



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

APA CALIFORNIA ELECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADOPTED JUNE 2011
AMENDED JUNE 2014

ELECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

American Planning Association
American Institute of Certified Planners

NOTE: These policies and procedures supplement Section 7 of the APA California Bylaws.
(Adopted 2014)

PREAMBLE

This document describes the election policies and procedures of the American Planning Association California (APA California), which were initially adopted by the APA Board of Directors in June 1, 2011 and amended June 20, 2014. It is the intent of the organization to have a dignified, transparent, and equitable professional election process designed to provide the members a diversity of choices, educate them as to the positions of the candidates, and allow them to make informed choices about the future of their organization.

Potential candidates for APA California office should submit their Biographical Background and Position Statement to the Nominating Committees. Potential candidates and all members actively involved in the election process are encouraged to focus on issues and ideas affecting the future and betterment of the organization. Potential candidates who are not slated as nominated candidates will have the option of seeking to become petition candidates.

These policies and procedures are designed to ensure a candidate nomination and election process that encourages all members, who have an interest and potential for Chapter leadership, to consider running for office. The policies and procedures also serve to encourage members to become informed about the candidates and to vote for those that they believe will provide the appropriate vision and leadership for the organization.

1.0 - ELECTIONS

1.1 - Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will consist of a maximum of nine members. The committee shall consist of the APA California Chapter President Elect or Immediate Past President who shall serve as Chair and six (6) additional members as provided in the APA California Bylaws. The Nominating Committee will be appointed by the APA California Chapter President by October 31st each year, and will open a season of Leadership Recruitment and Development. The President shall solicit Section input for committee members and shall make every effort to ensure a diverse committee representing a mix of ages, ethnicity, and geography (with an emphasis on a member for each section) in order to gain access to a broader spectrum of interested members. A Leadership Development and Recruitment Session at the Chapter Planning Conference (as part of the Conference Program) and in each of the sections will inform members about service opportunities in leadership positions for the Chapter Association. Additional information about Chapter offices and the election process may also be shared during individual Section meetings that occur in the fall and winter. As part of the recruitment process, APA California will provide information online about each of the positions, including job descriptions, time commitment and qualities required to serve in the position. Interested members can sign up for future correspondence and updates on opportunities to seek a leadership position from the Nominating Committee.

The key purposes of the Nominating Committee will recruit and nominate candidates with demonstrated leadership qualities, a commitment to ethical principles, an interest in serving the membership of the organization, and the ability to dedicate the necessary time to fulfill the obligations of the elected office. In this process committee members will view all names submitted with an open mind and will not be unduly influenced by any individual viewpoint in making their selections. The Nominating Committee must also commit to keep all discussions and information confidential. Names submitted to the Nominating Committee will not be released to the APA California Chapter Board unless they have been slated to run for an office. No Candidate Statements will be released until April 5 or after, and then only those statements from Candidates that have been slated to run for a position. The Nominating Committee shall notify in writing any nominee that is not slated. The Nominating Committee Chair shall establish a schedule and submit it to the Board for approval.

1.1.1 - Roles and Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall have the following roles:

- Recruit potential candidates for nomination from various APA California leaders and members that meet the leadership qualities identified in Section 1.1 above;
- Invite recommendations of potential candidates from APA California Sections and members;
- Make a commitment to keep all discussions and potential candidates names confidential;
- Consider a pool of potential candidates with the objective of selecting at least two qualified nominees for each elective office. One candidate shall only be selected if only one candidate is qualified or has applied for the position; and
- Review and fact-check the candidates' draft Biographical Background and Position Statements with staff assistance.
- Review leadership capabilities of candidates relative to the roles and responsibilities of the position.
- Hold a minimum of two (2) conference call meetings to review candidates and select the recommended slate for submittal to the Board. No action regarding slating candidates shall be conducted via email.

1.1.2 - Number of Nominees. The Nominating Committee shall slate at least two nominated candidates for each elective office, except where only one potential candidate is qualified or interested. The Nominating Committee shall seek balance in the diversity of candidates nominated for APA California elective offices.

