**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DENTISTRY**

**(AAPHD)**

**STUDENT CHAPTER HANDBOOK**

# 2025

**ABOUT AAPHD**

Founded in 1937, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) provides a focus for meeting the challenge to improve oral health. AAPHD membership is open to all individuals concerned with improving the oral health of the public. AAPHD accepts the challenge to improve total health for all citizens through the development and support of effective programs of oral health promotion and disease prevention.

**Mission:**AAPHD is the premier dental public health organization that promotes optimal and equitable oral health for all through education, research, practice, policy and advocacy.

**Goals/Objectives:***Goal 1:* Develop partnerships with members and stakeholders that have an interest   
 in public health dentistry.  
 *Objective 1-1:*Convene symposia in collaboration with other stakeholders.  
 *Objective 1-2:*Develop 1-2 strategic and influential partnerships to advance the   
 oral health of the public.  
*Goal 2:*  Translate evidence into policies and programs.  
 *Objective 2-1:*  Through strategic partnerships, develop scientific resources to   
 enhance the evidence-base, develop policy and promote   
 dissemination of the science of public health dentistry.  
 *Objective 2-2:*Create a research agenda to promote the science of public   
 health dentistry. *Goal 3:*Develop talent & leadership in the field of public health dentistry. *Objective 3-1:*Develop training and educational programs in public health dentistry. *Objective 3-2:*Advocate for, and utilize, resources to promote dental public   
 health education.  
 *Objective 3-3:*Disseminate the dental public health curriculum to dental hygiene,   
 dental and residency programs.

# AAPHD CHAPTERS The formation of chapters brings AAPHD to a new stage in its development. It's also through chapters that networking, events, information sharing and some training opportunities take place. It is at the local level that we carry out on a day-to-day basis our mission to AAPHD is the premier dental public health organization that promotes optimal and equitable oral health for all through education, research, practice, policy and advocacy.

City or area-wide campus chapters may be established by two-year or four-year colleges or universities within a radius of 75 miles, provided that at least one college or university involved has a school or department of Dental Public Health or offers courses of study relevant to the scope of the study of public health.

We hope the chapter manual will help you clarify your role as a chapter officer and your obligations to the national organization and chapter members. Any suggestions and comments that you might have in improving this manual, please contact AAPHD’s Executive Director at [David.pena@AAPHD.org](mailto:David.pena@AAPHD.org)

**HOLDING YOUR FIRST MEETING**

In this meeting, members will appoint someone to work on the chapters’ behalf, and this representative will lead the discussion on what the chapter envisions itself doing and give members/potential members info on AAPHD and chapter leadership roles to garner their support once the chapter is certified. We advise that the representative:

* Come to the meeting with about 4 or 5 programming ideas.
* Bring the AAPHD membership application.

**Below are some helpful hints/talking points in leading this meeting**:

* Discuss facts about the organization.
* AAPHD Goals
* Member Benefits: <https://www.aaphd.org/membership>
* Talk about your experience at any/all conferences that you’ve attended.
* Get group excited about annual conference.
* Share your programming ideas.
* Ask for programming ideas from the group.
* **Get potential members to join onsite!**
* Gather signatures to apply for certification.
* Make plans for holding the next meeting.

# CHAPTER OFFICERS

Each student chapter shall have as officers a president, vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. In addition, the chapter board can create other leadership roles such as social media coordinator, web master, job fair chair, etc. (the number and positions can be determined by the chapter based on its needs). One of the challenges student chapters often face is finding new leadership when the chapter’s founders graduate. We recommend having a mix of D1, D2, D3, D4 and/or dental residents in chapter board roles for continuity of the chapter.

**Job Descriptions for Chapter Officers**

## President

* Ensuring that the chapter works to fulfill the strategic plan on the local level
* Carrying out requirements to maintain chapter certification, including submitting the annual report.
* Preside at most chapter events.
* Serving as the primary contact person for potential members.
* Working with chapter leaders to recruit new members and retain existing members.
* Being acquainted with most chapter members and work to meet their needs within the AAPHD mission.
* Identifying and training a successor through outreach, recruitment and skills building. It is often the case that you will need to ask people to run for office, tell them what the job entails and encourage them with some examples of how it has benefited you.
* Facilitating, supporting and assisting with activities intended to support the mission of AAPHD, as managed by the AAPHD staff and approved by the Board of Directors.
* Keeping members informed of chapter activities through emails, social media.

## Vice president

* In the absence of the president, the vice president shall perform all duties of the president.
* When so acting, the vice president shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions on the president.
* The vice president shall assist the president and shall have other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the chapter board.

## Treasurer

* Responsible for completing annual financial reports.
* Recipient of the chapter’s bank statements.
* Keeping the local bank account open and in good standing.
* Issuing checks from the local bank account to pay for chapter expenses.

## Secretary

* Taking minutes at meetings and sending them to chapter leaders and members
* Greeting attendees at AAPHD chapter events and asking them to sign in.
* Writing chapter emails or other communications.
* Creating fliers, signs or other communication pieces for the chapter as needed.

**QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP**

If you have not had any background in managerial positions, remember that as a dental student you can become an expert in any field. Here are 11 qualities of leadership you bring to the table as a chapter leader:

1. SEE THE BIG PICTURE. A key leadership skill is vision — your vision in terms of where you see your chapter going and how you see your chapter growing in relation to the national organization.
2. BE ORGANIZED. Being organized means creating a plan. Something that lists your goals and objectives. Take the time to identify (with some members of your local leadership team) the key issues your chapter is facing.
3. LEARN TO PRIORITIZE. Be realistic, not only in terms of the goals you want to accomplish, but also in terms of the resources you have at your disposal.

