

Tri-State Center for Community Action

Terms of Reference

(Voted by the South Atlantic Conference of SDA Executive Committee on September 14, 2025)

Rationale

The expertise, and administrative and organizational structure needed to effectively research, identify, and apply for funding to support transformative community ministry is mostly unavailable or inadequate in local churches. The Tri-State Center for Community Action (TSCCA or the Center) is organized to equip and assist local churches through relevant training to develop and execute a strategic, public affairs approach to sustainable, transformative community engagement initiative, based on “Christ’s method alone.” TSCCA will engage strategic partnerships and relationships in its corporate effort to secure and then re-allocate grant funding to participating SAC churches. Churches that develop and submit a community engagement plan that, (1) meets demonstrable community needs, and (2) promotes kingdom growth, will be given consideration for funding.

Objectives

TSCCA will be an un-incorporated nonprofit entity with full group tax-exempt status under the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The Center’s objectives shall include, but not limited to:

1. Harness the collaborative effort of SAC directors, strategic partners, and other subject-matter experts, including community engagement practitioners to deliver high level training programs and resources to relieve local humanitarian needs.
2. Utilize methods such as conferences, boot camps, webinars, symposia, panel discussions, website, social media, and other available means to equip and mobilize participants in the essential areas of positive, transformational community engagement.
3. Award certificates of participation and completion to incentivize participation in its strategic training and community empowerment programs.
4. Identify, secure, and allocate funding to support missional community engagement initiatives as proposed and requested by local churches (as voted by their church boards).

Advocacy and Educational Project Emphases

Project emphases could include, but will not be limited to:

1. Human development and family dynamics (children, youth, young adults, men, women)
2. Ex-offender community re-integration and socio-economic empowerment
3. Developing relevant working relationships with elected and appointed public servants
4. Addressing housing inequality and food insecurity
5. Supporting partnerships with law enforcement and advocacy for veterans’ affairs
6. Addressing poverty, unemployment, and causes of urban/inner city social decay
7. Addressing the needs of persons with disabilities and mitigating healthcare disparities
8. Identifying community resources, networking with NGOs and government agencies
9. Providing training in researching grant sourcing and effective grant writing
10. Advocating civil rights, voting rights, religious liberty, and equal justice under the law
11. Assisting immigrant demographics with integration resources and training
12. Training in job searching and workforce preparation in underserved communities

Funding, Structure, and Administration of the Center

The Center shall be funded with allotments from SAC departmental budgets, private contributions, public and private grants, and will be organized and administered as follows:

- A. Governing documents

1. A Constitution establishing the Center as the community outreach arm of the South Atlantic Conference, with full group tax-exempt status (per IRS 501(c)(3) code) through a letter of determination by the Office of General Counsel of the General Conference of SDA
2. Bylaws detailing how the Center shall operate in carrying out its educational, advocacy, and grant sourcing and writing functions to aid local community initiatives and projects undertaken by SAC churches
3. The afore-mentioned documents shall provide pertinent information potential donors look for when deciding which causes and organizations to support

B. Governing structure and participation

1. A Board of Trustees – SAC ADCOM Members

- President (TSCCA Chairman)
- Executive Vice President (TSCCA Vice Chairman)
- Treasurer/CFO (TSCCA Treasurer)
- General Vice President (Board Recording Secretary/Steering Committee Chairman)
- Vice President for Education
- Vice President for Pastoral Ministries

2. A Steering Committee

- Adventist Community Services (ACS)
- Adventist-laymen Services and Industries (ASI)
- Children’s Ministry
- Communication Ministry
- Disabilities Ministry and Grief Ministry
- Family Ministry
- Health Ministry
- Men’s Ministry
- Multi-cultural Ministries (African, Asian, Franco-Haitian, Hispanic)
- National Service Organization (NSO)
- Pastoral Ministries
- Personal Ministries
- Prison Ministry
- Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL)
- Seniors Ministry
- Stewardship
- Women’s Ministry
- Youth and Young Adults
- Selected Lay Members of Local Churches who Demonstrate the Aptitude and passion for Community Engagement through Christ’s Method Alone

The SAC Tri-State Center for Community Action shall operate according to the guidelines and standards outlined in these terms of reference and the governing documents approved by ADCOM and the SAC Executive Committee.