

Texas Academy Physician Assistants

POLICIES

I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors (BOD) serves as the judicial and policy-making body of TAPA. It is responsible for setting policy regarding the property, business and professional affairs of TAPA. TAPA maintains board liability insurance for the TAPA BOD, committee chairs and agents.

There are eleven members of the BOD including six officers (president, president-elect, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past president), four directors-at-large, and one designated student member.

A. Term of Office

Each board member's term is one year unless otherwise prescribed commencing on July 1st. The vice president, secretary and treasurer positions are two-year alternating terms. The director-as-large terms are two years with the election of two of the four directors on alternating years.

B. Meetings

There will be two board meetings held in conjunction with TAPA CME meetings.

There will be an annual planning meeting held in the summer, which will include a review of committee goals and objectives and strategic planning. The president will designate the annual meeting dates at the beginning of the leadership year.

Notice of regular meetings of the BOD shall be sent to members of the board at least ten days prior to the meeting date. Notice of special board meetings shall state the time of the meeting, the place and the business to be transacted at such meeting.

C. Duties

Board members are required to attend all BOD meetings. In the event that a board member is unable to attend, he/she shall notify the president prior to the scheduled meeting. All board members must comply with and sign the TAPA Conflict of Interest statement at the beginning of the fiscal year. The board may request the resignation of any board member who misses two consecutive board meetings in a one-year period.

Email communication requires timely response from BOD members.

- Message marked URGENT Response required in 24 hours
- Message marked ASAP Response required in 3 business days
- Message marked FYI No response needed

In addition to the duties outlined in the Bylaws and elsewhere in this policy manual, member of the Board shall perform the following:

1. President – The president shall appoint an elected member of the board to preside over board meetings. He/she shall also designate a philanthropic project and coordinate efforts for the project with the TPAF. The president also will coordinate and host the Past President's Club meeting at the TAPA Annual Conference. The president shall appoint the board to serve as liaisons to the committee chairs and their committees when necessary.

2. President-Elect - Perform duties as stated in the bylaws and as assigned by the President.
3. Vice-President – The vice-president shall serve as the Parliamentarian and/or Sergeant of Arms of the board. Review and ensure compliance with bylaws and policies and procedures. Review TAPA bylaws annually for compliance with AAPA requirements.
4. Secretary – The secretary records all changes approved by the board relating to the Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures and shall be responsible for the maintenance of the TAPA website.
5. Treasurer – The Treasurer is responsible for providing a report on TAPA’s financial condition at each board meeting and providing an annual financial report to the general membership. Additional responsibilities include developing an annual budget for the board’s consideration.
6. Immediate Past President – The immediate past president shall perform duties as stated in the bylaws, serve as chair of the Elections committee and serve on the board of the Texas Physician Assistant Foundation.
7. Directors-at-Large – Each director may serve as an assigned committee advisor as appointed by the President and approved by the Board.
8. Student board member – The student board member is responsible for relaying information on TAPA activities to their respective programs. Additionally, he/she will bring any student concerns or interest to the BOD.

II. ADVISORS TO THE BOARD

- A. General Counsel
All calls to legal counsel should go through the TAPA president and/or Executive Director in order to control legal consultation expenses.
- B. Lobbyist
- C. Texas Physician Assistant Foundation
- D. Past President’s Club
- E. TAPA Education Council
- F. Executive Board
- G. TAPA Political Action Committee

H. Historian

The Historian is a one year term that is appointed by the President. The Historian shall be responsible for collecting and archiving historical documents, photos, and memorabilia for TAPA.

The Historian shall attend the TAPA Annual Conference and submit a formal report to the Board of their activities.

I. Physician Advisor

Physician Advisor shall be known as an advocator of the physician assistant profession and the position shall be non-voting and will be appointed by the TAPA President, with the board's approval, for a one year term.

Advisor shall be either a MD or a DO and a member in good standing of TMA or TOMA respectively.

Advisor should be a member in good standing of their respective state organization and of TAPA.

Advisor shall have been, or are currently, a supervising physician of a physician assistant who also is a member in good standing of TAPA; and be willing to both promote and educate their constituents regarding the physician assistant profession.

Advisor is required to attend all in-person board meetings and encouraged to attend all conference calls.

Advisor is encouraged to attend the TAPA Legislative Summit.

Advisor is also encouraged to attend any other meetings where physician representation may be needed; to be decided by the TAPA board and/or the TAPA president.

J. Peer Assistance Contact

Contact shall provide information, referrals, and advocacy for Texas physician assistants.

Contact shall support ongoing continuing medical education at TAPA sponsored CME conferences regarding substance abuse and dependence, and peer impairment.

Contact shall interface with the Texas State Board of PA Examiners regarding policies and procedures governing reporting and rehabilitation of impaired PAs.

Contact shall develop a protocol for referring impaired PAs seeking assistance through TAPA.

Contact shall identify referral base of resources for impaired PAs.

