

Chapter Elections

Guidelines for the Chapter Board of Directors

OPERATING GUIDELINES:

1. Elections are to be held in the month of November.
2. Elections will be conducted by a ballot sent by secure electronic means to all eligible chapter members.
3. All ballots will be tallied by authorized chapter board members assigned to handle the election process. *(Under the old system, the chapter Nominating Committee usually handled this, but now under the New Chapter Model the Nominating Committee and/ or chair isn't required.)*

ELECTION TIMELINE:

● **September or October:**

Call for nominations is distributed to the chapter membership (exact date to be determined by the chapter).

● **Early November:**

Deadline for nominations (exact date to be determined by the chapter). Ballots are prepared and finalized by the Nominating Committee or the Board of Directors.

● **Early or Mid-November:**

Ballots are distributed to the chapter membership (exact date to be determined by the chapter).

● **Early December:**

Ballots are returned to the Board of Directors and the votes are tallied.

● **Mid-December:**

New board members are announced to the chapter membership. Election results are reported to chapters@ons.org.

● **January 1:**

Newly elected board members assume office.

Preparing a Chapter Election

DEVELOPING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS:

1. A minimum of five elected members shall constitute the chapter Board of Directors:
 - President
 - Treasurer
 - Three additional positions, to be determined by the chapter board, whose responsibilities are based on the needs of the chapter.
2. The chapter is free to add additional elected or appointed positions to the chapter board based on their needs. Committee members may also be appointed to assist different board positions.
3. If applicable, the Nominating Committee, alongside the President and Board of Directors, will develop and maintain a position description for each board and committee position within the chapter. If the chapter does not maintain a Nominating position, this responsibility will fall to the Board of Directors.
4. The position description should include:
 - Position criteria
 - A list of responsibilities
 - An estimated time commitment for the position (ex: President – no more than a two year term).
5. The Nominating Committee and Board of Directors should review the responsibilities annually and revise based on the growth of the chapter and the roles of the positions.
6. All new or revised position descriptions should be submitted to the chapter board for final approval.

SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION:

Position: Treasurer

Term Length: 2 years

Time Commitment: About six hours per month, including one monthly meeting.

Responsibilities:

- Fundraising: Handling financial transactions on behalf of the chapter.
- Accurate messaging to donors: Chapters are not charitable organizations, so chapter financial support is not deductible as a charitable deduction.
- Sales tax: Collect and remit sales tax on products sold for fundraising.
- Insurance: To reduce liability, understand and obtain required insurance for all chapter- events.
- Reporting: Prepare and submit the annual Chapter Treasurer's Report.

SOLICITING NOMINATIONS:

1. The Nominating Committee or Board of Directors will establish an exact deadline (sometime in early November) for all election nominations.
2. Members in good standing in both the chapter and ONS National may be nominated or may nominate themselves for an elected position in the chapter. Please note that Associate and Student members **are not eligible** to hold elected office, but may be appointed to additional positions.
3. Suggestions for soliciting nominations include, but are not limited to:
 - Issuing the call for nominations through the chapter virtual community.
 - Making an announcement at chapter meetings.
 - Consider having a discussion or presentation at a chapter meeting regarding leadership, and the responsibilities and time commitment for each position.
 - Include election information on your chapter virtual community and social media pages.
 - Have members of the Nominating Committee or Board of Directors solicit nominations directly (in person, by telephone, etc).
 - Match expertise of the nominees with the available board positions.

INCENTIVES FOR HOLDING AN ELECTED POSITION:

Consider offering various incentives to help recognize the contributions of the chapter's elected and appointed board members. Please note that only monetary incentives that support the professional growth or leadership development of the individual can be offered.

Below are several suggestions that have been used by chapters:

- Stipend to attend ONS conferences.
- Stipend for ONS membership dues.
- Local recognition through the chapter newsletter.
- Local recognition through employer and/or the community.
- Give at the beginning or end of their term (ex: ONS pin, book, plaque, etc).
- Letter of appreciation from the chapter to the individual's employer or family.
- Educational scholarship.
- Weekend or day leadership retreat.
- Formal mentoring program for leaders.

SLATING CANDIDATES:

1. The Nominating Committee or Board of Directors should strive to slate at least two persons for each board position.
2. Develop an election ballot that has at least one person for each elected office.

3. If there is difficulty slating at least two candidates for each office, consider the following options:
 - Initiate a discussion with the chapter board and membership at a chapter meeting to discuss the election requirements.
 - Recommend a plan to increase board member support or remove barriers encountered when assuming a leadership position (ex: combining two offices, considering shared positions, etc).
 - Contact ONS to discuss slating issues or concerns.