1.1.3 - Eligibility Requirements. Candidates shall (1) be members of the APA California for not less than one year at the time of assuming office if elected, (2) agree in writing to serve if elected, and (3) not be members of the Nominating Committee. Individuals seeking to run for the President Elect position must have previously served as a voting member of the APA California Chapter Board.

1.1.4 - Biographical Background and Position Statements. The Nominating Committee has the following roles:

- All potential candidates desiring to be considered for nomination shall submit a Biographical Background and Position Statements (prepared in accordance with the guidelines in Appendix 1 to the Nominating Committee.

- Candidates are not allowed to change position statements once they have been submitted. Position statements are to be submitted electronically via e-mail.
- For all candidates, individual Background and Position Statements shall not exceed a 600-word limit.
- Fact-checking of position statements will be done by the Nominating Committee.
- Candidates not selected as nominees who choose to become nominees by the petition process shall use their Biographical Background and Position Statement originally submitted to the Nominating Committee.

1.2 - Election Committee. Following the slate being submitted to the APA California Chapter Board of Directors, an Election Committee shall be formed by the Nominating Committee Chair. The Elections Committee and the Nominating Committee are two separate committees. Members of the Election Committee will consist of three people: President Elect or Immediate Past President of APA California and two former APA California Chapter officers or other APA California members not currently on the APA California board. Election Committee members may not be nominated for any chapter office in the current election or in the next election.

1.2.1 - Roles of the Election Committee. The Election Committee's charge is to:

- Review petitions and qualify petition candidates for inclusion on the election ballot;
- Ensure a fair election in compliance with the policies, procedures, and Bylaws of the APA California A;
- Monitor the election web pages created by APA California for compliance with the Election Policies and Procedures;
- Develop and distribute the responses to a Consolidated Candidate Questionnaire; and
- Enforce standards of behavior for elections.

1.2.2 - Consolidated Candidate Questionnaire. The Election Committee will invite the Sections, Student Organizations, California Planning Foundation, Chapter Executive Board, and any other APA California affiliated groups to submit potential questions to be included in a consolidated questionnaire that candidates may choose to answer. The Committee will review and select four to five questions from those submitted for inclusion in the Candidate Questionnaire. The questions will be solicited and collected by the Election Committee from the Sections, Student Organizations, California Planning Foundation, Chapter Executive Board, and any other APA California affiliated groups. The Committee will seek a representative group of questions and may combine similar questions in developing the Consolidated Candidate Questionnaire. The completed questionnaires will be posted prominently on the web.

1.2.3 - Standards of Election Behavior. The Election Committee shall oversee and enforce the following standards and policies for conducting the elections:

Campaigning

- Endorsements by the APA California Board or any Section Board are prohibited. This does not preclude individual APA California members from personally endorsing or supporting a candidate; however, use of APA California membership lists (including

electronic formats) by candidates or members to endorse or express support for a candidate shall not be permitted.

- APA California will set up web page for candidates on www.calapa.org. Candidates Background/Experience and Position Statements, responses to the Consolidated Candidate Questionnaire, and optional photographs will be included on the Candidate web pages.
- Inclusion of photographs of the nominee on the web sites is optional, at the discretion of the individual nominees. Details are provided in Policies and Procedures Section 4.2.
- No mass mailings, mass unsolicited e-mails or use of any other electronic (social networks) campaign communication by candidates is prohibited. (The purpose is to prohibit campaigning by candidates, or by the current organizational leadership.) APA California will not provide mailing lists or labels for nominees to use.
- Negative campaigning is prohibited. Potential candidates or members shall not impugn the character, motivation or integrity of other candidates.
- No candidate shall write, or cause to be written, campaign letters or e-mail messages to be published or circulated.
- An individual APA California member who endorses a candidate shall not mischaracterize or misrepresent the positions or qualifications of other candidates, or other APA members.
- Fact-checking of position statements will be done by the Nominating Committee. Candidates will not have an opportunity to revise statements based on the committee's findings.