III. COMMITTEES

A. Continuing Medical Education Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Provide a minimum of 40 hours of Category I CME annually.*
2. *Provide biannual CME programs that are timely, convenient, cost effective and revenue conscientious.*
3. *Provide a Town Hall Meeting at the spring and fall meetings*
4. *Provide the Board with recommendations for CME fees.*

B. Elections Committee

This committee is composed of the immediate Past President, as chair, and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge

1. *Provide oversight for TAPA's official election.*
2. *Prepare election announcements and solicit candidates for TAPA elections.*
3. *Plan election procedures that are consistent with TAPA Bylaws and Policies.*

C. Finance Committee

This committee is chaired by TAPA's treasurer and is composed of the president-elect, vice president, and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Provide financial planning for the future of TAPA.*
2. *Provide accurate and timely financial statements of TAPA's income & expenditures to include a formal report at all face to face board meetings...*
3. *Carefully monitor TAPA's income and spending to maintain a balanced budget.*
4. *Seek external bids for the budget audit & inform the BOD about the policies and procedures of a formal budget audit.*

D. Legislative Affairs Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair, president-elect or vice president and other such members as the chair may select. A Rural Health Liaison and experts should be appointed in each major area of reimbursement (Medicare, Medicaid, WC, et cetera) if available. In the case of the Collaborative Practice Committee the members shall be approved by the board of directors as brought forth by the chair.

Committee charge:

1. *Promote legislative activities that enhance the utilization and practice of PAs in Texas.*
2. *Provide timely information to Physician Assistants on legislative issues affecting PA practice in Texas.*
3. *Provide representation and expertise on legislative issues that affect PA practice.*
4. *Promote collaborative relationships with legislators, professional groups, and organizations important to the success of TAPA's legislative interests.*
5. *Coordinate the Texas Legislative Workshop.*
6. *Coordinate representation for TAPA on the Ad Hoc Committee on Collaborative Practice.*
7. *Coordinate activities in accord with the actions of all TAPA Committees.*

8. *Serve as TAPA's primary resource for practice related problems/ questions/ solutions.*
9. *Maintain relationships with 3rd party payers and governmental bodies.*
10. *Identify issues that impede PA-Physician practice in rural areas.*
11. *Maintain close liaison with the Office of Rural and Community Affairs (ORCA).*
12. *Establish membership(s) in local and national organizations related to rural health i.e. TARHC, TRHA, NRHA, etc.*
13. *Promote strategic alliances with key organizations in rural communities.*

E. Membership Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Recruit and retain membership.*
2. *Promote PA student membership.*
3. *Promote Quarter of Century Club.*
4. *Coordinate annual membership drive.*
5. *Send yearly correspondence to each regional PA group offering a TAPA Board Member to come speak. Staff will coordinate these visits.*
6. *Maintain communication with rural PAs and supervising physicians.*

F. Multicultural Affairs Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Develop and implement activities and programs designed to increase and enhance member diversity with respect to race/ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.*
2. *Enhance recruitment efforts to increase the enrollment, progression, and retention of members of culturally diverse groups.*
3. *Identify and/or develop and implement a comprehensive program of education and training opportunities for members and students.*
4. *Develop internal and external collaborations and partnerships to extend diversity and multicultural ideology to members.*
5. *Develop and implement activities and programs that are designed to improve the multicultural healthcare climate.*
6. *Develop a plan for an ongoing evaluation scheme to document the progress made in providing opportunities for growth in multicultural endeavors.*

G. Public Relations Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair, the newsletter editor (which will be an existing board member or director), and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Maintain familiarity with AAPA Public Relation resources and utilize as needed to meet PRC charges.*
2. *Develop programs and initiatives to advance the PA profession within the state.*
3. *Act as Liaison between the Board of Directors and the media and other identified audiences, at the discretion of the Board.*
4. *Develop and transmit public service announcements and/or press releases wherever appropriate.*
5. *Develop, coordinate and supervise PA Day activities happening in the state.*

6. *Make policy recommendations concerning development of public education and public relations activities to the Board of Directors when appropriate.*
7. *Compose articles for the TAPA Newsletter regarding public education topics and committee activities.*
8. *The Newsletter Editor will be responsible for assigning articles and ensuring that board meets deadlines.*

H. Student Affairs Committee

This committee is composed of an appointed chair, the student council and other such members as the chair may select.

Committee charge:

1. *Promote student awareness of TAPA.*
2. *Improve services to student members.*
3. *Coordinate dissemination of student related information via the TAPA website and TAPA News.*
4. *Promote student participation in the profession.*
5. *Coordinate student directors' participation at the TAPA Board Meetings.*
6. *Coordinate a TAPA officer's participation in each of the State's PA Program's White Coat Ceremonies. Each new student will receive a TAPA pin.*
7. *Develop, coordinate and supervise PA Day activities happening in the state.*

I. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership on TAPA committees is based upon the following criteria:

- A. Members should have a demonstrated willingness and ability to commit the time necessary to accomplish the committee's work.
- B. Each member must be knowledgeable about the issues being considered by the committee.
- C. Members are encouraged to apply for committee positions through the committee application process.
- D. Regional (geographic) and issue representation should be considered.
- E. Each member must be fair and objective on the issues being considered.
- F. Student membership on committees is encouraged where appropriate.
- G. Committee members must be TAPA members in good standing.

II. OPERATING POLICIES OF COMMITTEES

- A. Term
Committee members and chairs will serve a one- year term commencing on July 1st.
- B. Meetings
All committees shall meet regularly at the call of the chair or president of TAPA.

- C. Responsibilities of Chair
The committee chair must be a fellow or associate member of TAPA. Each committee chair shall review and update the committee's charges annually at the beginning of the leadership year. In addition, each committee chair is required to submit a written report to the TAPA office prior to each board meeting and an annual committee budget and written annual report in June evaluating the goals achieved and goals yet to be met. All committee pages must be updated quarterly to correspond to the quarterly newsletter deadlines.

