



COMMITTEE  
MEMBER  
HANDBOOK

2009

*To advance the lifelong learning and professional interests of ophthalmologists ensuring that the public can obtain the best possible eye care.*

American Academy of Ophthalmology  
Mission Statement



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## A. Guidelines for Committee Membership

- All committee members shall be voting fellows, voting members or international members of the Academy.
- Individuals holding other classifications of membership in the Academy and nonmembers of the Academy may serve on Academy committees as consultants. Consultants may be appointed on the basis of expertise that enables the individual to make a significant contribution to the committee's work. Academy membership is not a requirement for appointment as a consultant; however, specific approval from the Senior Secretary or Executive Vice President is needed.
- Committee membership should be limited to seven members, including the chair and consultants.\*
- Committee chairs, committee members and consultants are appointed for one calendar year, with reappointment based on significant contributions to the committee.
- Committee chairs, committee members and consultants may be reappointed to serve a maximum of five one-year terms on a committee.\* If a committee member is appointed as chair, that member is eligible to serve a maximum of an additional five years as chair.
- To ensure that all committee members are not replaced in the same year, thereby losing continuity, you are encouraged to replace at least one member each year.
- Members should serve on no more than two Academy committees.\*

\*Requests for exceptions to these guidelines must be submitted to the Board of Trustees at the September board meeting.

Reaffirmed by: The Board of Trustees, June 1992  
Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, February 1996  
Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, September 2002  
Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, September 2003

## B. Responsibilities of Committee Members

Committees are the backbone of the Academy. In order for any committee to function at full capacity it is crucial that each member fulfill his or her responsibilities.

Each committee member should:

- Support and further the goals and objectives of the American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Be an active member of the ophthalmic community and be knowledgeable and aware of factors in the external environment that may affect the committee's activities
- Be receptive to the concerns, interests, and ideas of Academy members
- Devote the time and effort required to accomplish the committee's objectives
- Attend all committee meetings and participate in all committee conference calls unless excused by the chair; excused absences should not exceed one meeting/call per year
- Fulfill committee assignments on a timely basis
- Provide assistance and materials as requested by Academy staff

### ■ The Role of Consultants

Consultants are most often nonmembers of the Academy who, because of their special expertise, are asked to assist a committee. Consultants are appointed through the same process as members. Consultants have the same responsibilities as committee members, but do not have voting privileges.

## C. Travel Expense Policies for Volunteers

### ■ Purpose

The Academy's travel expense policies serve as guidelines for the reimbursement of expenses in conjunction with Academy-related business (**other than for the Annual Meeting**) and to ensure compliance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. In general, the Academy will reimburse necessary, actual and reasonable expenses for individuals traveling on Academy business. Academy department directors or individuals they designate are responsible for reviewing submitted expenses and for determining which expenses are allowable based on these travel expense policies.

The following policies were approved by the Academy's Board of Trustees in June 1992 & revised September 2002.

### ■ General

- To be reimbursed for expenses incurred, a *Request for Travel Expense Reimbursement* form [see center of handbook] should be submitted as soon as possible after the completion of the business travel, but not later than two weeks after the travel has been completed. **All expenses over \$25 must be documented by an *original* receipt (credit card statements are no longer acceptable as documentation).**
- Individuals serving on committees from outside the US will **not** receive travel expense reimbursement from the Academy without EVP authorization.
- Questions concerning expenses not covered by these policies should be directed to the appropriate department director, the designated staff member, or the Academy's chief financial officer.
- An individual traveling on Academy business is responsible for any expense incurred by an accompanying relative or friend, including, but not limited to, airfare, additional room charges, and meals.

### ■ Air Fare

- Individuals traveling on Academy business are required to **purchase airline tickets at least 14 to 21 days in advance** to take advantage of available discounts. If the Academy makes changes to the meeting schedule that require an individual to change travel plans, the Academy will reimburse any additional charges or penalties that are incurred.
- The Academy provides reimbursement only for coach airfare (i.e., not for business or first class).
- Exceptions to these policies pertaining to airfare will be granted on a case-by-case basis for illness, family emergency, or other extraordinary circumstances.

