



CHAPTER FORMATION HANDBOOK

(revised June 2012)

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The Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA) is pleased that you are considering forming a chapter of the organization. This Handbook is designed to outline the benefits and responsibilities of local chapters, as well as provide you with practical guidelines for chapter formation.

Part I. About GAPNA

1.1 History

- GAPNA, formerly NCGNP, originated in 1981 with a group of GNPs who were concerned with promoting quality of care for older adults, particularly those in long term care settings. This interest resulted in a continuing education conference in 1983, held in Portland, OR, where attendees voted to create an official not-for-profit professional organization, the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association.
- The mission of GAPNA is to promote excellence in advanced practice nursing that enhances the well being of older adults. This is accomplished through advocacy, dissemination of knowledge, and provision of opportunities for member growth.
- GAPNA's vision is the competent care of older adults, as delivered by APNs, will be universally valued and sought.

1.2 Benefits of GAPNA Membership

- A bi-monthly printed and online subscription to the official Journal of GAPNA, *Geriatric Nursing*
- Quarterly issues of the GAPNA Newsletter (via Email)
- A 10% discount on your ANCC GNP certification renewal
- Access to clinically relevant information found on the “members only” section of the GAPNA website
- Bi-monthly issues of our eAlert noting relevant legislative news, Chapter events, timely topics of interest
- Discounted registration fee to our Annual Conference (held every year in September)
- Discounted fee for CNE credits and educational sessions via our Online Library (*more information below*).
- Eligibility to apply for NSO's professional liability, life and health insurance programs (*endorsed by GAPNA*)
- A \$10 discount on AANP membership
- Discounts on many AGS and AMDA publications
- An opportunity to actively participate in setting health policy issues
- An opportunity to read/blog with your peers via our Facebook site (www.facebook.com/GAPNA)
- Being part of an elite group of advanced practice nurses who advance the practice of gerontological nursing, and the well-being of the public through advocacy, dissemination of knowledge, and provision of member growth opportunities.

Part II. Role of Local Chapters

2.1 Definition and Purpose of GAPNA Chapter

- The Board of Directors of GAPNA strongly promotes chapter formation as a means of encouraging individual GAPNA members to actively engage in education, practice, networking, and legislative advocacy in ways that reflect the advanced gerontological practice concerns of local members.
- A chapter of GAPNA is a group of GAPNA members who have committed to organize an ongoing structure for supporting the mission of GAPNA at a local level.

- A local chapter informs GAPNA of local concerns, opinions, and issues that influence the national agenda.
- While established as a not-for-profit (501c6) professional association with legal and financial independence from GAPNA, the chapter carries the designation of “Chapter of GAPNA” and, as such, maintains responsibility for upholding reporting relationships and responsibilities to GAPNA.

2.2 Benefits of Chapter Status

- Access to the resources of a national professional organization.
- Provides an organized group to speak on behalf of the profession in the community.
- Allows each chapter to serve as an organized group, that represents the older adult and serve as a resource to communities at all levels.
- Network and share ideas with other APNs specializing in care of older adults.
- Offer local continuing education to providers caring for older adults.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the GAPNA mission, vision, and values: to advance the practice of members and the wellbeing of the public through advocacy, dissemination of knowledge, and provision of member growth opportunities.
- Foster leadership potential, by enabling chapter members to seek involvement at the national level.
- Use of the chapter section on the GAPNA website to promote meetings and post current affairs.

2.3 Chapter Requirements & Responsibilities

A. Members

- The *minimum* number of regular members is ten (10).
- Chapters need to have members committed to maintaining successful chapters. This commitment includes, but is not limited to, the mentorship and nurturing of new members to assume positions of responsibility and leadership.
- Only regular members may serve as chapter officers.

B. Meetings

- *At least* one (1) business meeting must be held annually to conduct elections and review bylaws.

