



## **Responsibilities of & Guidelines for Committee and Task Force Chairs**

Congratulations on becoming a committee or task force chair. In an effort to make your job easier to manage, APsA has developed this simple check list of responsibilities and guidelines.

### **Overview**

APsA members are extraordinarily involved in the Association and that involvement often finds its expression through committee work. There are over 100 committees within the organization and in order to keep track of their work and contribution to the Association and profession, we ask committee chairs to assist. Below are the basic responsibilities we ask of all committee chairs. The Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the National Office count on your assistance in following these guidelines. Further, we can best support and promote the work of your committee when you provide us with information about your group's work.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your Department Head or Tom Newman in the National Office. Tom Newman can be reached at (347) 519-5250 or [tnewman@apsa.org](mailto:tnewman@apsa.org).

### **Responsibilities and Resources**

1. **Schedule Committee Meetings** during biannual meetings of the American Psychoanalytic Association. Schedule and room assignment is handled by staff member Steven Shaw ([sshaw@apsa.org](mailto:sshaw@apsa.org)). Steven will contact you between 10 and 12 weeks before each national meeting confirming your committee's meeting time and asking if you need to make any changes. Note that meeting space is very tight, so please let her know if your committee will NOT be meeting. Committees are expected to maintain the momentum of their work through the use of email communication between national meetings. Committee chairs are responsible for ensuring appropriate funds have been budgeted for any expected expenses.
2. **Prepare a Budget Request** for the next calendar year to submit to the Finance Committee (late January). The Association's fiscal year runs from September 1 through August 31. Preparing budget requests (if, in fact, your committee needs a budget), is critical; if you don't submit a budget request, no funds will be available for your committee's work. Keep in mind that Association

policies prohibit reimbursement to any committee members for any meals, entertainment, secretarial help, meeting registration fees, or any kind of electronic equipment or electronic service such as cell phones, cell phone calls, and internet service. Prior to the budget deadline, in mid-January, you will receive a worksheet and copy of the previous year's budget. Tom Newman is available to help with any questions.

3. **File an Expense Report** for any reimbursable expenses. Expense reports should be submitted no later than 3 weeks after the expense has been incurred. For help, contact Tom Newman in the National Office. Expense Reports should be itemized and include receipts. They should be submitted to Nerissa Steele ([nsteele@apsa.org](mailto:nsteele@apsa.org)) at the National Office.
4. **Prepare Brief Written Reports for Board of Directors Meetings** (to be reviewed by the Department Head and Executive Committee in March/September). The due dates and ideal format for the reports are described below:
  - A. DUE DATES: Written Reports should be submitted to the National Office in mid-November and mid-April each year. These reports are distributed to the Board of Directors six weeks prior to each meeting. You will receive an email reminder about one month before the due date from Tina Faison ([tfaison@apsa.org](mailto:tfaison@apsa.org)) in the National Office.
  - B. FORMAT: Reports should consist of a brief summary (no longer than one page) of significant activities. **Action items** coming up at the next Board of Directors meeting should appear in CAPS at the beginning of the report. If appropriate, additional information may be included. Email your report to Tina Faison ([tfaison@apsa.org](mailto:tfaison@apsa.org))
  - C. Even if your committee has nothing to report, it is important to submit a report so that the Board of Directors is aware of what is happening with all committees.
5. **Attend meetings of the Board of Directors** (or send a designated representative) during APsA's national meetings if your committee has an Action Item.
6. **Surveys**

Many of our committee's tasks are dauntingly large or diffuse. Often the committee or its chair comes up with the idea to conduct a survey regarding some issue relevant to its work. Long experience at APsA has shown that sometimes surveys aren't really necessary or require more effort than the results will provide. When they are necessary, amateur or inadequate construction can obviate any potential value. Thus, before embarking on a survey project, chairs are encouraged to talk to Tom Newman and the Executive Committee and others about the goal of the survey, and why it is necessary.
7. **Awards (including promotion)**

Committees are often intrigued with the idea of creating a new award or honor. This can become a problem as the organization gets so overloaded with awards that: a) they lose their meaning; b) necessary communications such as application announcements get lost; and c) it becomes difficult to appropriately honor each winner. If your committee already offers or sponsors an award, please reevaluate it from time to time to see if it is still serving its original purpose and maintaining its usefulness. *The Association is ultimately responsible for all of the awards we present. Therefore, it's important that we review what is being circulated concerning any award under APsA's name.* We review for facts as well as to make sure the guidelines for choosing the winner(s) are appropriate and that the deadlines fit within the fiscal year. By being the final sign-off, we are also

able to make sure that the most current information is available on our website. Please submit a copy for review to the staff member working with your committee. If your committee would like to create a new award or honor, including one without a financial reward, you should prepare a brief proposal including the rationale, timing, review process, and communications needs and submit the proposal first to the Department Head and then the Executive Committee for approval.