- An individual may combine Academy business with personal travel, provided that any additional cost associated with the personal travel is paid by the individual. Subject to prior Academy approval, the total cost of business and personal air fare will be reimbursed if such cost is equal to or less than that which would have been incurred for Academy business alone.
- For individuals who use private airplanes while traveling on Academy business, the Academy will reimburse the equivalent of the lowest (14-day advance purchase) available coach air fare.

#### ■ Hotels

- All meeting arrangements must be made by the Academy to ensure that available discounts are realized.
- Generally, hotel room rate and tax will be billed directly to the Academy. Incidental expenses should be charged to the individual's credit card.
- When a committee member for personal reasons chooses an alternative hotel to that selected by the Academy, lodging expenses above the daily rate arranged by the Academy will not be reimbursed.
- When a volunteer is traveling on Academy business other than a committee meeting, the Academy will reimburse reasonable and necessary hotel costs, including room, tax, and reimbursable incidentals.

#### ■ Meals

- Generally meals provided in conjunction with a meeting are intended for members and staff, unless otherwise indicated by the committee chair.
- When a social or dinner is held in conjunction with a meeting, one guest per member or staff may attend that event, with the approval of the committee chair.
- If a meal is provided in conjunction with a scheduled meeting, no individual expenses for that meal will be reimbursed.
- The cost of meals while traveling (breakfast, lunch, and dinner which are not provided by the Academy) must be reasonable and documented by receipts whenever possible. **Any meal over \$25 must be documented by an *original* receipt.**
- Business-related meals and entertainment (i.e., those that have a specific business purpose) must be documented in accordance with IRS regulations to be eligible for reimbursement. Such documentation must include the date, place, people present, their business relationship to the Academy, and the business purpose.

## ■ Ground Transportation

- The Academy encourages individuals to use the most economical form of transportation available, such as public transportation, hotel shuttles, or taxis. In general, the Academy does not reimburse for auto rentals except when required for business reasons or when they are less expensive than other forms of transportation.
- When rental autos are used, collision damage waiver (CDW) coverage should be purchased unless the individual uses a credit card that provides such coverage automatically.
- Individuals using personal autos on Academy business will be reimbursed at the rate currently allowed by the IRS.

## ■ Incidental Expenses

- The Academy will reimburse **reasonable** expenses for
  - \* Ground transportation to/from the individual's home and the airport and to/from the airport and the meeting location
  - \* Tips for sky caps, bellmen, etc.
  - \* Necessary telephone charges
  - \* Parking when a personal or rental auto is used and reimbursed
  - \* Other incidental expenses subject to adequate documentation
- Examples of incidental expenses that will **not** be reimbursed include
  - \* Hotel and airline movies
  - \* Greens fees, tennis court fees, ski lift tickets, health clubs, spa fees, etc.
  - \* Reading material not directly related to Academy business
- Whenever possible, incidental expenses should be documented by receipts regardless of amount. **Any expense greater than \$25 must be documented by an original receipt.**
- All incidental expenses submitted for reimbursement are subject to review and approval by the Academy.

#### D. Representing the Academy

Committee members are viewed as representatives of the Academy. So as not to inadvertently misrepresent the Academy, it is important that you choose your words carefully and distinguish your personal views from those of the Academy.

Speakers at Academy courses or functions should not make remarks that could be interpreted as being prejudicial against a group or an individual on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, marital status, physical handicap, or medical condition.

Please review the policy statements: *Policy for Academy*, *Guidelines for the Avoidance of Inadvertent Anticompetitive Conduct*, and *Diversity Policy* (on the following pages) before speaking on behalf of the Academy.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Policy for Academy Leaders**

#### **Policy:**

It is the policy of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, subject to ongoing review and periodic modification by the Board of Trustees, that each Academy Trustee, Secretary, committee chair, committee member, councilor, and representative to other organizations (Academy Leader) has an obligation of loyalty and fairness to the Academy and its members as well as an obligation to discharge the duties of an Academy Leader in good faith and in a manner that is in the best interests of the Academy and its members.

