

Archdiocese of Miami Procedures for Tamper-Evident Bag Use

A. Preparation for Bag Use:

1. The bookkeeper/head cash counter will place a sufficient supply of the tamper-evident pre-numbered plastic bags in the designated area in the Parish prior to each week's services. Access to the bags should be limited to the ushers and the bookkeeper/head cash counter. At least one bag, of sufficient size, should be available for each collection at each Event.

2. The bags should be labeled by the bookkeeper/head cash counter as to the Event time and the collection purpose (when there is to be more than one collection at an Event).

3. The bag numbers should be recorded on the control log designating a specific bag number for each collection at each Mass. An example **Tamper-Evident Bag Control Log** (the "control log") is attached. The bookkeeper/head cash counter will keep a copy of the control log and place the original control log with the bags.

4. A designated person, such as the head usher for each event, is responsible for obtaining the bag(s) and the control log before each Mass/Event.

Note: A small emergency supply of extra, number-controlled bags can be on hand in case one of the bags malfunctions or in case another bag is needed because of collection volumes. These bags should be properly labeled with instructions as to their proper use. They should be accounted for each week by the bookkeeper/head cash counter at the time new bags are supplied.

B. Collecting Funds:

5. When the collection is finished, the ushers (more than one person) at each Mass/Event will empty the entire collection from the baskets into the numbered tamper-evident plastic bags. Each bag is to be signed and dated with a **permanent marking pen** by the two ushers (this may be done prior to inserting the money into the bags).

6. To seal the plastic bag, remove the paper strip (liner) from the adhesive area at the top of the bag and fold the flap down and seal the tamper-evident plastic bag. Ensure that the contents are properly secured. If the bag is spoiled or un-useable the spoiled bag **should be kept and not thrown away** – it is to be put into the substitute bag that should be available. The paper strip is to be signed by the ushers and attached to the control log. The ushers will sign and date the control log for each bag they were given after comparing the serial numbers on the bags to the serial numbers listed on the control log.

7. After the last service, the original control log will be put in the safe or other locked and secured area with the tamper-evident bags.

8. The tamper-evident bag(s), once sealed, will be put into the safe or other locked and secured area by the ushers.

C. Counting Funds:

9. The bags will be retrieved by the Parish Business Manager/Bookkeeper and one member of the cash counting team from the safe or other locked and secured area. Before opening, the numbers on the bags shall be compared to the numbers on the control sheet and the paper strip liners by the members of the money counting team(s). The money counting team(s) will open the bag(s) with a pair of scissors. The bags should not be ripped open. After each bag is opened, a member of the counting team will sign-off on the control log. If there is a discrepancy with the control numbers or if the bag appears to have been tampered with, the counting team should contact the Finance Chair. The control log will then be given to an appropriate designee, someone who is independent of cash counting and record keeping functions.

10. The money counting team is to prepare the deposit, deposit slip and place all funds in a sealed tamper-evident bag for transportation to the bank. No currency/coin/checks are to be removed from the collection by anyone for any purpose. All cash and checks must be deposited and should not be used to pay bills or other expenses.

D. Depositing Funds:

11. The money counting team should give a copy of the deposit slip to the appropriate designee.

12. A member of the cash counting team and an additional representative (other than someone on the cash counting team) should **immediately** take the deposit to the bank.

13. Upon returning from the bank, the validated deposit slip is to be given to the appropriate designee to compare to the copy given by the money counting team. If the slips agree, the appropriate designee will sign off on the control log. If the slips do not agree, the appropriate designee should contact the Finance Chair. The control log and validated deposit slip should then be given to the Parish Business Manager/Bookkeeper for filing.

E. Monitoring:

14. The Parish Finance Council should monitor and periodically review the procedures followed by the Parish for the tamper evident bags.