



## American Planning Association – Ohio Chapter

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# Chapter Election Policies & Procedures Manual

## Purpose

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The APA Ohio Chapter Election Policies & Procedures Manual serves as a guide for managing the bi-annual Chapter election process consistent with the Chapter bylaws.

This is also a guide for Board candidates. Our intent is to create a level playing field for all prospective candidates in the election process.

## Overview

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- 1. Election Committee.** The Election Committee will be comprised of not less than three members of the Governance Committee not running for re-election. If there are fewer than three eligible members of the Governance Committee, then the Board shall appoint additional members to serve on the Election Committee.

The Committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring a fair election in compliance with the APA Ohio Chapter bylaws;
- Coordinating the process with APA;
- Managing the candidate recruitment process;
- Working with the APA OH Executive Director on all election process communications;
- Enforcing the standards of behavior for elections; and
- Recommending a ballot of qualified candidates for Board approval and membership vote.

- 2. Nominations & Elections.** Per the bylaws, the Chapter coordinates the biennial election process through APA National. The Election Committee is responsible for reporting a list of candidates to the membership at least 90 days prior to the election deadline. Ballots containing candidates and position statements are made available to APA Ohio members at least 30 days before the election deadline. All other election cycle dates will follow that of APA and its bylaws, with a general timeline provided in this guide.
- 3. Eligibility to Vote.** Each member who pays the full Chapter membership fee is entitled to one vote in any Chapter election. Reduced rate memberships are not entitled to vote in Chapter elections.

## For Candidates

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- 1. Board Term.** Board of Trustees members take office on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year following the Chapter election. Board members serve four year terms.
- 2. Submission Materials.** Please note that this information will be published on the APA Ohio website, and will be sent with the electronic ballot to Chapter members.

Candidates are encouraged to limit their complete submission (Position Statement and Background Information combined) to 500 words or less. The online submission form does not allow for special formatting (bold, italics, underline, multiple fonts) aside from bullets. Candidates should be sure to proofread their submissions.

- **Position Statement.** Candidates should submit a position statement prepared with the following guidelines:
    - Focus on issues that impact the future of the organization. Please review the materials on the APA Ohio Chapter website, as applicable.
    - Verify any and all facts that are stated.
    - Use bullet statements to concisely consolidate thoughts, as appropriate.
  - **Background Information.** Candidates should submit a biographical summary prepared with the following guidelines:
    - Comment on professional experience, educational background, volunteer activities related to service on the APA Ohio Chapter Board, and any other relevant experiences.
    - Incumbent candidates should provide an overview of their personal accomplishments from previous terms served.
    - List information in reverse chronological order (most recent experience first).
    - Use bullet statements to concisely consolidate thoughts, as appropriate.
  - **Photograph.** Candidates may submit a recent photo to be published with the position statement. The photo should be recent (within 5 years) and submitted with the position statement through the online application form.
3. **Eligibility.** Candidates shall be APA Ohio Chapter members in good standing and shall be required to maintain their APA Ohio membership for their full term on the Board.
  4. **Number of Candidates.** The Committee will aim for the following number of candidates for each of the open positions:
    - **General Seat** (6 available seats) – Minimum of 8 candidates, maximum of 12
    - **Focused Seat** (2 available seats) – Minimum of 3 candidates, maximum of 4
  5. **Ballots.** APA uses electronic ballots and email reminders to encourage voter turn-out. Ballots are prepared with the names of candidates in random order for each position.
  6. **Nomination Process.** The process will be a 2-step process: first to APA Ohio and second to APA National.

The APA Ohio Chapter will call for nominations and request prospective candidates to apply via online APA Ohio Nomination Form. The Election Committee may also choose to recruit a wide range of candidates for the purpose of assembling a ballot that reflects a diversity of views:

- **Geography** – Ensuring the Board has representation from all five APA Ohio Sections
- **Job Experience** – Ensuring the Board includes members from all career stages
- **Expertise** – Ensuring the Board includes professional planners from both the public and private sector, with a range of professional focus areas
- **Background** – Ensuring the Board reflects a broad range of background and member views, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age.

