is so noted on the records.

Depreciation

The purpose of depreciation is to recognize the decreased value of the property over its useful economic life.

- A fixed asset, as previously defined, is depreciated according to Panos Depreciation Policy.
- The Depreciation Policy sets the useful life of property types (Buildings, Capital Assets, Furniture & Equipment, Vehicles, etc.) which may differ from depreciation methods used for income tax purposes.
- Depreciation Schedules are to be prepared for the full fiscal year utilizing the guidelines of the Depreciation Policy.
- A separate schedule is made for each property/asset type. The schedule is maintained by the RDFA. As depreciable property is purchased, it is added to the depreciation schedule in the month following purchase/installation.
- A recurring journal entry is set up for posting depreciation charges each month. The journal is to be updated to account for any additions/disposals.
- Below are the estimated useful life of fixed assets for Panos:
 - Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment - 8 years
 - Motor Vehicle - 5 years
 - Computer (equipment & software) - 3 years
 - Leasehold Improvement - 40 years or in accordance with lease

Financial Reporting

1. RDFA should prepare a set of monthly financial reports for distribution to the Executive Director and the Board. The reports should include:
 - Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet);
 - Statement of Activities (statement of income and expenses for each territory [operating project]);
 - A comprehensive Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet);
 - Consolidated Statement of Activities (income and expense) report which show all territory (class) combined;
 - Budget-to-actual report for all accounts included in the annual operating budget;
 - Accounts receivable aging;
 - Accounts payable register and aging;
 - Cash flow projection;
 - Bank reconciliations; and
 - Any other requested reports.

2. RDFA to produce grant reports to report and analyse the expenditure or net result of each project and the accountability of donor funds. Production of grant reports by the RDFA includes the following reports:-
 - Budget-to-actual reports by project for all accounts included in the consolidated income and expense report;
 - Schedule of Grants and Contribution revenue and Expenditures (Income and expense report by project);
 - Budget to actual hours spent on each project or key performance indicator as determined by Panos or donor; and
 - Any other report required by donor(s).

Electronic copy of the reports are to be filed to facilitate external auditing purposes and third party review including grant donors

Time Reporting

Time reporting is a critical input for PANOS. It aids in allocating costs in the various projects as well as in analyzing project expenditures. This also provides the basic input for compensating various personnel.

To properly account for time each staff/contractor must account for his/her time. This is done through the accounting software.

1. Each individual is required to record their timesheet weekly (or as determined by Panos) in the accounting software. Individuals are to input the following on their timesheet:
 - a. The project they worked on – this is done by selecting the project from a drop-down list;
 - b. Territory worked – individuals must select class and chose the territory from the drop-down list;
 - c. Specification of work done – this is to be entered as a note in the time sheet;
 - d. Hours worked – hours are to be entered for each day worked;
 - e. Select billable – this allows the time to be allocated to the respective project
2. All hours must be pre-authorized by the RDFA and project manager before the services are performed.
3. The project officers are to review the timesheet inputted by the consultants and advise the RDFA of any discrepancies.
4. The RDFA and project manager will approve the timesheets and authorize payments to the consultants

End of Month and Fiscal Year-End Close

1. The RDFA / Executive Director will review and sign off on all month and year-end journal entries. They will be printed and filed for audit trail purposes.
2. At the end of each month and fiscal year end, the Executive Director will review all Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet) accounts including verification of the following balances: cash accounts match the bank reconciliations, fixed asset accounts reflect all purchases, write-downs and retirements, accounts receivable and payable accounts match outstanding amounts due and owed.
3. The income and expense accounts review will include a reconciliation to amounts received and expended and verification that payroll expenses match the payroll reports including federal and state payroll tax filings.
4. Once the final monthly and fiscal year-end financial statements are run, reviewed, and approved by the Executive Director, no more entries or adjustments will be made into that month or year's ledgers as the RDFA will close respective accounting period.
5. The RDFA is responsible for the backing up the accounting database at the close of business each day, by way of a scheduled automated procedure
6. RDFA has responsibility to oversee and execute month-end close procedures that safeguards Panos assets. These include but are not limited to the above procedures.

Documentation and File Retention

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles for filing, retaining and destroying Panos Caribbean records.

Panos Caribbean retains records, documents and files in an orderly fashion for time periods that comply with legal and governmental requirements in the countries where it operates and as needed for general business requirements. Documents can be temporarily retained in any of the Panos' offices or, in the case of working files, in the care of staff members or board members. However, documents to be retained indefinitely will be stored in the Main Office.

This policy applies to all business documentation generated by Panos, as reflected in Annex I. It does not cover other documents (such as internal or day-to-day business correspondence.)

