

Standing Rules of the American Physical Therapy Association



Adopted 1987; amended 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2011, 2013, and 2020.

Standing Rules of the American Physical Therapy Association have been ordered by theme and where possible, in order of related Association bylaw.

1. CHAPTER ASSIGNMENT

A member may request specific chapter assignment or reassignment when:

- A. Applying for membership.
- B. Renewing membership.
- C. Submitting change-of-address notification.

2. GOOD STANDING

- A. Ethical principles and standards shall be:
 - (1) As described for the physical therapist in *Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapist*.
 - (2) As described for the physical therapist assistant in *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant*.
- B. Documents that interpret the ethical principles and standards shall be:
 - (1) For the physical therapist: *APTA Guide for Professional Conduct*.
 - (2) For the physical therapist assistant: *APTA Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant*.

3. PROCEDURE FOR REINSTATEMENT

A member:

- A. Whose membership has been revoked for nonpayment of dues or who has resigned, provided that no complaint or charge of violation of the ethical principles or standards of the Association was pending at the time of resignation, may be reinstated to membership by payment of all dues for the current year.
- B. Who resigned while a complaint or charge of violation of ethical principles or standards of the Association was pending may be reinstated to membership by payment of all dues for the current year and reinstatement of the previously pending complaint or charge.
- C. Whose membership was revoked for any cause other than resignation or nonpayment of dues may be reinstated to membership by payment of all dues and if the Board of Directors finds that circumstances occurring after membership revocation warrant reinstatement and that the reinstatement would not be prejudicial to the Association's object and functions or ethical principles or standards.

4. FORMATION OF A CHAPTER

The Board of Directors may issue a charter establishing a chapter provided that:

- A. For the formation of a new chapter, a petition is submitted to the Board of Directors signed by at least three-fourths of the Physical Therapist, Retired Physical Therapist, and Life Physical Therapist members within the area of the proposed chapter.
- B. For the merger of chapters, a petition is submitted to the Board of Directors signed by at least three-fourths of the members of the Board of Directors of each existing chapter.

- C. No charter shall be issued that would establish a chapter within the territorial jurisdiction of an existing chapter unless, in the opinion of the Board of Directors and after consultation with the existing chapter, a compelling reason for the formation of a new chapter is found.

5. CHAPTER CHARTERS

All charters issued by the Association shall include the following:

- A. The name of the chapter, which shall include the name of the geographic area over which the chapter shall have territorial jurisdiction.
- B. The territorial jurisdiction of the chapter, which must coincide with or be confined within the legally constituted boundaries of a state, territory, or commonwealth of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- C. A statement that the chapter is governed in all respects by the association bylaws.

6. PROCEDURES FOR SECTION FORMATION

A. Petition

A petition shall be received, before January 1 of the year in which it is to be considered, by the Board of Directors for review and recommendation for approval/disapproval. The petition shall include:

- (1) A detailed statement of purpose and rationale showing that the proposed section is unique, pertains to physical therapy, and cannot have its members' interests served through an existing section.
- (2) Evidence that all existing APTA sections have been notified and have verified that the interests of individuals represented by the proposed section cannot be served through existing sections and that it has been recommended by the Committee on Chapters and Sections.
- (3) Legible signatures, chapter assignments, membership numbers, and addresses of at least 200 members in good standing, representing no fewer than 27 chapters.
- (4) Evidence that each petitioner intends to join the proposed section.
- (5) A detailed first-year budget, a preliminary program for the Combined Sections Meeting, and evidence of dialogue between the petitioning group and a majority of existing sections.

B. Approval

- (1) If approval has been recommended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, a motion for approval of the section shall be presented to the House of Delegates.
- (2) A majority vote of the House of Delegates is required for final approval of the section.

C. Merging of Sections

Sections may petition to merge when the following is provided:

- (1) Evidence of approval by a two-thirds vote of the sections' members voting in a referendum on the question to merge.
- (2) A petition signed by at least three-fourths of the members of the governing bodies of the merging sections.
- (3) A support statement accompanies the petition.

These materials must be received by the Board of Directors for review before January 1 of the year in which the merger is considered. The petition, with the Board of Directors recommendations, shall be presented to the House of Delegates for approval.

