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SAFEGUARDING OUR BRAND ASSETS

Y Brand Protection and Compliance Guide
YMCA OF THE USA

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BRAND REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLIANCE

YMCA of the USA's (Y-USA) brand revitalization strategy requires YMCAs to:

- Adopt the new brand by Dec. 31, 2015, and continue to conform to its requirements thereafter.
- Protect and use our trademarks by ensuring:
 - 1 Proper use of the YMCA logo (see pages 14-17 of the Y Graphic Standards Guide)
 - 2 Proper use of the areas of focus (see page 21 of the Y Graphic Standards Guide)
 - 3 Proper use of the YMCA name, defined as:
 - "YMCA" must be used in association names and branches wholly owned and operated by an association
 - Acquiring Y-USA permission for use of the YMCA name in a joint venture through a Y-USA license agreement

This resource provides YMCAs with guidelines for obtaining and maintaining compliance with the Y's brand standards. With successful completion of the steps outlined, YMCAs will meet the requirements set forth in Article II, Section 2i of the National Constitution, adopted by YMCA associations in 2010, which asserts that:

The name "Young Men's Christian Association" and all names, marks, logos, symbols and other intellectual property, including copyrights, owned, used or authorized by the National Council, are the property of the National Council, and member associations have a limited, revocable, non-exclusive, non-transferable right to use such intellectual property only as authorized by the National Board through its policies and guidelines to protect the YMCA brand and reputation.

CEOs and brand advocates should carefully review this resource with appropriate team members responsible for their YMCA's brand transition and ongoing compliance.

BRAND COMPLIANCE REVIEW SYSTEM

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The Brand Compliance Review System was developed to ensure that all Ys are using and continue to use the elements of the Y brand correctly, in accordance with the National Constitution. The system is comprised of two compliance assurance processes—reviews and trademark protection.

The first process includes two separate reviews facilitated by Y-USA in partnership with Ys. The first, the Brand Transition Review, certifies a YMCA's successful transition to the new brand by Dec. 31, 2015. The other, the Post-Transition Brand Review, ensures ongoing brand compliance beginning in 2016.

The second process, Trademark Protection, has been instituted to ensure the proper use of our marks and symbols, as represented in the Y logo and areas of focus, and the proper use of our name. At any point, should a trademark violation be identified, whether during or outside of a review and irrespective of a Y's transition certification status, the violation must be corrected.

The following pages provide an overview of the Brand Compliance Review System to ensure brand compliance as well as the consequences for noncompliance.

BRAND TRANSITION REVIEW

This first review of the Brand Compliance System enables a YMCA to demonstrate its successful brand transition prior to Dec. 31, 2015. Successful completion of this review requires action by both a YMCA's CEO and its designated brand advocate as follows:

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSITION YEAR

During the 2011 Annual Report process, the CEO identified a completion year for brand transition on the pledge statement.

After the Annual Report data was collected and processed, each CEO received a notice from Y-USA confirming the identified brand transition year.

STEP 2: COMPLETE YOUR TRANSITION

By the end of the identified transition year, a YMCA must be in alignment with Y brand standards (Y Graphic Standards Guide, Y Voice Messaging Guide and all application and technical supplements).

STEP 3: ACTIVATE YOUR REVIEW

- In the first quarter of a YMCA's identified transition year, the CEO and brand advocate will receive instructions as to how and when to activate their review.

YMCAs that have identified 2011 as their transition year may activate their reviews beginning in the second quarter of 2012. YMCAs that have identified 2012, 2013 or 2014 as their transition year must activate their reviews by the end of that year. YMCAs that have identified 2015 as their transition year must activate their reviews no later than Sept. 1, 2015.

- The Brand Transition Review will require a YMCA to submit evidence of brand-compliant materials for review by Y-USA. **If a YMCA is unable to complete the process electronically, it must contact ybrandcompliance@ymca.net for assistance.**

Y BRAND STANDARDS

Y-USA has two masterbrand documents—the Y Graphic Standards Guide and the Y Voice Messaging Guide—with a series of application and technical supplements that address specific topics. Resources can be found on the Brand Resource Center.

STEP 3: ACTIVATE YOUR REVIEW, CONT.

- When activated, you will be asked to submit five items as a sampling of your fully transitioned brand suite. You will have seven days to upload these files. These five items are:
 - 1 Exterior signage**—If you do not yet have your signage in place, you may still earn brand certification by submitting a rendering of your proposed sign for review with the requirement that you will email a photograph of the completed sign to **ybrandcompliance@ymca.net** to close your file.
 - 2 Website**
 - 3 Promotional item used by your YMCA** (e.g., water bottle, gym bag, key chain, etc.)
 - 4 Print marketing piece** (e.g., activity schedule, brochure, flyer, direct mail piece, etc.)
 - 5 Business essential** (e.g., letterhead, envelope, business card, notecard, etc.)
- If the materials are not submitted within seven business days, the review will automatically expire and the brand advocate will need to reactive the review.
- Y-USA will conduct a review of submitted materials within 30 business days to verify a complete and compliant brand transition.
- If materials are fully compliant with brand standards, a certification of successful brand transition will be issued to the YMCA's brand advocate, CEO and CVO.
- If the materials are not brand compliant, the brand advocate will receive the review results along with a notification that the YMCA has not yet successfully completed its brand transition. This notification will include instructions for a required consultation with a Y-USA Marketing Communications team member who will coach the YMCA on any corrective action required to successfully complete the review and earn brand certification. Once the YMCA believes all of its materials are compliant, the brand advocate will resubmit the materials within the agreed-upon timeframe. Once the review is successfully completed, a certification of successful brand transition will be issued to the YMCA's brand advocate, CEO, CVO and Resource Director.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Data from Ys that have transitioned in 2011 indicates that full transitions take at least 18 months to execute. Since the materials review process takes 30 business days, and YMCAs want a full 90 days to correct any issues that may arise during the review, Y-USA **strongly recommends** that YMCAs plan to activate their reviews well in advance of the final Sept. 1, 2015 deadline, which means beginning brand transition work no later than March 2014.