Current filing system, record retention and storage

- (1) INSTITUTIONAL FILES, such as corporate documentation (Incorporation documents, Bylaws, Annual Reports, Audits, Certificates of Registration, etc), are kept in all offices of Panos. Scanned copies will be filed in a central registry in each office. As much as feasible, original copies are made available to all Panos offices.
- (2) FILES RELATING TO GOVERNANCE, such as documentation relating to the Board of Directors, Board Committees, Institutional policies, Annual Budgets and Workplans, Panos Network, etc. are electronically stored in a special area of the Panos Caribbean website. Original copies are retained in the office where the ED is located (such as signed statements on Conflict of Interest).
- (3) ORIGINAL FINANCIAL RECORDS/ ORIGINAL PROJECT CONTRACTS are generally retained in the Main Office under supervision of the RDFA (original signed materials, cancelled cheques, etc). However, they may be kept temporarily in other Panos offices, if such is more appropriate to a specific project. Copies will always be provided to the Main Office. All project contracts will be scanned in the Main Office.
- (4) ELECTRONIC BACKUPS OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM with all financial information upto a certain date, will be made quarterly and provided to the other offices for storage. These backups will also include scans of Project Contracts.
- (5) CONTRACTS WITH CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS are retained in the relevant office in original form, but scans will be provided to the main office.
- (6) HUMAN RESOURCES RECORDS (employment contracts, personnel files, CVs, performance evaluations, any other info put on file) are to be retained in the Main Office under supervision of the RDFA. Copies relating to personnel in a specific office will be temporarily kept there. The Chair of Panos Caribbean's Board retains files relating to the employment of the Executive Director.

Documentation and File Retention Cont'd

- (7) THEMATIC FILES. To ensure efficient access, each Panos office keeps one set of hard copy files, as centrally accessible to all staff as practical. To reduce the amount of duplicate and unnecessary record retention, individual desk files should be avoided. All paper records should be filed in the central files. Generally, these files do not need to be made available to all offices.
- (8) OTHER ELECTRONIC FILES, photos, videos, media productions, etc. are to be archived in the main office.

Length and method of storage

Most materials will be scanned and archived electronically (in particular those listed above under items 1, 2, 4 and 5). Backups will be appropriately labeled and kept on electronic media in each office in a “locked area” (filing cabinets or a special room) appropriate to long-term storage (fire/waterproof, such as in a safety deposit box). Documents and original copies will be archived and stored in the Main Office for periods as indicated in Annex I, also in a “locked area” and appropriate to long-term storage (dry and controlled against pests).

Record destruction

Three to six months after each year-end, the RDFA and/or ED will proceed with destruction of all files that have exceeded their recognized holding period. A listing of file categories to be destroyed will be circulated by the RDFA to all staff thirty days prior to destruction for review and comment. The actual listing of records destroyed will be maintained permanently for future reference.

Records kept by Panos staff, Panos Board, correspondents or contractors will at the end of their tenure be returned to a Panos office or destroyed (in consensus with the RDFA). When relevant materials need to be shipped to a Panos office, costs will be paid by Panos Caribbean.

Annex I
Document and File Retention

Accident reports and claims (settled cases)	7 years
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Accounts receivable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports of accountants	Indefinitely
Bank reconciliations	3 years
Bank statements	7 years
Checks (canceled, see exceptions below)	7 years
Checks (canceled for important payments, i.e., taxes, purchases of property, special contracts, etc.)	Indefinitely
Contracts and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts and leases still in effect	Expiration + 7 years
Correspondence (general)	3 years
Correspondence (important)	Indefinitely
Deeds, mortgages, bills of sale, titles	Indefinitely
Depreciation schedules	Indefinitely
Duplicate deposit slips	1 year
Electronic fund transfer documents	7 years
Employee personnel records (after termination)	7 years
Employment applications	3 years
Expense analyses and expense distribution schedules	7 years
Financial statements (end-of-year, other months optional)	Indefinitely
General and private ledgers (and end-of-year trial balance)	Indefinitely
Insurance policies (expired)	3 years
Inventories of products, materials, supplies	7 years
Leases	see Contracts
Licenses	Indefinitely
Minute books of directors and stockholders, including by-laws and charter	Indefinitely
Notes receivable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Payroll records and summaries, payroll taxes	7 years
Pension records	Indefinitely
Petty cash vouchers	3 years
Property appraisals by outside appraisers	Indefinitely
Property records including costs, depreciation reserves, end-of-year trial balances, depreciation schedules, blueprints and plans	Indefinitely
Tax returns and worksheets, agents' reports, any documents relating to income tax liability	Indefinitely
Time books/cards	7 years
Trade mark registrations	Indefinitely
Voucher register and schedules	7 years
Vouchers for payments to vendors, employees, etc. (including allowances and reimbursement of employees officers, etc., for travel and entertainment expenses)	7 years

Adopted by electronic voting 31 August 2011

Annex II

**PANOS
PETTY CASH
RECONCILIATION**

LOCATION: _____

CUSTODIAN: _____

DATE: _____

FLOAT: \$ _____

REIMBURSEMENT: \$ _____

	\$		=	_____
X	5,000.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	1,000.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	500.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	100.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	50.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	20.00			
	\$		=	_____
X	10.00			
	OTHER COINS		=	_____
	PETTY CASH VOUCHERS (used)			_____
	TOTAL:	\$		_____

RECONCILIATION OF PETTY CASH FLOAT

Cash count: \$ _____

Petty Cash Vouchers Used: \$ _____

SUB-TOTAL: \$ _____

Less Float: \$ _____

Difference \$ _____

(Difference should be nil)

CUSTODIAN : _____

AUTHORIZING PERSONNEL: _____

List of Authorised Cheque Signors

Annex IV

List of Preferred Suppliers of goods or service

Check Requisition Form