The Election Committee will evaluate the applications to identify those who meet the highest standards of leadership ability, experience, and personal commitment.

The Election Committee will prepare a recommended candidate ballot for approval by the full Board. Successful candidates will be notified and will submit their nomination information through the process required by APA (national), who manages the election process on behalf of the Chapter.

Following the election, the Committee will notify candidates of the results. Newly elected Board members will receive orientation materials in preparation for the start of their term after the first of the year.

Refer to **Section 3, General Election Schedule**, for a detailed timeline.

**7. Standards of Election Behavior.** The Election Committee shall oversee and enforce the following standards and policies for conducting the elections:

- All prospective candidates seeking nomination are required to submit a Position Statement as part of the application/nomination process.
- Candidates are not permitted to change position statements once they have been submitted.
- Candidates are prohibited from personally campaigning in any form (social media, email, written, verbal, etc.). Negative campaigning about opponents is also prohibited.
- APA Ohio members who are not candidates may speak on behalf of candidates they support, but shall not make negative statements about other candidates on the ballot.

The Election Committee will refer to the Board any violations of these election policies that are not resolved. Candidates that fail to comply with the standards of behavior may be disqualified from the election.

**8. Petition Candidates.** The Chapter bylaws include provisions for Chapter members seeking to become petition candidates to serve on the Board of Trustees. Any member desiring to be a Board member may submit a petition to the Governance Committee signed by 5% of the members by the published deadline. The name of the petition candidate will be placed on the ballot along with the names of other nominees.

**9. Questions.** Prospective candidates may contact the Election Committee Chair/point of contact through the call for nominations deadline. Candidates may also contact other Board members regarding Board service, but shall not be permitted to lobby any Board or Election Committee members.

## General Election Schedule

1. **Timeline Overview.** The Chapter election is concurrent with APA. A general timeline showing key milestones and timeframes is provided below, subject to change according to APA's election schedule.

Milestone	Schedule	Responsible
Chapter Assembles election committee and identifies point person for APA coordination.	Last Board meeting in odd-number years	Governance Committee
Election Committee Kick-Off Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm Committee Chair</li> <li>Confirm schedule</li> <li>Create recruitment plan</li> <li>Create communications plan (email notifications, website updates, nominee application portal)</li> </ul>	Early January	Election Committee, APA OH Executive Director
APA sends election schedule to Chapters	Late Jan./Early Feb.	APA (Lynn Jorgenson)
Candidate Recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine whether incumbent Board members plan to run again</li> <li>Work with Section leaders to personally recruit nominees</li> <li>General call for nominations (with reminders)</li> </ul>	January – March	Election Committee, Section Representatives, APA OH Executive Director
Review candidate applications	April	Election Committee
Draft candidate ballot	April	Election Committee
Board approves candidate ballot	Late April/Early May Board meeting	Board, as recommended by the Election Committee
Notify nominees (those selected, and not)	After Board approves candidate ballot	Election Committee
Deadline for all nominated candidates to submit position statements to APA	Mid May	Candidates, with assistance from Election Committee
Send Notice of Election email to Chapter membership, including candidate ballot, petition process, bylaws amendments (if applicable)	Early June	Election Committee, APA OH Executive Director
Prepare member list for APA distribution	Mid-June	APA, with assistance from APA OH Executive Director
Deadline for petition candidates to submit nomination info to APA	Mid-July	APA
Ballots available online	Early August	APA
Deadline for members to vote	Early September	APA
APA certifies election results, notifies Chapters	Mid-September	APA
Advertise election results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify Board</li> <li>Notify candidates</li> <li>Notify Chapter members</li> </ul>	Mid-September (as soon as possible following results)	Election Committee
New Board member orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board members sign commitment letter</li> <li>Send orientation packet</li> <li>Invite to last Board meeting of the year</li> </ul>	October - December	APA OH Executive Director, Governance Committee
Nominate Chapter officers (President, VP/President-Elect, Treasurer, Professional Development Officer)	Vote to occur at the final board meeting of the year	Executive Committee
Newly elected Board members take office	January 1	