8. **Communication**

A. All committee chairs must have e-mail.

B. Some Chairs find it helpful to set up an e-mail list among committee members for communication between meetings. If you need help doing this, contact Scott Dillon ([sdillon@apsa.org](mailto:sdillon@apsa.org)) on the staff.

9. **Identify Future Leadership**

APSA's success is, in part, dependent on the success of its committees. And those committees can only be successful to the degree that there are committed and talented chairs guiding their work. An ongoing responsibility of committee chairs is to seek out, identify, and develop future leadership. Please always be thinking about appropriate individuals to take over for you when your term of office ends as chair.

10. **Committee Members**

Chairs are encouraged to recommend appropriate APsA members to join their committees. To make such a recommendation, contact the President-Elect.

In the spring of each year, committee chairs will receive a listing of committee members whose terms will end after the next Annual Meeting. If you would like to re-appoint some of those members for another term, please contact Steven Shaw in the National Office ([sshaw@apsa.org](mailto:sshaw@apsa.org)). For those committee members who have already served two terms, we strongly recommend that they rotate off - thereby allowing other members to participate and perhaps provide new ideas and energy. Of course, if the Chair thinks an individual should remain on the committee for a third term because of a unique contribution they make to the group, this will be honored.

11. **Records**

Maintain a file with all committee products, minutes and other materials for your ongoing work and to aid your successor in assuming leadership of the committee. If it is appropriate for your committee, also maintain your committee's procedures so that the next chair will know what needs to happen when.

*(Guidelines follow on page 4)*

## Guidelines

As the activities and programs of the Association continue to increase, we have found it helpful to establish guidelines regarding the interaction between Committee chairs and the staff of the Association.

The National Office staff is a valuable resource and can be relied upon to make helpful and useful suggestions. It is also their role to ensure that branding and established procedures are followed so that workloads and schedules can be anticipated. APsA staff field many calls per year and are often aware of certain problems that a committee member may not be.

In an effort to support the work of APsA's committees, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

1. Committees sending "outreach" mailings, promotional flyers or other online communications under APsA's name (especially to non-members such as students, educators, mental health professionals, etc.) must submit material to the National Office for review of content and design prior to printing, mailing, emailing, or posting to social media. The particular wording of a flyer can impact the National Office's registration procedures at a meeting, for example, or affect accounting and subscription procedures, etc. *Please submit drafts of all mailings/promotional communications to the staff member working with your committee or Tom Newman in the National Office.*
2. For Committee mailings with wide distribution, whether done locally or by the National Office, it is the responsibility of the Chair or their designee to check with the Accounting staff in the National Office to ensure that there are sufficient funds in the committee's budget to cover the full cost of the mailing. Please contact Nerissa Steele to determine if sufficient funds are available ([nsteele@apsa.org](mailto:nsteele@apsa.org)).
3. In requesting audio-visual equipment for committee-sponsored functions during the two national meetings, it is the responsibility of the Chair or their designee to determine whether funds are available in the committee budget to cover the rental cost of the equipment.
4. Confidentiality guidelines – all newsletters and other publications both print and electronic, no matter how informal, must meet strict confidentiality guidelines. Editors and chairs should review all materials carefully before they are posted to the internet or printed to assure no identifiable patient information is included. If you have any questions about a specific situation, contact Tom Newman *before* posting the material and he will direct you to the appropriate resources.
5. Please be sure that your committee members are aware of these guidelines and that your co-chairs communicate with you about any of the activities delegated to them that involve the National Office staff. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact Tom Newman at [tnewman@apsa.org](mailto:tnewman@apsa.org).

**On behalf of the officers, staff and members of the Association,  
thanks for all you do for psychoanalysis.**