

## **BYLAWS OF PHYSICIAN'S PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PPAC)**

Approved October 27, 2005, revised and approved September 9, 2010

In accordance with the directive "Guidelines and Procedures for the Professional Advisory Committees/Chief Professional Officers" dated July, 2001 and modified March 7, 2002, each PAC shall develop its own internal operating procedures, i.e. bylaws. The specific internal operating procedures listed below remain within the scope of the PPAC Charter, yet can be modified at the PPAC level without requiring approval at the level of the Office of the Surgeon General. These bylaws allow the PPAC flexibility to meet specific category requirements and changing circumstances, while maintaining a level of consistency among all PACs.

### **I. PPAC MEMBERSHIP**

These bylaws remain compliant with the PPAC Charter Sections V, VI, and VII. The intent of the Bylaws is to specify various categories of participation in the Physicians PAC, to encourage the broadest participation possible, and to recognize the efforts and achievements of officers who contribute to the Physicians PAC.

#### **A. Membership Categories**

Membership in the PPAC includes 6 categories of participation. Meetings are open and participation from all USPHS Agency's CC and CS physicians is welcomed.

##### **1) Official Members (voting):**

- a. Official Members will be appointed to 3-year terms. Terms will be staggered so that approximately one third of the members' terms will expire annually.
- b. Official members may serve one additional 3-year term. If desired, such request must be forwarded to the membership committee at the end of their first term for consideration.
- c. Once an Official member has accumulated a lifetime total of 6 years active service on the PPAC, they are not eligible for reappointment as a voting member.
- d. To increase PPAC membership, while retaining PPAC experience and knowledge base, Official members have the option of stepping down after their first three-year term and serving as an ex officio member. They remain eligible for serving another 3-year term at a later date.
- e. Official members who have completed a term (i.e., minimum 24 months of service to the PPAC) may be nominated by the CPO to receive the Surgeon General's Special Assignment Award for each such term. This would be contingent on active participation and fulfillment of qualifications.

**2) Ex Officio Members (non-voting):**

- a. In accordance with the PPAC Bylaws, the Chief Professional Officer serves as an ex-officio member of the PPAC. If the term of the PPAC Chairperson coincides with the expiration of that individual's membership on the PPAC, the Chair may serve an additional year as Chair as an ex officio member of the PPAC provided the OPDIV Head is informed and concurs with the extension, unless reappointed as a regular member per the provisions of Section (VI) of the PPAC Charter. The PPAC Executive Secretary position may be filled by an ex-officio member. Also, the PPAC may identify other individuals and request that they serve as ex-officio members.
- b. Ex Officio members also include officers who have completed at least 3 years as an active voting member and desire to remain active in the PPAC. Such prior voting members are welcome and encouraged to participate and guide the PPAC with the wisdom generated through their years of previous service.
- c. Officers who have been designated by the PAC chair as Ex-officio members voluntarily participate on the PAC, but are not formally appointed by the Surgeon General.
- d. Designation as an ex-officio member signifies a level of commitment to the PAC and a Letter of Designation will be placed in the officer's file. Ex-officio members who regularly participate on the PPAC and its committees and subcommittees will be eligible for a Chief Professional Officer's Certificate of Appreciation after participating for 3 years.

**3) Affiliate Members (non-voting):**

- a. Affiliate members are those officers without prior Official Voting membership, who are active participants in the PPAC and its committees and subcommittees.
- b. Officers may request an appointment to Affiliate membership status to the membership committee. Appointment will be based on past PPAC participation.
- c. Designation as an Affiliate member signifies a level of commitment to the PAC and letter of designation will be awarded to the officer.

**4) Alternate Members (voting):**

- a. In compliance with the PPAC Charter, and cognizant of the demands of the Active members' primary work responsibilities and the PPAC's need to conduct business, the PPAC has established procedures to allow each voting member to appoint and inform the chairperson of a single individual who can serve as his/her alternate.
- b. Such alternates shall have voting privileges when serving in the place of a primary member.
- c. It is the responsibility of the primary PPAC member to keep the alternate fully informed and knowledgeable of the PPAC's activities.
- d. Active voting members are encouraged to seek Affiliate or Ex officio members to serve as their Alternates when needed.

**5) Participants (non-voting):**

- a. These are non-voting members that promote the objectives listed in the PPAC Charter.
- b. These members periodically participate in PPAC functions, but have not made the same level of commitment as members in other categories.
- c. All USPHS CC and CS physicians may be participants in PPAC meetings and committees.