#### **Background:**

The American Academy of Ophthalmology and its membership have benefited enormously from the countless hours of volunteer work Academy Leaders have devoted in service to Academy programs and activities. The quality and value of these programs are a direct reflection of these leaders and the staff.

In nominating members to serve on the Board of Trustees, and in selecting members to serve on its secretariats, committees, and task forces, the Academy seeks individuals with the experience, skills, and knowledge necessary to do the job. Equally important, the Academy selects those individuals who have a reputation for excellence, both in the quality of their efforts and in their ethical standards.

In recent years, physicians' roles have expanded beyond the traditional parameters of clinical care. In many instances, physicians are assuming leadership, consulting, or significant equity positions in business, which potentially impact or are impacted by Academy activities. If the Academy were to select only Leaders not involved in such business ventures, it would seriously limit its ability to use the most capable and experienced individuals, which would not be in the best interests of Academy members.

#### **Evaluation:**

This Policy Statement is intended to maintain the standard of excellence demonstrated by all Academy Leaders and to protect these Leaders from allegations of wrongdoing in the discharge of their duties.

#### **Recommendation:**

All references herein to an Academy Leader means the Academy Leader, a relative of the Leader, an organization in which the Leader or a relative has a material financial interest, and an organization of which the Leader or a relative is a director, trustee, officer, or employee. The term "commercial" excludes pursuits that are predominantly clinical, scientific, or academic.

As a condition of eligibility for initial election or appointment to a position of Academy leadership and for continued service in that position, each Academy Leader shall do the following:

1. Disclose to the Academy the existence and nature of any personal or family interest in any activity that is, or reasonably could be expected to be, subject to this Policy Statement.
2. Disclose to the Academy board or committee or to the council on which the Academy Leader serves the existence and nature of any personal commercial interest, with respect to any actual or proposed contract or arrangement between the Academy and the Academy Leader, or any proposed endorsement by the Academy of any product or service of the Academy Leader, in advance of any discussion of or decision regarding the proposed contract, arrangement, or endorsement by that body, and abstain from the discussion and the decision.

3. Refrain from misusing the position as an Academy Leader to solicit, directly or indirectly, commercial opportunities for the Leader in the following ways:

a) By accepting the invitation of any professional or other organization to speak, at an educational or scientific meeting of the Academy or other organization, in the capacity of an Academy Leader and, in connection with that activity, referring to or soliciting, or causing or permitting others to refer to or solicit on the Leader's behalf commercial opportunities for the Academy Leader.

b) By soliciting or carrying out commercial opportunities for the Academy Leader and, in connection with that activity, referring to or causing or permitting others to refer to the Leader's position as an Academy Leader. In order to avoid the appearance of impropriety, there must be a clear separation by time and locale of the activities undertaken as a Leader of the Academy from activities undertaken as a commercial interest.

4. Honor and keep confidential all privileged or confidential information of or involving the Academy that is obtained by the Academy Leader by reason of or in connection with that person's position as an Academy Leader, and shall not use any of such information in connection with the Leader's commercial activities or disclose any of such information to any person or organization for any purpose whatsoever.

5. In the case of an Academy Trustee or Secretary only, avoid and refrain from any personal appearance by, or causing or permitting others to refer to, the Academy Trustee or Secretary as an Academy Leader in connection with an exhibit at any Academy meeting that promotes the commercial services or products of the Academy Trustee or Secretary.

Approved by: Board of Trustees, September 1994  
Revised and Approved by: Board of Trustees, September 1997  
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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Guidelines for the Avoidance of Inadvertent Anticompetitive Conduct**

#### **Policy:**

The American Academy of Ophthalmology, with the advice of its legal counsel, has adopted guidelines that must be followed to avoid inadvertent anticompetitive conduct that could be attributed to the Academy. These guidelines shall apply to all of the Academy's fellows, members, trustees, officers, councilors, committee members, and representatives to other professional or governmental organizations, and employees.