III. STATE OFFICE POLICIES

- A. Filing/Copy Procedures
The following procedure has been established to manage the growing amount of information generated throughout the year. Copies should be made of each letter, memo, report, etc., which is prepared and distributed to:
1. Subject file – This file will be maintained by the TAPA business office.
 2. Correspondence File
 3. Policy File – A copy of all adopted policies will be dated and forwarded for inclusion in the Policy File in order of adoption.
- B. Membership Application Processing
The TAPA office will verify AAPA membership status and graduation from a CAHEA approved program and/or NCCPA certification for all PA memberships.
- C. Membership Packet
Each new member will receive a packet containing the following:
1. Fellow, Affiliate, Associate, and Sustaining Members:
Membership Card
Welcome Letter
Board of Director's List
TAPA Newsletter
Membership Certificate
Public Education Brochure with order form
Job Bank Flyer
 2. Student Members:
Membership Card
Welcome Letter
Board of Director's List
TAPA Newsletter
Value Statement
- D. Mailing List Guidelines
TAPA will provide its membership list to organizations for the purpose of promoting CME meetings. A written request with a copy of the rough draft of the material to be sent must be submitted to the TAPA mailing address with the appropriate payment enclosed before the request will be processed. Mailing lists will not be supplied for telemarketing purposes. Requests for other purposes must be approved by the President.

IV. TRAVEL POLICY

Members of the TAPA Board of Directors and its associates appointed or elected by that Board may be reimbursed for expenditures of personal funds expended in the conduct of official TAPA business. Reimbursement is not permitted for expense not directly related to and necessary for completion of TAPA business.

Guidelines contained in this policy apply to members of the board and associates while spending funds provided by TAPA or when reimbursement is expected or requested for spending personal funds. The Executive Director applies reimbursement guidelines when approving funds for reimbursement.

Reimbursement Guidelines:

- A. Reimbursement Approval - All board members and associates are expected to conduct official business in a manner consistent with sound business principles and TAPA policies. Failure to do so could result in non-reimbursement of any or all expenditures. Reimbursements of expenditures falling outside the scope of this policy require approval by the President of the Board and Executive Director or by the Treasurer and Executive Director.
- B. Expense Records/Reports - Associates are expected to keep and maintain sufficient records of expenses, including receipts, while conducting official business so that reasonable determinations of expenses can be made. Receipts should be filed with requests for payment. Reimbursement for expenses greater than \$10 cannot be made without proof of the expense. No reimbursements can be made for expenses not reported on official TAPA Travel/Expense Reports. These reports should include the dates and purpose of the travel, itemized expenses, and have the appropriate receipts attached at the time of filing. Expense reports must be filed within 10 days of completing travel. Associates traveling together are expected to keep and submit separate expense records. Receipts showing more than just the member or associates expenses should be highlighted to indicate which are the member's reimbursable expenses. Receipts that are copied and submitted with more than one expense report should have a brief annotation indicating whose report contains the original. Checks will be processed and disbursed on the 15th and last day of each month.
- C. Lost Receipts - Reasonable attempt must be made to obtain copies of lost receipts for any expenditure greater than \$10. If a duplicate receipt cannot be obtained, the member or associate must submit a signed memorandum indicating the nature and amount of the reimbursable expense and the fact that the receipt was lost. This memo must be filed with the expense report. The Executive Director must approve any reimbursements under this exception.
- D. Travel Advances - Travel advances are not permitted except under unusual circumstances when the Executive Director has given approval or when the member's anticipated official expenses will be greater than \$600. Expenses covered under advances must be accounted for with receipts and expense reports and these should be submitted in the same manner as for reimbursement. Board members and associates are expected to refund any advance over-payment.
- E. Purchase of Airline Tickets - Board members and associates are expected to obtain their own airline conveyance at least 21 days, (three weeks) prior to conducting official travel. Reimbursement of expenses associated with airline travel may not exceed the amount that would have resulted if a TAPA staff had arranged the travel through a travel agent at least twenty-one days prior to the scheduled departure date. Short notice travel requirements

imposed by the Board of Directors do not come under this policy. Although encouraged to do so, members and associates are not required to purchase non-refundable tickets.

- F. Reimbursement for Lodging - When attending meetings sponsored by TAPA, members and associates can not be reimbursed at a rate that is higher than that which has been previously negotiated by TAPA for similar rooms at that same meeting.
- G. Rental Car Expenses - Rental cars generally are not authorized unless their use can be shown to result in a savings for TAPA over that which would have been realized using taxi, shared rides, and shuttle services. All rental car expenses must be pre-authorized by the Executive Director. Board members who fly to their destination, but otherwise personally opt to obtain a rental car over taxi or shuttle service may be reimbursed up to the expense that would have occurred for taxi or shuttle services. Expenses may be denied if preauthorization is not obtained.
- H. Use of Personal Car for Travel - Reimbursement for use of privately owned vehicles while conducting official business will be at the standard IRS mileage rate.
- I. Entertainment Expenses - Reimbursement for entertainment expenses is not permitted unless those expenses are considered reasonable and they have been pre-authorized by the Executive Director. Entertainment expenses must be consistent with the advancement of TAPA, its goals, or its approved objectives.
- J. Personal Expenses - Expenses for alcoholic beverages, personal entertainment, and personal comfort items are not authorized. Dry cleaning is not covered as a business expense except under extenuating circumstances associated with extended business trips. Club memberships, personal grooming, health expenses, dependent care expenses, personal loss due to theft, and other non-business related expenses of a personal nature are not reimbursable.
- K. Miscellaneous Expenses - Tips may be expensed but should not exceed what is customary or reasonable. Generally, this is considered 15-20% for meal service, 10% for taxi, and \$1.00 per bag at hotels or the airport. Business use of telephones is a reimbursable expense. Parking is a reimbursable expense.
- L. AAPA – Reimbursement for AAPA House of Delegates should not exceed House of Delegate registration, round trip airline ticket and three night's hotel stay.
- M. Per Diem – A \$35 per diem will be provided for all official TAPA travel.

