

# **AALNC Chapter Policy**

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Policy Statement: Chapters of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC) are authorized by and accountable to the AALNC Board of Directors. Chapters must be organized and operated in accordance with the purposes of AALNC, and must comply with the AALNC Chapter Bylaws, the AALNC Chapter Policy, the AALNC Affiliate Agreement and federal guidelines for tax-exempt organizations. Failure to comply will result in revocation of the chapter's charter.

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## **I. Application for charter as an AALNC Chapter**

A. The following items must be submitted to the AALNC office:

1. Completed Charter Application Form including the chapter's current mailing address, EIN, and bank account location.
2. Completed chapter membership list and a list of chapter officers (including national membership numbers for each). A minimum of twenty (20) AALNC members is required to organize and maintain a viable chapter.
3. Copy of AALNC Chapter Bylaws, modified to reflect the chapter name, location, and configuration of chapter board of directors as approved by the chapter membership.
4. Signed and completed Affiliate Agreement.
5. The chapter charter fee of \$250 must be paid by a check made payable to American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants and drawn on the chapter's bank account.

## **II. Organization of Chapters**

A. Bylaws

1. AALNC chapters must adopt a version of the AALNC Chapter Bylaws. At any time, amendments and additions to the chapter bylaws must be approved by the National AALNC Board of Directors before they are sent to the chapter membership for approval.
2. All RN and Non-RN chapter members must be members of the national association (AALNC). National membership for those in the Non-RN category is optional.
3. Each chapter recognized by AALNC national must have a board of directors of no fewer than three (3) members consisting of a minimum of a president, secretary/treasurer and president-elect OR Director-at-Large. Each chapter chooses the number and titles of its board members, based on its needs and resources, and amends the generic chapter bylaws accordingly.
4. Each chapter must hold an annual election for officers to be concluded no later than December 1. Results of the election, including board members names, positions,

addresses, and email addresses must be forwarded to the national office no later than December 15.

B. Chapter Name

AALNC chapters must choose chapter names that reflect the geographic location of the chapter (i.e., Phoenix Chapter, Atlanta Chapter) and is in compliance with the Affiliate Agreement Section 1. The name of the chapter will be approved by AALNC during the Chapter Charter approval process.

C. Chapter Operations

1. Day-to-day chapter operations should be managed at the chapter level, with limited support from the AALNC office or national board of directors. Chapters should make every effort to resolve chapter-level issues, conflicts, etc. prior to seeking counsel from the AALNC office or national board of directors.
2. Chapters must submit annual financial and activity reports to the national office, postmarked no later than February 15. Annual activity reports must conform to the format established by AALNC and include changes in officers, program dates and sites, and other such data required in the annual report form. Reports must be submitted electronically in the style of the template forms provided.
3. Chapters must inform headquarters immediately of any changes in the chapter's address, officers' names or addresses (including email address changes), or other contact information.
4. The national and chapter mailing lists are the property of AALNC. Third parties wishing to purchase the mailing list should contact the AALNC office for information on list availability.
5. The chapter must indicate on all correspondence, brochures, and other printed materials that it is a chapter of AALNC and not the national organization itself.
6. Chapters may use the AALNC logo in association with the chapter name. Individual members may not use the AALNC logo for their personal use.
7. Chapters must receive the approval of the national association before affiliating with, or establishing liaisons with, any other organization, is in co-sponsorship of educational programs.
8. If a chapter chooses not to offer Non-RN memberships, it can otherwise seek support from organizations such as law firms through the solicitation of sponsorship, advertisements, and exhibits.
9. Chapters shall hold a minimum of two meetings per year. An audit at random will be conducted to confirm meetings are occurring.
10. Chapters shall not participate in, or contribute to, any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Chapters may inform their membership about developments in healthcare policy and legislation.

### III. **Financial Regulations**

#### A. Records and Reporting

1. Annual financial reports must be submitted (postmarked) to AALNC by February 15 for the preceding fiscal year using the correct forms.
2. The chapter president or president-elect *and* the chapter treasurer are the only chapter members who may be authorized to sign checks.
3. An audit committee shall be established for the purpose of auditing financial records every three years. The audit committee shall be comprised of at least three chapter members or non-members, excluding chapter officers and those involved with chapter finances. A copy of the completed audit committee report must be sent to AALNC upon request.
4. Chapter financial records must be kept for a minimum of seven years.
5. Chapters must obtain written approval from AALNC before entering into any contract or financial obligation beyond one-year.
6. Chapters that acquire office space must carry liability and personal injury insurance of \$500,000, naming AALNC as beneficiary.

