

# Public Collections



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Public Collections can be an important part of a Scout Group's fundraising strategy. When undertaking a Street or House to House collection there are regulations that must be followed. This factsheet highlights how licensing rules and collection regulations apply individually to Street and House to House collections.

## Street Collections

The regulations cover collections made "in any street or public place". They do not cover collections on private premises, which might include cinemas and theatres, railway or underground stations or supermarket premises. Provided that the permission of the owner is obtained collections can be held in private premises without the need to obtain a licence.

## The Licence

If your collection is to be carried out on a street or public place you must acquire a licence from the appropriate licensing authority. In the City of London this will be the Common Council, in a Metropolitan Police District it will be the Commissioner of Police and elsewhere, the Local Authority. Although an application need not be made until a month before the proposed collection date you should give as much notice as possible as demand is often high.

## Collection Regulations

The regulations cover all aspects of a collection including the following:

**Timing:** the licensing authority fixes not only the day but also the start and finish times.

**Place:** the licensing authority can limit the collection to particular areas as it sees fit.

**Collectors:** must have written authority from the promoter (ie whoever is organising the collection) and must produce it if requested. They must:

- (a) be over 16 years old (except in the Metropolitan Police District where collectors aged 14-16 may be permitted if the promoter gives a written assurance they will at all times be accompanied by a responsible able-bodied adult);
- (b) be on the pavement except where permission is given to collect during a procession;
- (c) remain stationary and be at least 25 metres from the next collector;
- (d) have a sealed collection box;
- (e) collecting boxes must:
  - (1) be numbered consecutively;
  - (2) prominently display the name of the charity;
  - (3) be delivered unopened to the promoter and opened by them in the presence of another person.
- (f) no payment can be made to any collector.

No payment can be made directly or indirectly to anyone else connected with the promotion or conduct of the collection, unless the licensing authority has approved such payment.

**Accounts:** accounts relating to the collection must be submitted to the Licensing Authority

within a specified period (three months in London, one month elsewhere).

They must be in a specified form and must be submitted along with a list of collectors and a list of the amounts contained in each box. A qualified accountant must certify the accounts. The amount collected and related expenses must also be published as the licensing authority directs.

## Collecting cans

Collecting cans and related materials can be obtained from either of the following companies:

Angal Services to Fundraisers  
Building A  
91 Ewell Road  
Surbiton  
Surrey KT6 6AH  
Tel: (020) 8390 9393

ECL Plastic Products  
3 Richmond Road  
Trafford Park  
Manchester M17 1RE  
Tel: (0161) 877 8333

## House to House Collections

The definition of a **collection** is an appeal to the public, by which means of visits from house to house, to give, whether for consideration or not, money or other property. The sale of goods is therefore within this definition even where it is represented on the sale that only part of the proceeds will go to charity. **House** includes a place of business. A public house is classed as a place of business.

## The Licence

To carry out a house to house collection you must acquire a licence from the appropriate licensing authority. In the City of London this will be the Common Council, in a Metropolitan Police District it will be the Commissioner of Police and elsewhere, the Local Authority.

The application must be made before the first day of the month preceding the month in which the collection is to be made. For example, if you wish to hold a collection in September the application must be made by 1st of August. However a licensing authority may still grant the licence if the application was made late if it thinks there are special reasons for doing so.

A licence will be granted for the period requested in the application up to a maximum of 12 months.

## Collection regulations

1) Collectors must be over 16 and have a Certificate of Authority and a badge bearing their own signature. These must be in a prescribed form which includes a general indication of the purpose of the collection. They can be obtained from HMSO on production of a licence to collect.

2) The collection must be by securely sealed collecting box, unless a special order has been granted to allow the collection to be by way of envelopes with gummed flaps.

3) Monies received by collecting box must be placed directly into the box by the donor. Otherwise (and if not by sealed envelope) the collector must in the donor's presence write in ink a receipt and counterfoil giving the date, name of donor and amount of donation and shall give the receipt to the donor. Collectors where donations are by envelope shall receive a donation only in an envelope that has been sealed.

4) Any collecting box or receipt book must bear an indication of the purpose of the collection and an identification number.

5) The promoter must keep a record of the name and address of each collector to whom a badge, certificate, collecting box or receipt book is issued.

6) The collector must sign the badge issued to them and wear it prominently whilst collecting.

7) The collector must sign the certificate of authority and present it to any police officer or anyone occupying a house they visit who may request it.

8) The collector must return the badge and certificate when the collection is complete or on the promoter's demand.

9) The collector must return the collection box/receipt book/envelopes to the promoter:

- (a) when full
- (b) on promoter's demand
- (c) when they no longer want to act as a collector
- (d) when the collection is completed

They should return either a sealed box/envelopes or with a receipt book bearing receipts matching the amount of contributions.

Collection boxes must be opened by the promoter in the presence of another responsible person. The amount must be counted immediately, and where collection boxes have been used, the amount of the contents of each box must be recorded in a list next to its identification number.

Every receipt book shall be examined by the promoter and another responsible person to check the amounts receipted and collected match. The amount will be entered on a list against each receipt book. In each case the examiners will certify the list.

## Accounts

Accounts must be produced in a specified way and must be audited. The form of the accounts depends on whether money or property has been collected and, if property, whether this has been sold or has been used or given away.

The accounts must be sent to the licensing authority within one month of the expiry date of the licence. Vouchers for all expenses and application of the proceeds of the collection and, for cash collections, all receipt books and a list of collecting boxes and receipt books must also be sent to the licensing authority. This is not required where the auditor is a qualified accountant or is for any other reason deemed to be 'competent' by the licensing authority.

In this case the promoter of the collection must have the vouchers, receipt books and list of collecting boxes and receipts available for inspections for three months after the accounts have been submitted.

## Contacts

Further information can be obtained from the Fundraising Department:

Email: [Fundraising@scout.org.uk](mailto:Fundraising@scout.org.uk)

Tel: 0845 3001818

NB: For information in Scotland and Northern Ireland please contact your National HQ.