V. PARTICIPATION IN AAPA MEETINGS

A. AAPA House of Delegates

TAPA's delegates are elected by a plurality of votes cast according to apportionment by the AAPA. Delegates are elected for two- year terms staggering one half /+1 of the apportioned delegates on even and the second half of the apportioned delegates on odd years. Three alternate delegates may be chosen preferably from nominees receiving votes but not necessarily enough to be elected as primary. In the event there are insufficient candidates to provide an adequate number of alternate delegates, the board of directors may appoint additional alternates as required.

The TAPA President will appoint the HOD Chief Delegate from the elected group of delegates. The Chief Delegate provides the BOD annually with an overview of key issues being deliberated in the HOD (prior to the HOD). The Chief Delegate is provided an ex-officio seat on the BOD

and will conduct a teleconference meeting with delegates prior to the HOD. Chief Delegate will provide the membership with a synopsis of key resolutions/issues considered by the HOD prior to the HOD.

TAPA will only fund delegates to the AAPA Annual HOD – the number will be according to apportionment by the AAPA. Alternate delegates will attend on a volunteer basis. Alternate delegates attending in place of a primary delegate shall be entitled to the same funding as the primary at the discretion of the chief delegate. All reimbursement must be based on original receipts.

Reimbursement for TAPA delegates shall be according to Section IV of the TAPA Policies.

B. AAPA CORE

CORE is held every year beginning in 2011 in February. It serves as leadership training for state leaders. TAPA shall fund two representatives, the President and President-Elect to this meeting. In the case that one of these representatives cannot attend, the President will appoint an additional attendee. A written report by the President-Elect or the second funded participant shall be submitted to the BOD at its next regularly scheduled meeting following Leadership Summit.

C. AAPA Adventures in Lobbying (AIL)

AAPA holds AIL every other year in February. This conference allows state leaders and staff the opportunity to learn more on federal legislation and a chance to visit the Texas Congressional Delegation. TAPA shall fund two representatives, in addition to staff to this meeting. The President appoints the attendees to this conference. A written report by one of the attendees will be submitted to the BOD at its next regularly scheduled meeting following AIL.

VI. PUBLICATIONS

A. Newsletter

TAPA News is the official publication of TAPA. It is published at least quarterly and distributed to TAPA members and legislators. One issue will be distributed to all PAs in the state as a membership drive activity each year. The president shall appoint the editor of the newsletter with approval of the board. The editor shall have final say on any publication in the newsletter. The editor shall have the authority to reject or modify any articles submitted to the newsletter.

B. Website

The TAPA Secretary is responsible for the maintenance and updating of the website.

C. Other Publications – TAPA shall publish the following publications:

1. The TAPA Job Bank is a list of Texas employment opportunities and also a source of resumes of PAs in search of jobs. The listing is available to TAPA members only. TAPA members also may post their resumes at no charge.
2. A public education brochure is published in English and Spanish and is kept on hand in sufficient quantity to handle member orders. The price is \$.30.

VII. ELECTIONS

A. TAPA

TAPA elections are held yearly. Elections may be held more often if deemed necessary and approved by the Board of Directors.

1. **Date of Elections**
The date of the annual election shall be determined by the Elections Committee and approved by the Board. The date will be publicized to the membership at the time candidates are solicited. Dates of special elections approved by the Board shall be publicized at least 60 days prior to the election being held.
2. **Solicitation of Candidates**
Candidates shall be solicited by the Elections Committee. Solicitation shall be made through standard means of communication available to TAPA (i.e., TAPA news-blast, TAPA newsletter, TAPA website) and published on the TAPA website no later than September 15th of the year preceding the election. The last date to pre-declare candidacy in regular elections is December 1st of the year preceding the election. Names of all pre-declared candidates will be published and distributed to the membership along with a platform statement (when such statement is provided by the candidate) prior to December 1st of the year preceding the election.
3. **Publication of Platform Statements:** Platform statements are published by TAPA for pre-declared candidates only. Platform statements should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Platform statements for membership on the Board (includes officers) shall not exceed one page in #12 font.
 - b. Platform statements for TAPA Delegates shall not exceed one-half page in #12 font.
 - c. At a minimum, a candidate's platform statement will include the candidate's name, the office (or offices) for which they are declared, and affirmation of their willingness to serve.
 - d. Publication of platform statements is subject approval by the Elections Committee.
4. **Ballots**
Ballots must be official; that is, published and distributed by TAPA according to procedures established by the Elections Committee. A space for write-in candidates shall be provided for each available office on the ballot. Ballots that have not been distributed by TAPA will be considered invalid and will not be counted.
5. **Counting of Votes**
To be counted, ballots must be received by the published deadline(s) and according to procedures approved by the Elections Committee. The final date for members to cast votes by mail, on-line, or through other means shall be publicized at the same time as the call for candidates. Any postponement of the last date to cast a vote is subject to approval of the Board of Directors. Ballots shall be tallied by the Chair of the Elections Committee and at least one other person appointed by the Chair of the Elections Committee. In the event the Chair of the Elections Committee is not available to count votes, the Board of Directors shall appoint a substitute.

