Check list for Homeschool Organizations
Applying for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status

by Carol L. Topp, CPA

1. Choose a name for your nonprofit. While you're at it, select and reserve a web domain name. Research the IRS Charities web site (www.irs.gov/eo) , the Internet and your state's Secretary of State's Office to be sure it has not already been taken.

2. Create a board of directors. Often only three people are needed, a president/director, a treasurer, and secretary. More is better, including a vice-chair/director.

3. Write Articles of Incorporation including a statement of your purpose. Read the IRS Instructions for Form 1023 page 7 for specific language to include in the Articles regarding the purpose of the organization, private benefit and dissolution of the organization.

4. Incorporate as a Non-Profit Organization in your state. Submit Articles of Incorporation to the appropriate office in your state government with the required fee. This is usually the Secretary of State's Office.

5. Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) by submitting IRS Form SS-4.

6. Develop organizational bylaws—the rules by which you will operate.

7. Hold your first board meeting. Get board approval of the bylaws.

8. Set up a budget.

9. Read all you can on filing for tax exempt status. Review IRS Publication 557, instructions for filing for tax exemption and the articles on my website HomeschoolCPA.com

10. Have the board vote their approval for filing 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

11. File IRS Form 1023 to become a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, preferably within 27 months of the date of incorporation.

12. Pay filing fees to the IRS of $850 if you anticipate having revenue of over $10,000 per year, or $400 if you anticipate having revenue of less than $10,000 per year.

13. Register as a charity within your state. Visit www.HurwitAssociates.com to see what your state requires. They have a listing by state on their left sidebar.

Carol L. Topp, CPA is the author of *Homeschool Co-ops: How to Start Them, Run Them and Not Burn Out* and *The IRS and Your Homeschool Organization.* She enjoys using her accounting skills helping non-profit homeschool organizations. She and her family live in Cincinnati, Ohio. Her website is HomeschoolCPA.com