Enforcement

The Election Committee will refer to the APA California Board President any alleged violations of these election policies and procedures that are not satisfactorily resolved, for possible disciplinary or other action. Such action may include censure, removal from office, or expulsion from the APA California in accordance with the Bylaws of APA California.

Investigation of Violations

- Any member can file a complaint about a perceived violation of elections policies and procedures.
- Complaints shall be filed with Executive Director of APA California, who shall establish the facts of the complaint and forward the complaint, along with any additional background information developed during fact checking, to the Election Committee within 7 days.
- The Election Committee shall confer within 5 working days to initiate an investigation of the complaint. A final decision of the Committee shall be made within two weeks of the initial review of the complaint.
- The Election Committee has the authority to take final action on minor infractions of the elections policies and procedures. Recommendations on major infractions, which result in removal from the election ballot or invalidation of the election results, shall be forwarded to the appropriate governing body (APA California Board) for final action.

Potential Disciplinary Actions by the Election Committee

- The Nominating Committee shall remove any factual errors or inaccuracies from the position statement. The candidate shall be notified of any such corrections one week

prior to the posting of the candidate statement on the APA California Chapter website and the candidate cannot further modify the position statement.

- Official censure by the Election Committee for violation of any policy or procedure outlined in these guidelines after an investigation and evaluation by the Election Committee.

Potential Disciplinary Actions by the APA California Board

- Removal of candidate from the election ballot.
- Invalidation of election results.
- Any APA California AICP member who violates the provisions with or without the support of the candidate may be referred to the APA National Executive Director based on the recommendation of the Election Committee and action by the APA Board, for Ethics Investigation.
- In this scale of progressive discipline, the APA California Board or AICP Commission must act to impose any penalty higher than censure by the Election Committee.

1.2.4 - Training Conference Call. The APA California Election Committee has the option to host a training conference call that candidates are required to attend. These elections policies and procedures will be distributed to candidates via email. The purpose of the training is to ensure that candidates understand the election policies, and the prohibition against campaigning by candidates.

1.3 - Teller Committee. The Teller Committee will consist of Executive Director or a committee appointed by the President of APA California, who are not nominees and who reside in the area of the Association's office where the ballots are to be counted.

1.3.1 - Roles of the Teller Committee. The Teller Committee shall have the following roles: Review the reports of the Nominating Committee and certify that they meet the requirements for nomination;

- Approve the procedures for the receipt, opening, and counting of votes; certify the count, and provide the results to the President at the conclusion of the balloting period.

1.4 - Schedule. See *Appendix 5, Election Schedule*. From the time the Nominating Committee meets and selects a slate until the APA California Chapter Board of Directors certifies the slate will take no longer than five months.

2.0 - CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE

2.1 - Terms of Office. Term of office for members of the APA California Board of Directors shall be limited to two consecutive terms in any combination of offices, excluding President Elect. An individual may submit their name to the Nominating Committee for consideration for a second term as president.

3.0 - PETITION CANDIDATES

3.1 - Eligibility. Only those persons who have submitted their Position Statements for consideration by the Nominating Committee, and who have not been slated as nominated candidates for office, may become petition candidates.

3.2 - Process. Potential petition candidates may be nominated by the petition of at least 32 APA California members, four (4) signatures from each of the eight (8) Sections. APA California will supply forms for signatures by the petitioners. Petition candidates shall meet the requirements of candidacy and shall file their petitions with the Nominating Committee Chair within 45 days of the announcement of nominated candidates slated by the Nominating Committee.

3.3 - Certification. Within one week of submittal deadline, the Election Committee shall review the petitions and certify that all signatures are valid and upon such finding shall declare the petitioner a petition candidate.

4.0 - OTHER ISSUES

4.1 - Election Season. The "election season" is defined as the period between the meeting of the APA California nominating committees and the end date for voting for APA California.