6. **Illegal Votes**
Votes are counted if the intent of the voter is clear. Stray marks and corrections do not invalidate a ballot. Votes that are not marked in such a manner as to signify the clear intent of the voter are not counted. An illegal vote cast for an office does not invalidate the entire ballot. All legal votes will be counted.
7. **Voting at the Annual Conference**
Voting at the Annual Conference shall be permitted if announcement of such has been publicized with the call for candidates and if the ballots have been published, distributed, and collected according to procedures established by the Elections Committee.
8. **Announcement of Election Results**
Announcement of the election results shall be made by the Chair of the Elections Committee (or designee) after the election has closed. Release of number of votes cast for individual candidates is permitted, but not required. Election results may be announced at the TAPA Annual Conference if the time and place of the announcement is open and publicized to the general membership. Election results will be publicized in the next available issue of the TAPA Newsletter and on the TAPA Website after the election has closed.
9. **Contesting an Election**
A candidate may contest election results if the candidate does so in writing within 15 days after the election has closed and if the can show just cause. Letter(s) contesting results shall be addressed to the Chair of the Elections Committee and must include which results are being contested and why. Just cause is subject to approval of the Elections Committee. The decision to nullify an election result is subject to majority approval of the Board of Directors.
10. **Designated Campaigning Area at Annual Meeting**
TAPA shall provide the candidates with a designated area that will serve as a general area for them to discuss their platforms with the membership as well as post their election materials.
Candidates will not be allowed to campaign in the areas reserved for: 1. Registration area, 2. TAPA store, 3. Lecture Halls and any other areas TAPA may which to designate.
The areas defined as 1. Registration, 2. TAPA Store, 3. Lecture Halls and 4. Other shall be determined by TAPA at the beginning of each annual conference.
Election materials shall not be distributed or placed in the 1. Registration area, 2. TAPA Store, 3. Lecture Halls, 4. Hotel Rooms, and 5. any other areas TAPA may which to designate.
Non-compliance with the above stipulations shall result in an initial warning by TAPA.
Should the candidate fail to comply after being warned, the candidate may be disqualified from the election.

B. AAPA

A direct link to AAPA's website will be maintained on TAPA's website. Current AAPA election information about the candidates and their platforms, as well as information about the elections process may be obtained there.

VIII. CME POLICY

CME meetings will not be sponsored in conjunction with any regional group. An annual CME meeting will be held in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex in the spring. Beginning in 2010 the spring meeting will rotate annually between Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston.

A second meeting will be held each year with the following permanent rotation of San Antonio, Galveston, Austin, Houston, starting with the 2007 meeting in San Antonio. In addition, every third year there will be an additional city added to the rotation to be determined by the CME committee chair and TAPA board of directors. TAPA board members receive complimentary CME at the spring and fall conferences and are entitled to reimbursement for one night's stay at each out of town conference.

TAPA has adopted the ACCME "Standards for Commercial Support" in the planning and implementation of TAPA approved CME programs. In addition, the CME committee has adopted a copyright statement that all speakers must sign, "I represent that the presentation and all associated materials will contain no content from copyrighted or published works without the written consent of the copyright owner."

The Annual CME meeting will consist each year of: (1) "Meet the Candidates" – at the afternoon break on Friday; (2) Keynote Address & Awards Ceremony – 1 ½ hour, to be held at last session prior to the Saturday luncheon; (3) Annual Business meeting at Saturday luncheon, must include passing of the gavel, election results and President's report.

IX. ANNUAL DUES

TAPA will charge annual dues. The board of directors shall be responsible for determining these dues. Membership dues will be sent in February each year prior to the annual conference. A renewal letter will be sent to members with an opportunity to renew at the conference. A second notification will be sent out in May and a drop letter in July. Members who do not renew by July 1st will be charged an increase in dues. Fellow members who regularly pay \$165 will instead pay \$200. Other categories will increase accordingly. Notification will include the potential increase of dues for late renewal and will include a check box for automatic renewal. Reports to the BOD will reflect the names of the members who are more than sixty days past due and the past due member will be dropped from the membership roster. TAPA staff will notify the member in a timely fashion that they have been dropped from membership. New graduates pay half price membership dues their first year of Fellow membership.

| | | |
|-------|--------------------|--|
| Dues: | Fellow | \$165 |
| | Associate | \$165 |
| | Affiliate | \$128 |
| | Sustaining/Retired | \$1/2 price of current fellow membership |
| | Physician | \$128 |
| | Student | \$25/ 2 years |
| | Military | \$25 |
| | PA/Physician Team | \$25 |
| | Hardship | \$0 |
| | Pre-PA Student | \$25 |
| | Honorary | Free |
| | Past Presidents | Free |

X. TAPA PROPERTY

The TAPA Executive Director shall maintain an inventory of all property and report the status of that inventory to the board annually.

- A. TAPA traveling display
- B. Corporate credit cards
- C. Texas Medical Jurisprudence, current (15th -2004) edition & Texas Medical Jurisprudence Study Guide, current edition (2004)

XI. MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- A. TAPA contracts management services with Texas Medical Association – Association Management Services Department. The hourly management fee is to be set on a yearly basis and includes salary, benefits, and continuing education for staff; office space; utilities; equipment and property overhead. Not included in the fee are direct charges for faxing, long-distance telephone, in-house graphic arts and printing, postage, special order office supplies or other out-of-pocket expenses.