**6) Liaison (non-voting):**

- a. Non-Physician PAC representatives that act as liaisons between the Physician PAC and other entities.
- b. It is not necessary for Liaisons to be members of the Physician category.

## **B. Selection and Appointment to PPAC Membership Categories**

### **1) Official Members (voting):**

- a. See **Guidelines for the Selection of PPAC Voting Members (Appendix A)**
- b. **Replacement officers:** As per Guidelines for the Selection of PPAC Voting Members (Appendix A), after selecting the required number of candidates to fill the PPAC vacancies, the PPAC Membership Subcommittee may identify up to 3 additional candidates, listed in rank order, as potential replacement candidates.
  1. These officers could be offered the opportunity to serve as Voting Members in the event that a vacancy arises either because:
    - a. A Voting Member vacates his or her term, or
    - b. A candidate selected as a new Voting Member for a term to begin the following calendar year is found to be unacceptable to the Surgeon General or for any other reason is unable to begin his or her term as a voting member.
  2. The names of the replacement officers selected during the annual nomination cycle will be forwarded to the PPAC Voting Members as part of the slate of candidates for terms beginning the following year. These names will be kept confidential; replacement officers will not be informed of their status, and their names will not be forwarded to the Surgeon General
  3. If a vacancy arises or a position is unfilled, the highest ranked officer on the most recently approved list of replacement candidates will be offered the vacated or unfilled position. If the officer is being offered the opportunity to replace a Voting Member who is vacating his or her term, the effective length of the term for the replacement officer will be as described in B1c3 below. If the selected replacement officer is interested in serving as a Voting Member, the nomination process would proceed in the customary fashion with the concurrence of the agency liaison, the CPO, and then the approval of the Surgeon General. In such an instance, the packet of requisite forms and information will be forwarded to the OSG off cycle.
  4. The list of replacement officers is valid throughout the year until the list of new replacement officers has been approved by the PPAC Voting Members as part of the new slate of incoming PPAC officers.
  5. If the selected replacement officer will be filling a vacated position, he or she may be designated as the Alternate (see A4 above) for the vacating officer, and, as such, would serve as the designated interim voting member until the required approval from the Surgeon General is obtained. If the selected officer will be serving an unfilled term, s/he can continue to be active in the PPAC, but will be unable to vote until approval of the Surgeon General is obtained.
- c. Per the PPAC Charter, terms of Voting Members will be staggered to ensure **rotational balance** (defined in these bylaws as approximately one third of the members terms will expire annually)
  1. Rotation of terms might become unbalanced due to positions that might go unfilled, positions that might be vacated during the term, or lengths of term for replacement officers who fill vacated positions
  2. In order to rebalance the rotation of terms, at the discretion of the PPAC membership subcommittee, the PPAC can consider the following:
    - a. A 1-year extension can be offered to voting member(s) who currently serve(s) in important role(s) such as a PPAC officer or subcommittee chair. The PPAC membership subcommittee could review justifications submitted from officers interested in a 1-year extension. (Note that a full nomination is not required.) Decisions regarding 1-year extensions can be made by a vote of the PPAC voting membership, either as part of the slate of

candidates selected for the coming calendar year or separately from that slate.

- b. A 2-year second term can be offered to voting member(s) who wish for a shorter second term. Nominees for a 2-year second term are required to submit a completed nomination as described in “Guidelines for Selection of PPAC Voting Members” (Appendix A).
  - c. Voting members can nominate themselves to serve in the coming calendar year in whichever term lengths (1-year, 2-year, and 3-year) they would consider. However, 6 years is the maximum number of years that an officer can serve as an Official Member of the PPAC; as such, a 1-year extension or a 2-year term could likely decrease the total number of years that an officer could be an Official PPAC member. (An officer who was appointed as a replacement officer to fill a vacancy on the PPAC might have had a shorter 1st term and might therefore be able to fill an extension or shorter term without decreasing his or her years of eligibility.)
3. In order to maintain rotational balance, if a Voting Member must step down during the course of his or her term, the highest ranking candidate on the list of replacement officers may be offered that position (see B1b3 above) for the longer of the following options for term length:
    - a. The duration of the vacating officer’s term
    - b. The longest term length less than 3 years that would improve or maintain rotational balance.
- 2) **Ex Officio Members:** Officers who have completed a 3-year term as a PPAC Voting Member in good standing and wish to remain active in the PPAC through meeting attendance and subcommittee work in a nonvoting capacity can request appointment as an ex-officio member by submitting a written request (mail, email, or fax) to the chair of the Membership subcommittee. The request should provide evidence of how the candidate intends to stay active in the PPAC and should be submitted by the deadline of the PPAC Call for Nominations for the given year. Ex-officio membership is for a 1-year, renewable term. All candidates who meet the criteria can be appointed ex-officio members. Note that current Voting Members who apply for a second term can indicate in their nomination materials if they wish to serve as an ex-officio member if not selected for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term as a Voting Member.
  - 3) **Affiliate Members:** Officers may request an appointment to Affiliate membership status by submitting a written request (mail, email, or fax) to the chair of the PPAC Membership Subcommittee. The request should provide evidence of how the candidate intends to stay active in the PPAC and should be submitted by the deadline of the PPAC Call for Nominations for the given year. Appointment will be based on past PPAC participation as evidenced by:
    - a. Attendance at a minimum of 3 of the prior 6 PPAC meetings during the 12 months prior to nomination
      1. Those interested in affiliate membership should note the dates of meetings attended in the written request. (These dates should be verified by the Executive Secretary of the PPAC.)
      2. Note that the 3-meeting requirement does not include open forums.
    - b. Active participation in one of the PPAC sub-committees as evidenced by a letter of support by the sub-committee chair.