PRODUCING A BALLOT:

The ballot should include:

- Name of the chapter
- Year of the election
- Board positions to be filled
- Candidates for each office
- Directions for voting

Supporting documents for the candidates may be included in the materials sent with the ballot, such as:

- Biographical sketch
- Curriculum vitae
- Qualifications
- Statement of goals

SAMPLE BALLOT:

2018 [Chapter Name] Election

The biographies and statements of goals for each candidate can be found at [\[link to candidate supporting documentation\]](#).

Please cast your vote for the position of Treasurer:

- Candidate 1
- Candidate 2

Please submit your ballot by **no later than Friday, December 7, 2018.**

Completing a Chapter Election

BALLOT DISTRIBUTION:

1. Confirm that all candidates are current members of both the chapter and ONS – to obtain assistance with verification please contact chapters@ons.org.
2. Ballots will be distributed by secured electronic means to all eligible chapter members.
3. To maintain confidentiality, all returned ballots should be free of voters' identification.

ENCOURAGING MEMBERS TO VOTE:

1. Only chapter members in good standing (including Regular, Physically Challenged, and Retired) may vote. Associate and Student membership categories do not vote.
2. Activities to increase voting may include:
 - Reminders in the chapter newsletter or on the chapter virtual community.
 - Voting incentives.
 - Phone call reminders to the membership.
 - Providing election access information on the chapter virtual community and on social media pages.
 - Offering the opportunity to vote at chapter meetings.

RECEIVING AND TALLYING COMPLETED BALLOTS:

1. All ballots must be returned by the published deadline date.
2. The Nominating Committee or Board of Directors will tally the votes.
3. Ensure that there is more than one board member available for the tallying and review of ballots to ensure validity.
4. In the event of a tie, the Nominating Committee will break tie votes by a run-off election between the tied candidates through an electronic ballot. The deadline for the return of this ballot shall not exceed four (4) weeks from the date of distribution.
5. Refer to the chapter's Standing Rules in the event of a vacancy.

SUBMITTING ELECTION RESULTS:

1. Submit a completed election results form to chapters@ons.org within two (2) weeks of the election.
2. Ensure the chapter Board of Directors has a copy of the report, and one is archived for the chapter's records.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee

If the chapter decides not to elect or appoint a Nominating Chair or Committee, the following responsibilities shall be absorbed by the chapter board of directors.

PURPOSE:

1. Conduct an annual chapter election by mail or email ballot insuring that each member has one vote ballot.
2. Encourage chapter members to vote in chapter and ONS elections.

COMPOSITION OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

1. The chair of the nominating committee is elected or appointed by the president and the chapter board of directors as described in the chapter's standing rules.
2. Members of the nominating committee are appointed by the chair in consultation with the president and the chapter board of directors.
3. The number of members on the nominating committee is determined by the goals and objectives of the chapter, the committee, and the size of the chapter.
4. The term of the appointment as a committee chair or member is determined by the chapter board of directors.
5. Appointments to the nominating committee are renewable annually.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR:

1. Select members of the nominating committee in consultation with the President and the chapter board of directors.
2. Establish meeting dates, times, and locations for the nominating committee.
3. Prepare an agenda for nominating committee meetings.
4. Preside at all meetings of the nominating committee.
5. Submit a copy of all meeting minutes of the nominating committee to the chapter secretary.
6. Submit a report on the activities of the nominating committee at all meetings of the chapter board of directors and the general chapter membership.
7. Submit an Election Results Form to ONS within two weeks of completing the election procedures.
8. Submit a report to the chapter board of directors to be included in the chapter annual report.

9. Assure that the records of the nominating committee are maintained according to the procedures established by ONS.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

1. Establish qualification criteria for candidates for chapter offices in collaboration with the chapter board of directors.
2. Develop a plan for conducting annual chapter elections that includes, but is not limited to:
 - Notification of the chapter membership offices to be filled:
 - Length of term of office
 - Qualifications
 - Time commitment for each office
 - Deadlines for each phase of the election process
 - Solicitation of candidates
 - Production, distribution, and receipt of ballots
 - Counting the ballots
3. Distribute candidate information packets to all members who request materials. Materials not limited to:
 - Job description and responsibilities of each office
 - Length of term of office
 - Qualifications
 - Time commitment for each office
 - Request for candidate biographical information
 - Request for candidate statement of purpose
4. Review all materials submitted for each candidate for office.
5. Prepare a slate of candidates to be submitted to the chapter board of directors for approval.
6. Produce a ballot that includes candidate biographical information, statement of purpose, instructions for voting, and deadline for return of the ballot.
7. Distribute the ballot to all members who are current members of ONS and the chapter to verify that each member only has one vote.
8. Receive and verify that ballots are complete and received by the published deadline for return.
9. Tally the votes for each candidate.
10. Communicate the election results to the chapter board of directors, the candidates, and the general chapter membership.
11. Implement strategies to encourage members to vote in chapter and ONS elections.