7. PROCEDURES FOR ASSEMBLY FORMATION

A. Petition

A petition shall be received, before January 1 of the year in which it is to be considered, by the Board of Directors for review and recommendation for approval/disapproval. The petition shall include:

- (1) A detailed statement of purpose and rationale showing that the proposed assembly is unique, pertains to physical therapy, and cannot have its members' interests served through an existing means.
 - (2) Proposed bylaws and a statement showing that they have been reviewed by the Association's component parliamentarian and that they are not in conflict with association bylaws.
 - (3) Legible signatures, chapter assignments, membership numbers, and addresses of at least 3% of members in good standing in that category, representing no fewer than 27 chapters. Exception: Student Physical Therapist and Student Physical Therapist Assistant members may combine to form 1 assembly.
 - (4) Evidence that each petitioner intends to join the proposed Assembly.
- B. Approval
- (1) If approval has been recommended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, a motion for approval of the Assembly shall be presented to the House of Delegates.
 - (2) A majority vote of the House of Delegates is required for final approval of the Assembly.

8. PROCEDURES FOR COUNCIL FORMATION

A petition shall be submitted to the Board of Directors. The petition shall include:

- (1) A detailed statement of purpose and rationale showing that the proposed council is unique and provides a unique service to the Association and/or the physical therapy profession.
- (2) Legible signatures, membership numbers, when applicable, and addresses representing three-fourths of the membership of the group proposing to form a council.
- (3) Evidence that each petitioner intends to join the proposed council.

9. DELEGATE ROSTER

All components and the PTA Caucus shall provide Association headquarters with the names, postal addresses, telephone numbers, all addresses for electronic telecommunications, and terms of its delegates, chief delegate, and alternate delegates no later than August 30 of each year, with additions and changes sent no later than 30 days prior to the start of the House of Delegates. Those components whose delegates have terms of office greater than 1 year shall confirm the information on file at Association headquarters no later than August 30 each year.

Proviso: These amendments to the standing rules shall take effect August 2014 in preparation for the 2015 House of Delegates.

10. DELEGATE CREDENTIALS

Component Delegates: Chapter or section delegate credentials shall be signed by the chapter or section president or the chapter or section chief delegate. The designation of chief delegate shall be indicated on the appropriate chapter or section credential. Assembly delegate credentials shall be signed by the assembly president.

11. FORMULA FOR DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF CHAPTER DELEGATES

- (1) Add the number of Physical Therapist, Retired Physical Therapist, and Life Physical Therapist members and one-half of the number of Physical Therapist Assistant, Retired Physical Therapist Assistant, and Life Physical Therapist Assistant members of the Association who are assigned to chapters as of June 30 of the year preceding the House of Delegates in which they will serve.
- (2) Divide the total found in Step 1 by 400. This shall be the apportionment number.
- (3) Divide the total number of Physical Therapist, Retired Physical Therapist, and Life Physical Therapist members and one-half of the number of Physical Therapist Assistant, Retired Physical Therapist Assistant, and Life Physical Therapist Assistant members for each chapter by the apportionment number.

- (4) Chapters shall be allowed one delegate for each whole number and one additional delegate for any remainder equaling or exceeding 50 percent of the apportionment number.
- (5) Any chapter that would be entitled to fewer than 2 delegates according to the above shall be allowed 2 delegates.

12. MAIL BALLOT

When the Board of Directors determines to conduct a mail ballot, according to Article VIII, Section 5., C., (2) of the bylaws, a ballot shall be prepared and distributed as follows:

- A. The question to be decided and appropriate supporting information shall be provided with the ballot.
- B. Instructions for completing and returning the ballot shall be printed on the ballot.
- C. The deadline for receipt of ballots at the Association's headquarters shall be printed on the ballot, and this deadline shall be no fewer than 30 days after the date mailed to all voting delegates.
- D. An addressed envelope (to the Association's headquarters) and a plain envelope shall be included in the mailing.
- E. The ballots shall be mailed by first class mail to each voting delegate.
- F. The voting delegate shall place the completed ballot in the plain envelope, place the plain envelope in the envelope addressed to the Association's headquarters, sign the outside envelope, and mail it to Association headquarters.
- G. The Officers of the House of Delegates shall be responsible for opening and counting the returned ballots and preparing a report of the results of the vote.

13. ELECTIONS: TELLER'S REPORTS

- A. The teller's report to the House of Delegates shall include for each position to be filled:
 - (1) The number eligible to vote.
 - (2) The number of votes cast.
 - (3) The number of votes necessary for election (for officers).
 - (4) The number of votes cast for each eligible candidate.
 - (5) The number of illegal votes, and the reason therefore.

14. VACANCIES: OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- A. If a vacancy occurs within the first year of a 3-year term, or the Board of Directors' member-elect cannot assume office, the vacancy may be filled by the Board of Directors until the next session of the House of Delegates. The Nominating Committee shall select a candidate(s) for election at the next annual session of the House of Delegates; the elected person shall serve for the remaining 2 years of the term.
- B. If a vacancy occurs after the first year of a 3-year term, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors.
- C. If a vacancy occurs to the public member position, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors.
- D. Notwithstanding Standing Rule 14(B), if a vacancy occurs on the Board of Directors as a result of an election, a second election shall be required. The Nominating Committee shall prepare the slate for the second election and additional nominations from the floor shall be in order.