Keep it simple. It is better to lay out a few objectives and accomplish those successfully than to shoot for the moon and end up becoming frustrated, disappointed and ultimately burned out.

Try not to overwhelm yourself. Come up with five objectives and make those objectives active, specific and real. Be sure to work within a manageable time frame. Start off by making your action plans in increments of three months.

1. BUILD A PHENOMENAL TEAM. A local board that will help you in supporting and executing your vision. There are several different ways that you could structure your management team. The most popular types are, creating committees or leadership positions.

1. DELEGATE Don’t be afraid to ask other people for help. Break large projects into manageable bites and find the best person for each job. Assign tasks, delegate event planning, and allow others to help build your chapter.

1. ESTABLISH STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS. As a leader you need to create the

structures and systems that will ensure that your chapter can run efficiently. This could be as simple as having your team meet on a regular monthly or bimonthly basis.

1. TAKE RISKS. Be creative and try new things.

1. LISTEN. Hear what people are saying. Take their advice. Listening to what your local board has to say about your chapter will allow you to be confident.

1. BE DECISIVE. You’ve weighed the pros and the cons. You’ve solicited advice from people. You’ve listened. Now make your decision and stick to it. Since you relied on input from your members to make the right decision, thank them.

1. ENCOURAGE AND MOTIVATE. People are looking to you for their cues, and you set the tone. As a leader it is up to you to work with your team. There will be plenty of times when their energy lags — it is up to you to pump it up. Help the people who are helping you problem solve. Give them the freedom to do their best and be 100 percent supportive of them at all times (even when it is most difficult.).

1. ACKNOWLEDGE. Always show your appreciation. In any job we need to hear positive reinforcement. “Nice job.” “Thank you for your hard work.” This is especially true in a volunteer organization. Thank those who work for you in private and in public.

**NOW THAT YOUR CHAPTER IS OFFICIAL**

There are a few things that will become important to the overall success of your chapter. Below are some items that you may wish to consider once your chapter has formed.

**1. OBTAINING CONTACT LISTS**

## Board members

Once the chapter board is in place, make sure that a board member contact list with all pertinent contact information is drawn up and distributed to all members of the board.

This will help when meetings need to be called or important information disseminated. Be sure to provide the national office with this list, as soon as the board is elected.

## Chapter members

It’s always good to know whom your members are, and how to reach them. You will receive a list of current members from the national office.

# SCHEDULING MEETINGS: CHAPTER AND BOARD

The most effective way to run a chapter is to have regular meetings to facilitate communication. The dates of these meetings should be made known early so that everyone is advised in advance. Meeting reminders should come days before it’s held. Additionally, provide an agenda so important topics are covered and made known.

# DELEGATING TASKS AMONG BOARD MEMBERS

To accurately judge what needs to be delegated and to whom, compose a list of duties that need to be performed and distribute them to the board.

# DEVELOPING CHAPTER GOALS

Every chapter should have goals that it wishes to complete on an annual basis. Those goals can include fundraising, increasing membership, playing host to panels or other dental public health activities, and providing networking opportunities for members.

# CREATING A CHAPTER CALENDAR

The most effective calendar can consist of a few items: dental public health activities (such as panels and clinic tours), chapter activities (fundraisers and chapter meetings) and social activities. Be sure to let the national office and other chapters know of your activities and successes.

# MARKETING TO INCREASE MEMBERSHIP

For new members who recently joined but did not indicate in their membership application that they would like to be affiliated with an existing chapter, ask them to send an email to **info@AAPHD.org** with the following information:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (Member # if known) am an AAPHD member in good standing and would like to be part of the \_\_\_university chapter

# COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEMBERSHIP

All AAPHD members should hear from their chapter board, especially their president, on a fairly regular basis. To assist in this process, you should create a chapter listserv. The national office, will provide you with a list of current university chapter members for sending news and other correspondence to your members.

# FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING FOR AAPHD CHAPTERS

## FINANCES

Members will pay dues directly to the national organization and indicate on the online membership application that they want to be considered a member of the chapter. We encourage chapters to recruit as many members as possible to grow membership and increase chapter funding. If you have questions regarding chapter finances, please contact the national office.

## FUNDRAISING

As it becomes self-sufficient, the chapter will need to raise funds for expenses. This type of fundraising is typically for small amounts and is meant to cover your chapter event costs and help sustain your chapter in its programming for the year.

# SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Student chapters primarily use sites on their school’s website or on other social media platforms.

## Purposes of Your Student Chapter Social Media Platforms

* Provide a vehicle for communicating chapter-related information.
* Inform chapter members about chapter activities.
* Inform chapter members about AAPHD national information (via links to www.AAPHD.org).
* Provide national and chapter contact info for recruiting members.
* When providing a chapter’s e-mail contact, include a reference to the chapter in the address to avoid confusion with the AAPHD national office contact information, e.g., “For questions about this event, please e-mail…….

AAPHD student chapter social media sites must not include or link to:

* Potentially offensive or pornographic material.
* Sites whose mission does not align with our own. The general rule is to stick with dental public health issues and organizations.

# MAINTAINING THE CHAPTER

In order to keep chapters up to date and provide benefits, AAPHD needs a current list of chapter leadership. Each chapter must submit an annual report every year. You will be sent a form that asks a few questions about what your chapter has been up to the past year, and you also list the names and contact information for the chapter leadership and advisor. We will also send you a chapter roster and a financial report so you can keep up with your members and goals. Student chapters who fail to submit an annual report two years in a row will no longer be considered active and will have to submit an annual report and a list of ten active members before being reinstated. If more than two years passes, the chapter will have to reapply.

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