C. Finances

- Chapters must be financially independent.
 - Chapters function as a separate entity from GAPNA, both legally and financially.
 - All expenses and liabilities of a local chapter are the sole responsibility of that chapter, and GAPNA shall have no liability with respect to any such obligation.
 - Chapters must adhere to the Chapter Financial Policy (see **Appendix J**) and submit an Annual Chapter Financial Report every July (see **Appendix K**).
- Steps to establish financial independence include the following:
 - Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN).
 - ✓ Each chapter must obtain an EIN from the Internal Revenue Service (see GAPNA website for link and forms or see **Appendix H** of this handbook).
 - ✓ Get your Chapter Affiliation Agreement signed and submitted to the National Office. (See GAPNA website for form or see **Appendix E** of this handbook). You will also need to take a copy of this to the bank to open a checking account. Establish a checking account.
 - ✓ Requirements to establish a business checking account include establishing an EIN number, bringing a copy of the Chapter Affiliation Agreement with you, and signature of two officers.
 - Develop an annual financial plan for the upcoming year that includes
 - ✓ Potential institutional or corporate support.
 - ✓ Potential fundraising activities.
- GAPNA Stipend

- A start-up stipend of \$250 is provided to new chapters for initial costs such as mailings and marketing.
- The fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

D. Bylaws and Policies

- Chapters will develop bylaws (see sample – **Appendix D**) that are congruent with National’s bylaws (see **Appendix C**).
- Each chapter shall review its bylaws annually and can amend them as stipulated in the bylaws.
- Any changes to the chapter’s bylaws must be submitted to the National Office along with the Chapters’ Annual Report (see GAPNA website or template - **Appendix A**).

E. Officers

- The Board of Directors of each chapter shall consist of a president, president-elect, secretary, and treasurer. (The secretary and treasurer positions may be combined into one role.) There shall be a *minimum* of three (3) chapter officers with staggered terms of office.
- Each member of the Board of Directors shall have a job description.
- Elections
 - Chapter election of officers is held annually during the second quarter of the year (April – June).
 - When the size of chapter membership allows, a nominating committee can determine a slate of candidates for office.

F. Committees

- The Board of Directors shall appoint committees and task forces as needed to complete the work of the unit.

G. Recordkeeping

- The chapter shall maintain minutes of all general membership and Board of Directors meetings.
- The chapter shall maintain records of program offerings and attendance, including CE events as per GAPNA’s approver & provider unit policies. (Separate instructions for applying for continuing education hours can be found on the GAPNA website).
- The chapter shall maintain financial records including checkbooks, account statements, receipt books, audit reports, annual financial reports, tax submissions, and any other items of a fiscal nature. The treasurer will provide at least an annual report of finances and proposed budget to the local membership.
- The chapter maintains a membership list including name, PO Box, and contact information.
- It is strongly advised that all Chapter Treasurer’s participate on a teleconference once a year with the National Treasurer (this is usually scheduled during a Member Services Committee call).

H. Reporting

- The chapter submits an Annual Report (see GAPNA website or **Appendix A**) to the National Office once a year in June/July. The report includes information such as:
 - Current list of officers, term of office, and contact information.
 - A report which includes the past year’s activities, bank balance, intentions for coming year and any budget requests. This report is due two (2) months prior to the annual conference which is always held in September.
 - Any changes to chapter bylaws must be submitted with the annual report.
- The chapter must notify the National Office of any changes in officers via the Chapter Election – Change in Officers Form (see GAPNA website or **Appendix F**), or any upcoming chapter meetings or events for posting on the National website and promotion via bi-monthly eAlerts.

Part III. Application for Chapter Charter

3.1 Creating a Chapter - Steps to Getting Started

A. Notify National of Interest

- As you begin the process, notify GAPNA of your interest/intent to pursue chapter status.
 - The notification of intent to pursue chapter status should include the name of the proposed chapter, along with what you would like the geographical boundaries to be.
 - The National Office can provide you with a list of current GAPNA members in your area, as well as advise you if there are any other chapter development activities.
 - The Member Services Committee Chair or designee can help mentor you through this process.
 - Use this Chapter Formation Handbook as a guide.