#### **Background:**

The Supreme Court of the United States has held that a trade association would be liable under the federal antitrust laws for treble damages arising from unlawful acts of one of its representatives, even if those acts were not authorized by the organization, if the representative had the "apparent authority" (viewed from the perspective of outsiders) to speak or act in the name of and with the apparent endorsement or backing of the organization. The Court held that the appearance of authority could be created, for example, if the representative's unlawful acts were statements written on the organization's letterhead or if other writings or oral statements were made in the representative's capacity with the organization. The Court's holding applies to all membership organizations, including the Academy.

#### **Evaluation:**

It is essential that all personnel and representatives of the Academy be specifically aware of the types of conduct that could be found to constitute anticompetitive conduct and that they adhere to straightforward guidelines designed to avoid inadvertent anticompetitive conduct and the possible attribution of that conduct to the Academy.

#### **Guidelines:**

Except when expressly authorized in advance by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees, the following guidelines shall prevail.

1. Discussions as described below shall not be conducted at any formal or informal meeting of the fellows and members, the Board of Trustees, the Council, a Council Section, or a committee of the Academy or by any Academy representative to any formal or informal meeting of any other professional or governmental organization, and must be avoided in all other contacts with actual or potential competitors.
  - a) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, fixing, raising, depressing, pegging, or stabilizing prices or fees; or any element of prices or fees; or establishing minimum or maximum prices or fees;
  - b) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, either withholding patronage or services from or otherwise discouraging dealings with, or encouraging exclusive dealings with, any health care provider or group of health care providers, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of health care products or services, any actual or potential competitor or group of actual or potential competitors, or any patient, group of patients, or other segment of the public;
  - c) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, allocating or dividing geographic or service markets, customers, or patients;
  - d) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, restricting, limiting, prohibiting, or sanctioning advertising, or soliciting that is not false, misleading, or deceptive;
  - e) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, discouraging entry into or competition in any segment of the health care market;

f) Discussions about whether or not the practices of any member, actual or potential competitor, or other person are "unethical" or "anticompetitive"; and

g) Discussions about the safety, quality, or efficacy of the products or services of, or the prices or fees charged by, any health care provider or group of health care providers, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of health care products or services, or any actual or potential competitor or group of actual or potential competitors. This does not restrict or prohibit study and reasonable discussion and assessment of the safety or efficacy of technology, drugs, and devices.

2. Minutes shall be prepared and maintained for all meetings of the fellows and members, the Board of Trustees, the Council, Council Sections, and committees of the Academy. Except for matters protected by the attorney-client privilege, all discussions conducted and all decisions reached at those meetings shall be reflected in the minutes of those meetings. Academy representatives to other organizations shall take reasonable steps to ensure that minutes of the meetings of those organizations are prepared and maintained, except for matters protected by the attorney-client privilege, and that all discussions conducted and decisions reached at those meetings are reflected in the minutes of those meetings.

3. No fellow, member, trustee, officer, councilor, committee member, representative, or employee of the Academy shall have the authority to, or shall, issue any written statement on Academy letterhead to anyone on any of the subjects enumerated in item 1 above.

4. No fellow, member, trustee, officer, councilor, committee member, representative, or employee of the Academy shall have the authority to, or shall, issue any oral or written statement to anyone on any of the subjects enumerated in item 1 above, in which or in connection with which the person issuing the statement identifies his or her affiliation with the Academy or purports to act on behalf of, in the name of, or with the endorsement of or backing of the Academy.

5. Notwithstanding anything apparently or expressly to the contrary contained in the preceding items, a person who is affiliated with the Academy and who has been specifically authorized by the Academy or its Board of Trustees or its Executive Committee to communicate in the name of and on behalf of the Academy to representatives of the executive and legislative branches of government with respect to administrative or legislative proposals that are under consideration by those branches and are of direct concern to the Academy, shall not be required to comply with item 3 or item 4 above with respect to any oral or written communication that satisfies the following conditions:

a) Is first approved by the Board of Trustees or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees; and

b) Is related solely to the substance or merits of a proposal that is then the subject of administrative or legislative hearings or proceedings being conducted by the executive or legislative branch of government and that does or could, if adopted, relate to the science and art of medicine pertaining to the eye and related structures or to the provision of or in payment for services involving prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of disorders affecting the eye and related structures; and

c) Is made by that person as a participant in those hearings or proceedings and solely in connection with that participation; and

d) Is made directly and solely to a representative of the executive or legislative branch of government who is a participant in those hearings or proceedings with copies of such communications provided only to persons designated by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees.