Some benefits of management through TMA Association Management Services include:

- 1. Management information systems support.
- 2. Access to TMA meeting space and library services.
- 3. Direct link to TMA’s Division of Public Affairs for legislative consultation.
- 4. Consultation and support from TMA’s Division of Medical Economics on third party relations, managed care and other socioeconomic issues.
- 5. Permanent storage of society records and continuity of business operations.

- B. Membership Management

Includes: Development and conducting membership recruitment and retention campaigns, processing of membership applications, billing of dues, processing of dues, preparing deposits, tracking and reporting statistical data, analyzing membership demographics, developing membership reports, and managing membership database.

- C. Board Support

Includes: Working with officers to develop board agenda packets, producing reports, assisting with strategic planning, planning and staffing board meetings, producing minutes, handling correspondence and referral of matters to appropriate officers, assisting with committee appointments, providing guidance and assistance for bylaws revisions, carrying out initiatives and action items as directed, providing on-going support throughout the year to board members to assist with individual duties as required by their office.

- D. Meeting Management

Annual conference in Dallas/FW area and fall regional conference.

Includes: Providing pre-registration services, including confirmation letters to attendees, on-site registration staffing and coordination. Providing assistance with site selection, contract negotiations, planning meetings, program development assistance, and coordination with hotel, food and beverage planning, entertainment coordination. Preparing exhibitor solicitations and providing on-site exhibit management. Producing collateral pieces to include flyers, letters, brochures and handout materials.

- E. General Client Service

Includes: Answering TAPA telephone line/voice mail during regular business hours (8:15am – 5:15pm), serving as member resource and providing member assistance,

distributing publications as requested, researching information for members, general office activities.

F. Financial Management

Includes: Managing society bank accounts with society treasurer, handling bookkeeping, preparing financial reports for Board of Directors, reconciling monthly bank statements, managing accounts payable/receivable, developing operating budget for Board approval, and working with a CPA to provide information for audits and tax preparation. Cost for CPA is not included in hourly rate.

G. Legislative/Regulatory Affairs

Includes: Researching and tracking legislative and regulatory issues, briefing members for testimony, working with established key contact programs, developing legislative and political education activities, coordinating and implementing grassroots political activities, representing TAPA as requested at meetings, assisting with developments and operation of a political action committee (with legal consultation).

H. Publication Services

Includes: Writing or assisting editor with editing copy, design and layout of newsletter, recruiting advertisers, writing and assisting editor with educational materials and brochures, including: membership directories, recruitment brochures, membership handbook, and educational materials. Does not include charges for graphic arts services or production.

I. Program Development

Includes: Fundraising activities, assisting with scholarship fund development, developing and implementing special projects and programs, developing operations manual.

J. Member Services

Includes: Providing guidance and assistance in defining member services, implementing parent chapter member services at state level.

K. Public/Media Relations

Includes: Writing and issuing news releases, coordinating media activity at meetings and functions, assisting officers/members with media relations education as necessary.

XII. TEXAS PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT FOUNDATION

The Texas Physician Assistant Foundation was established in 1998. The mission of the Foundation is to foster knowledge and philanthropy that enhance the delivery of quality health care in Texas. TAPA shall work with the Foundation to further its mission.

The Immediate Past-President of TAPA shall serve on the board of the Foundation.

XIII. TEXAS ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PA-PAC)

The TAPA Political Action committee was established in 2001. The purposes of the PAC are to elect to the Texas Legislature, candidates who support good health and medical legislation; to encourage and strive for the improvement of government by encouraging and stimulating physician assistants and others to take a more active and effective part in governmental affairs; to encourage physician assistants and others to understand the nature and actions of their government as to important political records, office holders, and

candidates for public office; and to assist physician assistants and others in organizing themselves for more effective political action and in carrying out their responsibilities of good citizens.

XIV. PHILANTHROPY

A. President's Philanthropic Project

The TAPA President will identify a philanthropic project each year and notify the TPAF of this project.

XV. POSITION PAPERS

TAPA follows AAPA position papers and code of ethics.

The following position papers have been approved by the Board of Directors and are available in the TAPA business office for membership review:

Foreign Medical Graduate Paper

Anti-Smoking Paper

Physician/PA Team Concept

XVI. TAPA STORE

TAPA staff selects items to be stocked in the TAPA Store. The budget will be determined by BOD with recommendation from treasurer. Staffing the store during conferences will be the responsibility of the BOD & committee chairs. If a BOD or committee chair cannot be present to staff the store, it is their responsibility to find a replacement.

XVII. TAPA AWARDS

The following awards may be awarded at the TAPA annual conference. Applications for the following awards are encouraged, accepted and reviewed on a yearly basis:

PA of the Year

Supervising Physician of the Year

PA Educator of the Year

Honorary Member Award (optional)

TAPA staff and the Executive Committee will promote awards to the general membership and other groups in order to encourage the submission of nominations. In addition they will coordinate nominations and present committee recommendation to the Board of Directors for consideration.

XVIII. STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council is comprised of one representative from each of the Texas PA programs (All members of the student council should attend the first annual BOD meeting of the year to select student council representatives to attend subsequent BOD meetings as the voting student member. There is one voting student member per BOD meeting. Two student council members, one being the designated voting member, will attend subsequent BOD meetings that year on a rotational basis. The student council is responsible for relaying information on TAPA activities to their respective constituencies. Additionally they shall bring any student concerns to the BOD. The voting student member shall be identified during roll call for all scheduled board meetings.

In the event of a vacancy in the student council it will be responsibility of the program to elect a new delegate to represent the program.

