Anatomy of a Fundraiser: A Legal Guide for Charitable Fundraising In California

With the support of City National Bank, Public Counsel's Community Development Project is pleased to release its latest publication, Anatomy of a Fundraiser. You know you have to raise money to survive as a nonprofit - but the process of raising money - whether through special events, online fundraising, or mail solicitation - is subject to city, state, and federal oversight that ultimately may subject your organization to legal liability and impact your nonprofit’s tax exemption and your donors’ ability to get the benefit of a tax deduction. Anatomy of a Fundraiser addresses various legal issues associated with fundraising under California and federal law, including corporate and tax filings, acknowledging donations, managing employees and volunteers at fundraising events, contracts with vendors, unrelated business income tax, charity auctions, commercial co-ventures, and rules regarding bingo, raffles, and gambling. The publication guides the reader through questions raised in the planning of an annual fundraising gala by a fictional nonprofit organization, providing both practical tips and legal explanations.

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