All candidates who meet the criteria can be appointed as affiliate members. Note that officers applying for a first term as Voting Members can indicate in their nomination materials if they wish to serve as an affiliate member if not selected as a Voting Member.

## II. SELECTION AND SUCCESSION OF PPAC OFFICERS

These bylaws remain compliant with the PPAC Charter Section VII.

The intent of the Bylaws is to ensure the highest qualified officers are given an opportunity to serve in a leadership position while maintaining a continuity of leadership should a position be vacated prior to completion of the term.

**A. Chairperson**

1. **Succession if Chairperson is unable to complete term** - Should the Chairperson be unable to complete his or her term, the Vice-Chair will serve the remainder of the term. There will be a solicitation for nominations to serve out the remainder of the Vice-Chair position. If more than one nomination is received there will be a vote of the PPAC voting members.
2. **Succession when Chairperson completes their term** - Once the Chair has completed his or her term the Vice-Chair will assume the position of Chair. If it is not feasible for the Vice Chair to assume the position of Chair, there will be a solicitation for nominations to serve as Chair. If the incumbent Chair wishes to serve a 2<sup>nd</sup> year, he or she may self-nominate to do so; if the 1<sup>st</sup> year served as Chair is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a PPAC term, he or she may serve a 2<sup>nd</sup> year as Chair as an ex-officio. If more than one nomination is received there will be a vote of the PPAC voting members to determine who will serve as Chair.

**B. Vice-Chair**

1. **Succession if the Vice Chair is unable to complete term** - Should the Vice Chair be unable to complete his or her term, there will be a solicitation for nominations to serve out the remainder of the Vice-Chair's term. If more than one nomination is received there will be a vote of the PPAC voting members.
2. **Succession when the Vice completes their term** – When the Vice-Chair completes his or her term, there will be a solicitation of nominations to serve as Vice-Chair. If more than one nomination is received there will be a vote of the PPAC voting members.

**C. Timing of Solicitation of Nominations**

1. Solicitation of Nominations for PPAC Officers should occur the first week of October. If no nominations are received from voting members then nominations should be solicited from incoming voting members who will begin their PPAC term as voting members the next calendar year.

**III. RECOGNITION OF OFFICER'S CONTRIBUTIONS**

The PAC Chair, Committee Chairs, Committee or Sub-committee members may be nominated to receive the appropriate Individual or Unit awards at any time for noteworthy contributions. Any PPAC participant is eligible for nomination by the PPAC Chair for the Surgeon General's Certificate of Appreciation for exceptional contributions to the PPAC.

Assignments to special initiatives of the Surgeon General might qualify officers for the Surgeon General's Special Assignment Award. These special initiatives include functioning as a Chief Professional Officer or a voting member of a Professional Advisory Committee, or appointment to other special initiatives or activities, as determined by the Surgeon General. PPAC may consider nominating an officer for a Special Assignment Award for completing a term of service of at least 24 months; officers leaving the PPAC during their term are not eligible.

The PPAC Chair is eligible to be nominated for an individual honor award by the Chief Professional Officer upon successful performance of their duties.