All candidates who were slated for any position on the Board of Directors and were not elected in the first election will be slated in the second election unless they have indicated otherwise. Candidates who were not elected for the Nominating Committee shall not be automatically slated but may be nominated from the floor.

15. REFERENCE COMMITTEE

- A. The committee shall receive and correlate motions and resolutions to be presented to the House of Delegates and shall identify motions which fall outside the object or functions of the Association. The committee shall provide advice and counsel regarding form, wording, and method of presentation of matters to be presented to the House.
- B. All main motions and resolutions, except for procedural motions presented for action by the House of Delegates, shall be referred to the Reference Committee unless this rule is suspended in any particular case by a majority vote of the House of Delegates.
- C. The committee will review main motions that are submitted by the established deadline and in the manner prescribed in the standing rule titled Main Motion Criteria.
- D. Appointed members of the committee shall be seated in the House of Delegates and shall reply to inquiries directed to the committee by the Speaker of the House.
- E. On a regular basis the committee will review the Association bylaws and standing rules and, as it deems appropriate, propose to the Board of Directors that it bring amendments to the House of Delegates for consideration.

16. DEADLINE FOR MAIN MOTIONS

All main motions to be considered by the House of Delegates shall be submitted in writing to APTA headquarters by a date set by the Speaker of the House of Delegates, which shall be at least 2 months and no more than 3 months prior to the date of the House of Delegates meeting. Any main motion which has not been so submitted shall require a majority vote, without debate, to be considered by the House.

17. MAIN MOTION CRITERIA

All main motions submitted by the established deadline shall meet the following criteria.

It is the responsibility of the maker of the motion to:

- (1) Provide a statement of the intended outcome of the motion.
- (2) Demonstrate that the motion's subject is national in scope or importance.
- (3) Provide pertinent background information, in collaboration with the APTA Board of Directors or staff including (a) a description of previous House, Board, or staff activity relating to the subject and (b) an identification of the stakeholders affected by the motion.
- (4) When possible, demonstrate that the motion concept has been disseminated to delegates of other delegations prior to the deadline for submission of main motions.
- (5) Provide a description of the potential fiscal impact of adopting and implementing the motion.

The Reference Committee determines how criteria have been met. If it is determined that the criteria are not adequately met, the motion shall be placed at the end of the agenda of the House of Delegates and shall not be considered unless a majority of the delegates vote, without debate, to consider the motion. The Reference Committee shall develop and make available to the delegates guidance designed to help delegates satisfy the foregoing criteria.

18. REPORTS TO THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

When the House of Delegates requires annual or periodic reports of Association or Board of Directors activities, such reports may be integrated into standard Association reporting mechanisms, which include but are not limited to the Year-End Report on Goals and Objectives and the Chief Executive Officer's Report.

19. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. The officers of the House of Delegates shall prepare a list of recommended motions that are routine, standard, non-controversial, or self-explanatory and where general approval is anticipated, for placement on a consent calendar.
- B. The preliminary consent calendar will be distributed 3 weeks prior to the start of the first meeting of the House of Delegates.
- C. Prior to the first meeting of the House of Delegates motions may be removed from the consent calendar by the officers of the House of Delegates or at the request of 5 chief delegates.
- D. The revised consent calendar will be prepared by the officers of the House of Delegates for presentation to chief and assembly delegates prior to the first meeting of the House of Delegates.
- E. Following the opening of the House of Delegates motions may be removed from the consent calendar by an affirmative vote of one-third of the voting body of the House of Delegates.
- F. If a motion is removed from the consent calendar, it shall be placed appropriately in the order of business previously assigned by the Speaker of the House and the chair of the Reference Committee.
- G. The consent calendar shall be presented for adoption in a single motion.

20. DEFINITION OF ASSOCIATION VIEWPOINTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVES

- A. Association Viewpoints
 - (1) Standard: A binding statement used to judge quality of action or activity. The use of “ethical standard” refers to right and wrong conduct, as articulated in the *Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapist*.
 - (2) Position: A firmly held Association stance or point of view. Positions of the Association direct subsequent decisions on similar matters of both the Association and its members.
 - (3) Guideline: A statement of advice.
- B. Association Administrative Directives
 - (1) Policy: Association directives defining operational and administrative activities.
 - (2) Procedure: Steps required to achieve a result.

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