Guidelines for Use of TAPA Member Database for Research Purposes

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide clearly defined guidelines for the utilization of TAPA members as research subjects when and if approved by the Board of Directors. TAPA identifies and embraces the need for research specifically on workforce issues within the State of Texas.

Board of Directors:

1. All requests must be approved by the sitting TAPA President or his/her designee(s).
2. The designee(s) is/are, by preference, elected Board of Directors member(s) that is/are also an educator.
3. Researchers will NOT be given membership data. TAPA staff will communicate email correspondence to TAPA membership.
4. All research conducted utilizing TAPA membership must be electronic in format. Data must be collected through email and/or internet correspondence. TAPA will not incur any costs for postal data collection.
5. TAPA will not incur any costs besides in kind staff dissemination of email notifications to TAPA membership.
6. TAPA staff will notify TAPA membership of a researcher's data collection instrument held somewhere independent of the TAPA website. TAPA staff will not email surveys and/or any other forms of data collection instruments.
7. TAPA will not house and/or administer data collection instruments on its own website.
8. TAPA will consider research projects involving survey format data only. Requests for raw TAPA membership data, interviews (any format) and/or any other kind of research will be denied.
9. TAPA will not endorse any research project and offers approval of research endeavors through the TAPA membership as a service and benefit of membership.
10. TAPA retains the right to terminate any research project at any time during the process for any reason.

Researchers:

The following are requirements of every request for TAPA membership participation in research endeavors:

1. Principal investigator(s) must be a TAPA member in good standing.
2. A letter of approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) for student requests.
3. Faculty sponsor is required for student requests.
4. Cover letter detailing a summary of the research, confidentiality measures, subject protections and risks.
5. Data collection instrument AND any correspondence to subjects should include a statement stating that TAPA does not endorse the research project.
6. All data collection should be collected utilizing internet formats preferably. Email communication is discouraged.
7. Final copy of the data collection instrument must be presented for approval.
8. Notifications to membership inviting them to participate are limited to two. The first notification is the initial invitation. The second is a reminder and final notification to participate.
9. All approved research projects and their principal investigator(s) must present their research findings and conclusions by poster presentation at the spring conference. This expense is incurred by the principal investigator.

10. Any approved research project and its principal investigator(s) may be asked to present their findings and results in lecture format at the spring conference. This expense is incurred by the principal investigator.
11. All approved research projects and their principal investigator(s) must prepare an abstract suitable for publication in the TAPA Newsletter upon completion of the research process.

XIX. PRESIDENT'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

The President of the TAPA Board of Directors may be permitted an annual discretionary fund in the budget, not to exceed \$1,000. These funds are provided to the President as a part of the Board of Director's annual budget. Discretionary funds are provided to allow the President limited flexibility to respond to urgent Board expense items and/or to develop activities that are consistent with the TAPA mission statement. These activities should directly address current goals and/or objectives of TAPA.

The President must keep track of and account for all discretionary fund expenditures according to current TAPA policy, including retention of receipts and other necessary documentation. Expenditure of funds by the President that are not directly supported through budgeted line items or the President's discretionary fund are subject to scrutiny of the Treasurer and the Board of Directors and must also be accounted for accordingly. All expenditures of the Board of Directors, including the President's discretionary fund, must be performed in a manner consistent with current TAPA policy.

Special Expense Items:

The President of TAPA may call for a special vote of the Board of Directors in order to approve additional discretionary funds requests of \$1,000 or less if required and indicated. Such requests require approval of a simple majority of the Executive Committee. A simple majority of the Board must approve all discretionary and special expenditure requests in excess of \$1,000. Special expenditure requests are subject to the availability of sufficient funds within the projected TAPA budget. Discretionary expenditures that exceed \$1,000, which will place the annual budget into a deficit or which is requested during a deficit year, must be approved by a simple majority of the board conducted by roll call.

The President may request funds to be shifted from one committee's account to another, or to a special budget item, provided she or he has obtained approval from the appointed committee chairperson and the Treasurer of TAPA. This type of cost shifting may not exceed 25% of the committee's total remaining budget or \$1,000; whichever is smaller. Chairperson(s) of the affected committee are responsible for adjusting their committee's expenses accordingly so as not to exceed the revised budget after the transfer is complete.

Budgetary cost shifts of this nature must be reported at the next scheduled meeting of the TAPA Board of Directors and must be accompanied by appropriate documentation. All fund transfers are subject to final approval by a majority of the Board. Cost shifting in excess of \$1,000 or 25% of a committee's approved budget must receive approval of a simple majority of the Board prior to the actual transfer of funds.

XX. MEMBERSHIPS

TAPA will be a yearly member of the Physician Assistant Historical Society.

TAPA will be an organizational member of the Asthma Coalition of Texas.

XXII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICIES

Decisions made by the officers, committees, and others on behalf of the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants have far-reaching implications for the profession, TAPA, and the volunteers individually. The wide range of diverse interests within TAPA serve TAPA well by bringing many areas of expertise together for the benefit of the profession.

Situations may arise in which an individual participating in TAPA decision-making may have outside interests or organizational involvements, which could be perceived as a conflict of interest for the individual or for TAPA. Potential conflicts of interest are situations that might not allow for impartial or objective determinations or which potentially put TAPA at a competitive or other disadvantage as a result of divided loyalties. These situations include, but are not limited to, relationships with products, devices, government, companies such as pharmaceutical and equipment manufacturers, and non-TAPA organizations addressing PA issues.