6. An exact copy of each written statement described in items 3, 4, or 5 above and an exact transcription of each oral statement described in items 4 or 5 above, whether or not the statement has been expressly authorized in advance either by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees, shall be furnished to the Academy's Executive Vice President immediately after the statement is issued, together with a complete record of its distribution.

Approved by: Board of Trustees, February 1988  
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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **DIVERSITY POLICY**

The Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Ophthalmology recognizes that this organization is best served by representation from the broadest possible diversity of member background, experience, and thoughts. As a policy, the Board of Trustees is committed to diverse representation on the Board of Trustees and its committees, councils, and staff without regard to race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, gender, or physical disability.

Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Revised and Approved by:	Board of Trustees, February 2002
Reapproved by:	Board of Trustees, February, 2007

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## E. Achievement Award Program

As a committee member, you qualify to receive points in the Achievement Award Program. The following explains the program and how you can earn an Achievement Award.

The Achievement Award Program recognizes individuals for their participation in Academy activities and their contributions to ophthalmology. This program uses a cumulative point system. An annually appointed Awards Committee is responsible for identifying individuals who have accumulated a specified number of points **and** who have made significant contributions to ophthalmology.

### ■ Earning Points for Consideration of an Achievement Award

The Achievement Award Program was established in 1953 to recognize individuals for their participation at the Annual Meeting. Today, the program recognizes individuals in more than 25 categories of contribution to the Academy. These categories include:

#### Annual Meeting:

- Instruction Course, Skills, or Breakfast with the Experts: Course Director, Senior Instructor, or Instructor
- Film or Video Production: Senior Author or Co-Author
- Scientific Paper Presentation: Senior Author, Co-Author, or Discussant
- Scientific Poster Presentation: Senior Author or Co-Author\*
- Scientific E-Poster Presentation: Senior Author or Co-Author
- Scientific Exhibitor: Presenters\*
- Symposia: Presiding Officer, Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, or Presenter
- Specialty Day: Chairperson, Moderator, Presenter, or Panelist

\*Informational posters and exhibits are not awarded points.

#### Other categories of contribution for Academy service:

- Committee Members
- State Society Presidents
- Representatives
- Councilors
- Board of Trustees
- Participants in the Academy's Leadership Development Program
- State Society Presidents
- Authors, Co-Authors and Reviewers of Academy Educational Material

The program is based on a cumulative point system. One point is awarded for each area of contribution. Starting in 1998, an individual can earn a maximum of three points per year. (For example, if an individual serves on a committee and presents two papers, one instruction course and one poster during the Annual Meeting, they receive one point for committee participation, only one point for the papers, and one point for the instruction course. They could not receive a fourth point for the poster or the additional paper.)

Effective in 2000, any Fellow or Member who is or has been convicted of a felony shall automatically forfeit all points that may have been earned toward any Achievement Award Program prior to the date of conviction.

#### ■ Achievement Awards Nomination Process

Achievement Award	10 points
Senior Achievement Award	30 points
Life Achievement Honor Award	60 points

Each year, the names of those individuals who have accumulated the required number of points are presented to the Awards Committee. Individuals who have accumulated 10 points are presented with the Achievement Award. Individuals who have accumulated 30 points are presented with the Academy's Senior Achievement Award.

Individuals who have accumulated 60 points are presented to the Awards Committee for consideration and determination of their significant contributions to ophthalmology. A two-thirds majority vote of the committee is required to nominate an individual for the Academy's Life Achievement Honor Award.

All award recipients are presented to the Board of Trustees. Nominees are notified of the board's determination before that year's Annual Meeting.

#### ■ Receiving an Award

Each award recipient receives an award certificate. In addition, photographs of all Achievement Award recipients appear in the Annual Meeting Final Program. In addition, recipients' names are published in *EyeNet Magazine* and on the Academy's website. Lapel pins recognizing each category of award are available for sale.



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