4.2 – Photographs. Candidates for APA California office may submit a portrait photograph of themselves for publication with statements. Submission of photographs for APA California candidates is optional. If submitted, digital photos are encouraged. Photographs must be:

- Head/shoulders portrait type.
- Electronic files or photographic prints
- No smaller than a passport photo and no larger than 8"x10" (for prints).
- 300 dpi or greater (for digital files)
- No more than five years old
- Submitted at the same time as the background/experience and position statement or at the time petition filings are due.

Photographs meeting these requirements that are submitted by nominated candidates will be published with their position statements on the APA California website. Photographs meeting these requirements that are submitted by certified petition candidates will be published with their position statements and on the web.

4.3 - Partisanship by APA California, Staff or Board

4.3.1 - No APA California resources, including those of any Section of APA California, are to be spent or used on behalf of any candidacy unless otherwise permitted by these guidelines.

4.3.2 - No APA California staff or contractor of APA California may participate or contribute to any partisan act regarding APA California candidacy or to suggest to a member that the member consider running for national APA California office.

4.3.3 - The APA California Board of Directors and appointed members may not endorse or campaign for any candidates in the capacity of their position. Individual Directors/Commissioners may speak on behalf of candidates they support but not in their identity as an APA California Director.

4.3.4 – The Nominating Committee and Election Committee may not endorse or campaign for any candidates.

4.4 - Advertising and Articles in APA California Publications

4.4.1 - No advertising, paid or unpaid, will be accepted for any candidacy to appear in any publication of APA California. Letters endorsing or criticizing candidates will not be accepted for APA California or APA California Section publication.

4.4.2 - No advertising or publicity in the form of special news or feature articles by or about a candidate or candidate-related event or publication will be accepted knowingly for publication during the last two months of the election season by APA California or APA California Section except for reference to commitments and ongoing APA California or APA California Section activities initiated prior to candidacy. During the last two months of the election season mention of a candidate's name is permitted in reference to ongoing APA California or APA California Section activities or when the candidate's name is a minor but germane part of a larger article. Similar policies apply to photographs.

4.4.3 - During the election season, current APA California Chapter Board Members or APA California Section Board Members who are running for APA California Chapter office may report to the membership on APA California business. These reports may not be used to endorse or criticize candidates. There are no restrictions on report distribution or publication by any Chapter Board of Directors member not running for APA California office.

4.4.4 - During the entire election season, publishing articles that are intended primarily to garner publicity for a candidate shall be avoided.

4.5 - Ballots

4.5.1 - APA California will use electronic ballots for elections. By using an electronic ballot, voter turn-out will be encouraged more cost-effectively with targeted email reminders containing a link to the online secure voting page.

4.5.2 - The Nominating Committee Chair shall prepare ballots with the names of candidates, arranged in accordance with a drawing, for each elective position.

4.5.3 - Petition candidates will be so identified on the ballot.

4.6 - Eligibility to Vote.

Membership must be processed by January 1 of each year to be eligible to vote during that years' election.

4.7 - Monitoring and Reporting. Staff and the Election Committee shall note any election-related problems to both the Nominating and the APA California Chapter Board of Directors upon conclusion of an election.

APPENDICES:

1. Guidelines for Writing Background/Experience and Position Statement
2. Eligibility Form
3. Candidate Agreement
4. Commitment to Serve Statement
5. Elections Schedule
6. Philosophy and Goals of the Election Process
7. Bio Questionnaire (To be Developed)

Appendix 1:

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING BACKGROUND/EXPERIENCE AND POSITION STATEMENT

Statements will be given full consideration as long as they meet the guidelines for biographical background/position statements. Keep in mind that potential candidates should state their positions and opinions about issues regarding the future of the organization. Any facts that are cited must be verifiable.

1.0. Suggestions for Biographical Background Information:

- Organize the information into five categories: professional experience, APA California experience, experience specific to position roles and responsibilities, community involvement, and education.
- List information in each category in reverse chronological order (most recent experience first).
- Present information in a list, rather than in full sentences, when appropriate.