TAPA does not wish to exclude individuals who are experts in their given fields from policy formulation and recommendations merely because they have potential conflicts of interest due to their expertise or their organizational affiliation. However, the TAPA has a particular interest in avoiding situations that could prove detrimental for the organization.

To assist in avoiding any real or perceived conflict of interest, each volunteer applicant shall sign a statement of disclosure of conflict of interest at the time of application for election, appointment, or change of position. If a change in situation is to occur, notification must be made to the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants as much in advance as possible

TAPA does not wish to exclude individuals who are experts in their given fields from policy formulation and recommendations merely because they have potential conflicts of interest due to their expertise. If a perceived conflict is identified through this notification process or by other means, it is the responsibility of the President of the Board of Directors to discuss the potential ramifications with the individual volunteer. However, it will remain the decision of the volunteer to recuse himself/herself from discussion that may lead to undue influence resulting from the perceived conflict and to take any appropriate action as the board deems necessary. At a minimum, an individual with a personal or organizational conflict of interest on an issue should abstain from voting on that issue, or recuse themselves completely from the discussion of that issue. In situations of more generalized conflict of interest where the conflict may occur on more than one issue, the board may request that the individual resign from that position. In all situations an open and honest approach with as much full disclosure as possible should be taken by all volunteers to any situation of potential or real conflict of interest.

XXI. Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets forth the general expectations of Texas Academy of Physician Assistants (TAPA) for its leadership, and describes standards of ethical behavior that each officer is expected to uphold. It does not address every situation that may be encountered, and is not a substitute for an officer's exercise of good judgment and common sense. Leadership is made up of elected and appointed officers, committee chairs and staff. A leader who has a question about a particular circumstance that may implicate a provision of this Code should address the question with the Executive Committee, who may consult with legal counsel as appropriate.

Each leader is responsible to act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of TAPA and in so doing, to support TAPA in fulfilling its mission and discharging its accountabilities.

Compliance with Laws, Rules and Regulations

Leaders shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and rules.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Policy

Decisions made by the officers, committees, and others on behalf of the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants have far-reaching implications for the profession, the Academy, and the volunteers individually. The wide range of diverse interests within TAPA serve TAPA well by bringing many areas of expertise together for the benefit of the profession.

Situations may arise in which an individual participating in TAPA decision-making may have outside interests or organizational involvements, which could be perceived as a conflict of interest for the individual or for TAPA. Potential conflicts of interest are situations that might not allow for impartial or objective determinations or which potentially put TAPA at a competitive or other disadvantage as a result of divided loyalties. These situations include, but are not limited to, relationships with products, devices, government, companies such as pharmaceutical and equipment manufacturers, and non-TAPA organizations addressing PA issues.

TAPA does not wish to exclude individuals who are experts in their given fields from policy formulation and recommendations merely because they have potential conflicts of interest due to their expertise or their organizational affiliation. However, TAPA has a particular interest in avoiding situations that could prove detrimental for the organization.

To assist in avoiding any real or perceived conflict of interest, each volunteer applicant shall sign a statement of disclosure of conflict of interest at the time of application for election, appointment, or change of position. If a change in situation is to occur, notification must be made to the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants as much in advance as possible.

TAPA does not wish to exclude individuals who are experts in their given fields from policy formulation and recommendations merely because they have potential conflicts of interest due to their expertise. If a perceived conflict is identified through this notification process or by other means, it is the responsibility of the President of the Board of Directors to discuss the potential ramifications with the individual volunteer. However, it will remain the decision of the volunteer to recuse himself/herself from discussion that may lead to undue influence resulting from the perceived conflict and to take any appropriate action as the board deems necessary. At a minimum, an individual with a personal or organizational conflict of interest on an issue should abstain from voting on that issue, or recuse themselves completely from the discussion of that issue. In situations of more generalized conflict of interest where the conflict may occur on more than one issue, the board may request that the individual resign from that position. In all situations an open and honest approach with as much full disclosure as possible should be taken by all volunteers to any situation of potential or real conflict of interest.

Confidentiality

An officer may never use Confidential Information for his or her own personal benefit or to benefit persons or entities outside TAPA. Officers shall not disclose Confidential Information outside TAPA either during or after their service as a officer of TAPA, except with the express or implied consent of the Board of Directors (BOD) or as required by law.

“Confidential Information” means all non-public information entrusted to or obtained by an officer by reason of his or her position as an officer of TAPA. It includes, but is not limited to, non-public information that might be useful to competitors or harmful to TAPA, its members or the physician assistant profession if disclosed.

Media Contact and Public Discussion

News media contact and responses and public discussion TAPA's affairs should only be made through the BOD's authorized spokesperson(s). Any officer who is questioned by news reporters or other media representatives should refer such individuals to the appropriate representatives of the BOD.

Respectful Conduct

It is recognized that officers bring to TAPA diverse background skills and experience. Officers will not always agree with one another on all issues. All debates shall take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy. The authority of the Chair must be respected by all officers.

Use of TAPA Property

In the absence of prior TAPA BOD approval, assets of TAPA should be used for legitimate business purposes and for personal purposes only to the extent allowed by TAPA policy. All officers have an obligation to use TAPA property efficiently.

Obtaining Advice of Counsel

Request to obtain outside opinions or advice regarding matters before the BOD should be made through the President.

Reporting of Violations

Officers should communicate any suspected violations of this Code promptly to the Executive Committee. Suspected violations shall be investigated by or at the direction of the Executive Committee, and appropriate action shall be taken in the event that a violation is confirmed.

Edited February 2009