B. Determine Interest in Community

- Determine who else in your community is interested in starting a chapter.
 - Compile a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers.
 - Select a date and time to have a meeting(s). Notify all interested parties and request their attendance.
 - Have a formal agenda prepared to direct the discussion. Topics to consider include:
 - ✓ Overview of the National organization
 - ✓ Will each of us support a local chapter with our time?
 - ✓ What would we like the focus of the chapter to be (e.g., networking only, continuing education, advocacy, etc.)?
 - ✓ Meeting logistics – where, how often?
 - ✓ How will we disseminate information to chapter members?
 - ✓ Who is willing to serve on the chapter Board of Directors?
 - ✓ What can each member offer to launch and sustain the chapter?
 - ✓ Request that someone keep minutes of the meeting, which will become part of the chapter's permanent records.
 - ✓ Present GAPNA policy on membership requirements.
 - Obtain a supply of recruiting materials (applications, sample newsletters, promotional materials) from the National Office to display at your meeting.

C. Schedule Initial Meeting

- At the initial meeting, or at subsequent meetings, bylaws must be established. You may choose to adopt and modify the National bylaws or to create your own. Chapter bylaws, however, must be congruent with the bylaws of the National organization.

D. Elect Officers

- Elect chapter officers and establish any needed committees.

E. Obtain EIN

- Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS, which varies between states. Make it clear that you are applying as a non-profit organization. (**Appendix H**) If you neglect to submit your 990 Postcard for 3 years in a row, your EIN # and tax status will be revoked and you will need to apply for reinstatement. (**Appendix I**)

F. Obtain Checking Account

- Open a business checking account.

G. Track Members

- Keep an updated chapter membership roster (the National Office can provide you with a listing of members in your area). Also keep track of potential members.

3.2 Application

A. Submit Application: When chapter requirements are met, submit the completed Application for Chapter Status (**Appendix B**) to the National Office. Include the following:

- Roster of officers with terms of office
- Membership list
- Chapter bylaws
- Letter from the IRS assigning an EIN number
- Financial independence plan. Provide a narrative description of how the chapter will be financially independent, which may include some or all of the following:
 - Checking account
 - Corporate support
 - Projected annual budget

B. Review by Member Services Committee: The Member Services Committee reviews all applications to ensure requirements are met. The Committee will work with the applicant to remedy any deficiencies.

- A completed Application for Chapter Charter will be forwarded to the Board of Directors with a recommendation for approval or disapproval.
- The Board of Directors will review the petition and the Committee's recommendation at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. An affirmative vote of 2/3 of the Board of Directors will be required to approve a Chapter Charter.

C. Approval/Denial Notification

- The National Office will inform the petitioning chapter of the decision that has been reached. If the petition is denied, a reason(s) will be provided. A denied petition may be re-submitted after deficiencies have been corrected.
- A letter of recognition and charter certificate will be sent to the chapter upon approval of the petition. The new chapter will be added to GAPNA's chapter contact list, announced in the newsletter and eAlerts, and added to the National website.
- According to the dues structure, quarterly checks will start being sent to the chapter treasurer for all renewing and new members designated as members (via their zip code) in your chapter.

3.3 Chapter Dissolution & Reorganization

A. Chapter Reorganization

- A chapter may request reorganization status for a period of up to one year.
- A written (or email) request for reorganization is sent to the Chair of the Member Services Committee.
- A member of the Member Services Committee is appointed to communicate and work with a designated chapter point person throughout the year of chapter reorganization.
- The current chapter members are notified of the chapter's reorganization status by the national office using the last official chapter membership list.
- If the chapter does not follow through with plans for chapter reorganization with officers in place by July 1st of the following year they proceed to Involuntary Chapter Dissolution.
- The Chair of the Member Services committee notifies the GAPNA Board of Directors (BOD) of the chapter's inability to reorganize.