Appendix A

**GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF PPAC VOTING MEMBERS** (Approved 14 April 2009)

**PPAC Charter criteria for voting membership** (PPAC Charter approved June 2007)

**Requirements**

1. Full time Commissioned Corps medical officers or Civil Service physicians
2. *Basic ready* at the time of nomination and throughout their PPAC service (Charter V.1). This requirement applies only to Active Duty CC Officers.
  - a) The nomination package is due to the OSG by Oct 31 and is finalized by Dec 31. Thus candidates must be Basic Ready Sep 30, immediately prior to Membership committee deliberations.
  - b) PPAC voting members must have met Basic Readiness standards for at least 2 of 3 checks during the year (Mar, Jun, Sep) in order to continue their service into the next year.
  - c) Readiness status of the nominees and voting members will be confirmed by the Membership Committee Chair through the PPAC Chair, who receives quarterly readiness updates.
3. *Geography*: “PPAC will have at least 2 members more than 75 miles from Washington Metropolitan area”. The PPAC will seek to have representation from within and outside major metropolitan areas, and from rural and/or international settings.
4. *Professional seniority*: “PPAC will have at a minimum one individual who has less than 5 years of professional experience.” This is interpreted to mean that officers, at the time of beginning their PPAC term, will have less than a total of 5 years of service in the PHS Commissioned Corps when combined with years of service as a physician in another uniformed service.

**Goals**

5. *Organizations*: “every effort must be made to have the broadest representation possible among all the agencies that are routinely staffed by Commissioned Corps Officers of the Medical Category.” In addition, efforts will be made to include at least one officer who is employed by a non-HHS agency and one officer who is assigned to state/local government or an international agency (even if employed by a federal agency).
6. *Gender and minority representation*: “a concerted effort to include both men and women and racial and ethnic minorities”
7. *Personnel system*: “a concerted effort to include civil service personnel”

**Nomination Procedures**

The candidate must submit a CV, a nomination statement (see below), and a letter from his/her supervisor which demonstrates supervisor support for the nomination.

**Guidelines for review of nomination packages**

Relative weights assigned to the following 5 elements will be determined by each Membership Committee member as he/she deems appropriate. Any and all guidelines may be waived in order to comply with requirements 2-4 listed above.

1. The candidate’s *understanding* of the challenges and opportunities facing the Medical Category highlighting any particular *interests or concerns that motivate* the officer to become a voting PPAC member
2. *Skills, attributes, experiences, talents, and qualities* that the candidate brings to service on PPAC (i.e., to assist in particular activities or to accomplish specific objectives for the PPAC)
3. *Prior participation in and commitment to* the PPAC as evidenced by a combination of the following:
  - a. Attendance at and participation in PPAC meetings during the 12 months prior to the date by which nominations are due; nominee cites the dates of meetings attended as shown in PPAC minutes
  - b. Participation on a PPAC committee, with documentation of roles and accomplishments
  - c. Affiliate membership status (will serve as additional evidence of PPAC commitment)
4. Past/present activities that exemplify *officership and commitment* to the Commissioned Corps (examples of officership are presented in the Promotion Guidelines, Precept 4)
5. Enthusiastic *supervisor support* for the nomination (as reflected in the supervisor letter).

The **nomination statement** should be no more than 400 words and should respond to the following questions that address the first 4 elements above:

1. Please describe your understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the Medical Category and highlight any particular interests or concerns that motivate you to become a voting PPAC member. What contributions would you like to make during your term as a voting member? What particular committee(s) interest you and why?
2. What skills, attributes, experiences, talents and qualities would you bring to PPAC service? How could those benefit the PPAC?
3. Please write about your current/past PPAC participation and accomplishments. Specifically describe your roles and impact on any PPAC committees (and have the relevant committee chair[s] concur by email or letter to the membership subcommittee chair). Cite the dates of PPAC meetings that you attended in the 12 months prior to the nomination date. If you have been an affiliate member, state the dates of your affiliate membership.
4. Briefly mention other activities that demonstrate your officership and commitment to the Commissioned Corps.

**Operational note:** the PPAC Membership Committee will select a sufficient number of candidate members to reach the full complement of 20 voting members. These names will be approved by a vote of the full voting PPAC membership and submitted to the OSG for approval. The PPAC Membership Committee may identify up to 3 additional candidate names, listed in rank order. This list is kept confidential. One or more of these names will be submitted to OSG if any of the original names are found to be not acceptable to the SG. In addition, if a PPAC member chooses to relinquish his or her voting membership during the course of the year, the next name on the replacement list may be submitted to the OSG, with the approval of the officer.