

# LOCAL BRANCH COMMITTEE Standard Operating Procedures

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COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



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## References

### COA Governing Documents

- Strategic Plan
- Bylaws

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## Article

### I. PURPOSE

The Commissioned Officers Association of United States Public Health Service (COA) Local Branch Committee Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) provides operational and procedural guidance for the COA's Local Branch Committee.

This SOP applies to all documents created that are related to all functions within the COA Local Branch Committee to establish policies, processes, records, and acceptance criteria under the auspices of the COA. This SOP does not apply to documents created by other organizations outside of the COA Local Branch Committee.

### II. MISSION

The mission of the Local Branch Committee is to improve the vitality of local COA branches and to strengthen ties between local branches and the National COA. This mission is conducted primarily by facilitating communication and collaboration among local branches and National COA. This committee seeks a create an environment in which all Local Branches understand national level COA issues and communicate them to their members, National COA understands the needs of local branches and responds effectively to them, and local branches are empowered to flourish and be relevant to their members, ultimately to the benefit of the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

### III. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES & ORGANIZATION

#### Section 1. Committee Responsibility

The Local Branch Committee shall work with the COA Board of Directors and COA staff to facilitate issues and activities of Local Branches.

#### Section 2. Structure

The Local Branch Committee consists of one Committee Chair, one Vice-Chair, and Local Branch officers (i.e., Branch President or designee) who are designated as Committee members. The Local Branch Chair may form other permanent or ad-hoc subcommittees within, as needed.

- A. Chair: The Local Branch Committee Chair shall be currently serving on the COA Board of Directors and is to be appointed by the Chair of the COA Board of Directors. The Local Branch Chair acts as a liaison between the COA Board of Directors and the COA Local Branch Committee. The Local Branch Committee Chair and Vice-Chair facilitates, organizes, and maintains order in meetings; advises the Local Branch Committee on new and existing projects; and reviews and finalizes Committee- specific documents. The current Local Branch Committee Chair and Vice-Chair may have input on the selection of the next Local Branch Committee leaders.

- B. Vice Chair: The Local Branch Committee Vice Chair shall be currently serving on the COA Board of Directors and is to be appointed by the Chair of the COA Board of Directors. The Local Branch Vice Chair assists the Committee Chair on any administrative committee work and acts for the Chair in case of deployment or any other leave of absence. The Chair and Vice Chair can divide duties in whatever fashion they agree upon.
- C. Committee Members: Presidents of the various Local Branches are de-facto members of the National Local Branch Committee. Other than the Branch Presidents, other committee members may be appointed to help complete specific projects or assist with specific tasks.

#### IV. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

##### Section 1. Responsibilities

The Local Branch Committee Chair must keep the Committee viable and productive through aligning the meetings and projects to facilitate the mission of the Local Branch Committee.

- A. The Local Branch Committee Chair and Vice-Chair will have the following responsibilities, which can be divided between the two as agreed upon:
  - i. Prepare written reports (to be included in the minutes) for Committee meetings to communicate project progress and Committee activities. Meeting minutes shall be archived on the Committee's designated page on the OnBoard webpage.
  - ii. Prepare written and/or verbal reports for the COA Board of Directors meetings.
  - iii. Review Committee SOP and other Committee documents (as listed in the Committee SOP) at least annually.
  - iv. Involve as many Committee members as possible in discussions by soliciting opinions and experiences.
  - v. Ensure Committee members understand expectations for assigned tasks and projects.
  - vi. Ensure individual project milestones are met, and if not, identify the cause and rectify the problem.
  - vii. Provide orientation to new Committee members to review the mission of the Committee, current projects, time and frequency of meetings, etc.
  - viii. Maintain accurate records of Committee attendance.

- ix. Prepare End-of-the-term Certificates of Appreciation (see Appendix A) for the Vice-Chair, the Secretary, or any other active members of the committee (not including the de-facto members. See item xi.)
  - x. Chair and Vice Chair will, at least annually, attempt to make contact with any branches that are not attending meetings, to obtain “proof of life,” i.e., proof that the branch is still active, viable, and in existence.
  - xi. The COA National Membership Coordinator issues letters of appointment and letters of thanks to the de-facto members of the Local Branch Committee (the Branch Presidents).
- B. The Local Branch Committee Secretary, if appointed, will have the following responsibilities. If a Committee Secretary is not appointed, the Committee Chair or Vice-Chair will assume the following responsibilities:
- i. Distribute agenda to Local Branch Committee members prior to meetings
  - ii. Prepare Local Branch Committee meeting minutes for review and approval by Chair or Vice-Chair.
  - iii. Maintain accurate records of Committee attendance in the above-mentioned minutes.
- C. Committee Members have the expected roles and responsibilities:
- i. Be willing and able to give the necessary time to attend meetings and perform any assigned duties.
  - ii. Actively participate in discussion and be willing to listen to and respect others’ viewpoints.
  - iii. Think in terms of the welfare of the group rather than personal interests.
  - iv. Accept and follow through on assignments.
  - v. Represent the interests of Local Branches.

## Section 2. [Meetings](#)

The Local Branch Committee will meet as often as mutually decided upon by the Chair and Vice-Chair. Most often, the agenda consists of a welcome message, Executive Director (ED) Report, announcements by Chair or Vice-Chair, and at times, a brief training or presentation relevant to the interests of the members.

Additionally, committee members can communicate or elevate concerns or questions from the Local Branches that require attention from the Chair, Vice-Chair, or ED. The COA Local Branch Committee operational year is July 1 to June 30.

Meeting minutes are archived by the Local Branch Committee Chair or Vice-Chair via the designated space on the OnBoard webpage.

### Section 3. Branch Presidents: Attendance and Reporting

Branch Presidents or his/her/their designee should attend at least 50% of the Local Branch Committee meetings each operational year. This attendance can serve as “proof of life” of a branch.

Branch Presidents or his/her/their designee should report at least annually on their branch activities by completing the Branch Activity Report, and either completing the form on the NationalCOALocalBranch Google site, or by emailing the report to [NationalCOALocalBranch@gmail.com](mailto:NationalCOALocalBranch@gmail.com) and copying the National Membership Director. This is due by June 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

## Appendices

Appendix A. End-of-the term Certificate of Appreciation

Appendix A. End-of-the Year Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate can be found on OnBoard in the Resources folder.

**CERTIFICATE**  
**OF ACHIEVEMENT**

This acknowledges that

**Rank and Title**

Put achievements text here.

*Jacqueline D. Rychnovsky*  
Jacqueline Rychnovsky, PhD, CAE  
Captain, USN, Ret.  
Executive Director

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Date