B. Voluntary Chapter Dissolution

- A chapter that chooses to disband must notify the National Office of the intent to disband (see GAPNA By Laws – **Appendix C**)
- Copies of all official chapter records must be sent to the National Office.
- The chapter bank account is closed with funds dispersed to GAPNA.
- The current chapter members are notified of the chapter dissolution by the national office using the last official chapter membership list.

- The chapter is removed from the GAPNA website.

C. Involuntary Chapter Dissolution

- If a chapter does not comply with chapter responsibilities, the last known chapter president (or contact person) will be notified in writing (or email) by the national office with the points of non-compliance outlined.
- A specific date will be given to the chapter to become compliant.
- If a chapter remains non-compliant, the Chair of the Member Services Committee will make an attempt to communicate with the chapter president and discuss the officers' chapter roles and responsibilities.

If a chapter remains non-compliant, the Chair of the Member Services Committee will notify the National Board of their non-compliance. The Board may revoke the Chapter Charter or assign "reorganization status". The current chapter members are notified of the chapter dissolution, or chapter reorganization, by the National Office using the last official membership list. If the chapter is dissolved, bank accounts funds are dispersed to the National Organization.

Part IV. Resources to Launch & Maintain a Successful Chapter

4.1 Recruitment & Retention of Members

- Develop a mailing list of additional potential members.
- Use free meeting advertising opportunities such as college or hospital bulletin boards or calendar of events sections of local newspapers. The National Office will post any meetings/events to their website under "Chapter Events" and also promote via the Newsletter and eAlert.
- At meetings, use different colored nametags to identify non-members and encourage members to greet and welcome them.
- Charge non-members to attend meetings and/or to receive continuing education credits.
- Acknowledge new members (and the members who recruited them) at your meetings or in written communications.
- Provide a recruitment incentive for the member who recruits the most members.
- Use the National website "Chapters" section to showcase chapter activities and accomplishments. Please update quarterly.

4.2 Running Effective Meetings

- Establish and publicize meeting dates well in advance so members reserve the time on their calendars.
- Create a clear agenda for each meeting and have someone take minutes (see sample agenda & minutes templates **Appendix G**).
- Establish ground rules or parliamentary procedures for the conduct of meetings.
 - Roberts Rules of Order
 - Roberta's Rules

4.3 Generating Financial Support

- Local APN schools of nursing may be able to donate free meeting space, as well as provide an opportunity to recruit student and faculty members.
- Pharmaceutical company representatives are often very interested in working with APNs and may offer a speaker or subsidize a related educational program.

4.4 Continuing Education

The GAPNA Approver Unit can approve continuing education programs. Each Chapter is allowed up to 8 Free CE's at one (1) meeting per year. Any meetings thereafter the non-profit fees would apply. (See the GAPNA website for fees and application).

4.5 Operational Considerations

- Chapters should have a published, permanent PO Box as a chapter address and up-to-date contact information listed with the National Office. The reasons a PO Box is needed:
 - Eases administrative functions such as establishing legal and tax-exempt status.
 - Decreases paperwork and confusion for the IRS (each time the contact person and address changes, Form 8822 must be filed with the IRS).
 - Fosters a sense of identity and permanence.

<h2>Part V. Appendices</h2>

All attached separately

A. Annual Chapter/Comm/SIG Board Report (template)	<i>Appendix A</i>
B. Application for Chapter Status FORM	<i>Appendix B</i>
C. Bylaws (National)	<i>Appendix C</i>
D. Bylaws (Chapters) (sample) FORM	<i>Appendix D</i>
E. Chapter Affiliation Agreement FORM	<i>Appendix E</i>
F. Chapter Elections – Change in Officers FORM	<i>Appendix F</i>
G. Chapter Meeting Agenda/Minutes (template)	<i>Appendix G</i>
H. Employer Identification Number (EIN) (template)	<i>Appendix H</i>
I. Tax Filing – Steps for Reinstatement of Revoked Status	<i>Appendix I</i>
J. Chapter Financial Policy (instructions)	<i>Appendix J</i>
K. Annual Chapter Financial Report (template)	<i>Appendix K</i>