POST-TRANSITION BRAND REVIEW

After all Ys have transitioned to the revitalized brand, it's critical that we continue to ensure compliance to promote and protect our brand.

Beginning in the first quarter of 2016, Y-USA will schedule random Post-Transition Brand Reviews. These reviews will mirror the Brand Transition Reviews with the exception that Y-USA, rather than the local Y, will initiate them.

CEOs and brand advocates will be notified when their Y has been selected for a review, and the instructions will be provided at that time.

Successful completion of Post-Transition Brand Reviews is required in order for a Y to be considered fully compliant with Article II, Section 2i of the National Constitution. The Y's brand-compliant status will remain until such time as 1) evidence of noncompliance is found during a review or 2) evidence of a trademark violation that requires immediate corrective action is discovered at any time by Y-USA (refer to page 9).

Y-USA will conduct approximately 200 reviews per year, and YMCAs may be reviewed at any time regardless of the year in which their last one occurred. Post-Transition Brand Reviews may include review of a Y's adherence to any or all of the approved brand standards as outlined in the Y Graphic Standards Guide, Y Voice Messaging Guide and all application and technical supplements.

TRADEMARK PROTECTION

Regardless of whether a YMCA has completed transition to the new brand, all uses of the YMCA name and trademarks **must comply** with Y brand standards.

In order to be considered compliant with Article II Section 2i of the National Constitution, YMCAs must **immediately correct** any trademark violations identified by Y-USA:

- 1 Improper use of the Y logo (see pages 14–17 of the Y Graphic Standards Guide)
- 2 Improper use of the areas of focus (see page 21 of the Y Graphic Standards Guide)
- 3 Misuse of the YMCA name, defined as:
 - failure to include “YMCA” in association names and branches wholly owned and operated by an association
 - failure to acquire a Y-USA pre-approved license agreement for use of the YMCA name in a joint venture

Evidence of the above trademark violations may be brought to Y-USA’s attention at any time, during or outside of a scheduled review, and irrespective of a Y’s transition status. If a trademark violation has been identified, Y-USA will immediately contact and partner with the YMCA to outline a plan for correction.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE

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FAILURE TO ACTIVATE OR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE BRAND TRANSITION REVIEW PRIOR TO DEADLINE

All brand advocates must activate their Brand Transition Review on or before Sept. 1, 2015, in order to receive a response from Y-USA prior to the transition deadline of Dec. 31, 2015.

If a YMCA has activated its review but did not receive successful brand transition certification by the Dec. 31, 2015, deadline, the CEO, CVO and brand advocate will receive notification that the required Brand Transition Review has not been completed. The matter will be referred to the Regional Committee on Membership Standards (RCMS)* with the recommendation that the YMCA be placed on probation. If the YMCA did not receive successful brand transition certification due to lack of good faith effort to take any corrective action required, the YMCA will be referred to the National Committee on Membership Standards (NCMS)* with the recommendation that the Y's status be terminated.

If a YMCA has **not** activated its Brand Transition Review by Sept. 1, 2015, Y-USA will notify the CEO, CVO and brand advocate that the required review has not been activated. The notification will outline the steps required within 30 days to avoid referral to NCMS with the recommendation that the YMCA's membership status be terminated.

FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE POST-TRANSITION BRAND REVIEW

YMCAs are required to successfully complete Post-Transition Brand Reviews within the timeframe outlined in the review instructions.

If a YMCA has not successfully completed its review within the timeframe specified, or if incidences of noncompliance are found during a review, the YMCA has 90 days to take corrective action or provide an acceptable plan for corrective action. If the YMCA has not successfully completed the correction or provided an acceptable plan for corrective action within 90 days, but has made a good-faith effort, Y-USA will consider issuing a 30-day extension.

If a 30-day extension has been granted and the YMCA has not taken corrective action, the YMCA will be deemed noncompliant with Article II, Section 2i of the National Constitution, and the matter will be referred to NCMS.

FAILURE TO IMMEDIATELY CORRECT TRADEMARK VIOLATIONS

If a trademark violation has been identified, Y-USA's Marketing Communications team will notify the CEO and brand advocate and provide written documentation of the violation and guidance on its correction. The YMCA has 90 days to take corrective action or provide an acceptable plan for corrective action. If the YMCA has not successfully completed the correction or provided an acceptable plan for corrective action within 90 days, but has made a good-faith effort, Y-USA will consider issuing a 30-day extension.

If a 30-day extension has been granted and the YMCA has not taken corrective action and the trademark violation is a misuse of the Y logo or areas of focus, or the failure to include "YMCA" in the location name, the YMCA will be considered noncompliant with Article II, Section 2i of the National Constitution, and the matter will be referred to NCMS.

If the trademark violation entailed the failure to receive Y-USA approval for use of the YMCA name in a joint venture, the CEO and brand advocate will be notified in writing that a request for permission must be sent to Y-USA within 30 days. If the request is approved, the CEO will be allotted 30 days to sign a license agreement. If no agreement is signed during the allotted timeframe, the matter will be referred to NCMS.

If Y-USA denies permission for the joint venture, the CEO will be given 30 days to provide documentation that a name change has taken place. If this documentation is not provided, Y-USA will send a cease-and-desist order to the joint venture.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Y-USA created this resource to help Ys understand the requirements regarding transition to the new brand and the protection of our trademarks. Questions about this resource may be sent to **ybrandcompliance@ymca.net**.