#### B. Tax ID Number/Tax Filing

1. AALNC (including its chapters) is incorporated in the state of Arizona as a non-profit organization under Section 501(c) 6 of the Internal Revenue Code. The AALNC federal identification number is 86-0618788. Each chapter will apply for its own federal identification number.
2. AALNC recommends that each chapter contact the Secretary of State or an attorney with experience in the incorporation of non-profit organizations in their state for advice on specific state regulatory and tax requirements.
3. Chapters shall make separate applications for state income tax exemptions and shall file tax returns or information with state taxing agencies as determined by their respective state statutes.
4. AALNC will make all necessary federal income tax filings on behalf of the chapters. Chapters should forward any requests for filings from any federal agency to the national office.
5. Chapters may apply to their local post offices for a bulk mail permit.

#### C. Chapter Revenue

1. Chapters may charge member and non-member fees, or ask for contributions, for attending educational meetings.
2. Chapters may sell space for educational exhibits at their events. The exhibitors' giveaways should be reviewed to ensure that they do not represent a conflict of interest.

3. All income generated by chapters should be related to the chapter's mission and goals. Business income unrelated to the chapter's non-profit mission is subject to federal income tax.
4. Chapters may accept donations to offset the costs of publishing chapter-related materials such as newsletters and brochures.

**D. Utilization of Funds**

All chapter funds must be used to further the mission and purposes of AALNC and the chapter, as detailed in the bylaws.

**E. Funding Guidelines**

1. Chapters may solicit financial support for activities related to legal nursing education. Financial support includes money solicited from private individuals, private foundations, companies, and corporations, and excludes state and federal funding.
2. Financial support may be solicited for speaker honoraria, coffee breaks, meals, door prizes, publications, program supplies, scholarships, program and chapter publicity, and educational materials (A/V and printed).

**F. Chapter Bank Accounts**

1. Chapters are responsible for setting up their own checking and savings account(s).
2. The President and Treasurer should be listed as signatories on the account(s).
3. The chapter tax id number (EIN) will be required to open an account. In some instances, banks may require the chapter to file for chapter Articles of Incorporation which can be done through the Secretary of State.
4. It is the responsibility of the chapter to update the bank when there are new signatories.
5. It is recommended that chapters use a national bank chain that supports online banking.
6. It is recommended, that once bank accounts have been established, those accounts remain open and are updated with new signatories instead of opening and closing accounts when new leadership is elected.
7. AALNC recommends that each chapter contact an attorney with experience in non-profit organizations in their state if they encounter difficulties establishing a bank account.

**IV. Educational Guidelines**

The intended audience for all educational programs offered by chapters should be nurses, attorneys, insurance companies and others in the medical/legal community.

**V. Annual Renewal of Chapter Charters**

- A. Chapter charters must be renewed annually, with all required materials received (postmarked) by AALNC Headquarters by February 15. AALNC will send chapter charter renewal notices to each active chapter on or before November 1 annually. Notices will be sent to the chapter president as on file with Headquarters. It is the chapter's responsibility to notify Headquarters of any

changes to pertinent contact information. A chapter's charter will be renewed only if the chapter completes the renewal process and is in compliance with this Chapter policy and the AALNC Chapter Bylaws. Following is a list of items required for renewal:

1. Maintained minimum of twenty (20) chapter members who are AALNC members. Only exception applies to those chapters grandfathered in by the AALNC Board of Directors in June 2011.
2. Completed charter renewal form, Affiliate Agreement and annual renewal fee.
3. Copy of chapter bylaws if they have been revised within the past year
4. List of officers (including names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers)
5. List of members
6. Annual chapter financial report
7. Annual report of the chapter's educational activities in support of AALNC's purpose and goals.

B. AALNC will declare invalid and decharte/dissolve any chapter that fails to complete the annual renew process by postmarking all materials requested by the deadline date of February 15. There will be no grace period for a chapter that does not meet the deadline.

**VI.** If a chapter is dechartered/dissolved, AALNC will notify the chapter first by email and then by certified letter and the chapter must send all meeting minutes, financial records, and remaining treasury funds to the national office. If an AALNC Chapter's status is revoked and the Chapter feels this is unwarranted, the Chapter may file an appeal with AALNC National for procedural issues only. If the National Board of Directors does not accept the appeal, the chapter (or members from the chapter) may be allowed to re-apply for a new charter (i.e., go through the new charter process) one year from the point of dissolution if they so desire. All chapter charters are reviewed by, and subject to approval by, the AALNC Board of Directors.