This approach works well for three reasons. A lot of information can be squeezed into relatively few words, leaving more room for the position part of your 600-word-total background/position statement. The format helps voters because it focuses on the highlights of your career. Finally, it provides a place to note prior experience in managing or serving on the board of an organization.

2.0. Suggestions for Position Statements:

- Focus on issues that impact the future of the organization.
- Focus on qualifications that demonstrate your leadership and skills specific to the position
- Verify any and all facts that are stated.
- Use bullet statements to consolidate your thoughts in a more concise fashion, when appropriate.

3.0 Submission Requirements:

1. Submit two electronic copies of your biographical background/position statement in MS Word or similar format; one copy without any formatting such as bold face, italics, underlines or bullets, and another copy indicating where you wish such emphases to be placed. The appearance of the emphasis will be made uniform from statement to statement. Your notations will let the editors know where, if at all, you want any emphasis to go.
2. Submit a current digital photograph of yourself, if you would like to include a picture on your candidate webpage and official ballot. Details on the photograph are in Policies and Procedures, Section 4.2.
3. Finally, be sure to proofread your statement. The Nominating and Election Committees shall make appearance uniform among all statements, but they will NOT correct spelling and grammatical errors or typos contained in the statements.

Appendix 2:
APA CALIFORNIA ELECTION
ELIGIBILITY FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone number: _____

Fax number: _____

E-mail address: _____

APA membership number: _____

Please indicate the position(s) for which you are interested in pursuing. If you are interested in more than one position, indicate your preference in priority order, with “1” being highest priority, “2” being second priority, etc.

APA California members from all Sections are welcome to submit their names as potential candidates. Members must meet any qualifications, as stated in the APA California Bylaws, required for a position.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Interest</u>
<i>(as applicable based on even/ odd years)</i>	_____

“I am committed to accepting nomination and running for the position(s) indicated above. If elected, I agree to devote the necessary time and energy to serve in this position, including participation, in person, at the orientation for new Board Members and Annual APA Board Retreat in January [year following election cycle].”

Signature

Date

E-mail or fax this document to [name, email and fax as applicable], by **February 28, [year]**.

Appendix 3:
CANDIDATE AGREEMENT TO ABIDE

I acknowledge that I have read and understand all the policies and procedures, appendices, and bylaws governing the Election Process and agree to abide by them and any decision of the Nominating and Election Committees.

For APA CALIFORNIA office, sign and return to:

American Planning Association
California Chapter
Stefan/George Associates Office

Candidate Signature

Date

Appendix 4: Commitment to Serve Statement

If elected to the APA California Board of Directors, I understand my commitment to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events.
- Be informed about the organization’s mission, services, policies, and programs.
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings.
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments.
- Inform others about the organization.
- Suggest possible nominees to the board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and the organization.
- Keep up-to-date on developments in the organization’s field.
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff.
- Assist the board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the organization’s annual financial statements.

Under well-established principles of nonprofit corporation law, a board member must meet certain standards of conduct and attention in carrying out his or her responsibilities to the organization. Several states have statutes adopting some variation of these duties, which would be used in court to determine whether a board member acted improperly. These standards are usually described as the duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience.

Duty of Care - The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as “the duty of care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances.” This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he or she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.

Duty of Loyalty - The duty of loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means the at a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.

Duty of Obedience - The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization’s mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public’s trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization’s mission.

I understand the responsibilities described in this Commitment to Serve statement.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5:
APA CALIFORNIA ELECTION SCHEDULE

Nominating Committee Appointed

Ad Posted on CCAPA Web Site

Cal Planner Ad Published

Nominations Due with Candidate Statement - February 28

Nominating Committee Consider Candidates

Nominating Committee Report to Board

Slate Candidate Statements posted on Website

Petition Candidate Statements due

Petition Candidates certified by Board

Elections Slate sent to National APA for inclusion in National-Chapter Consolidated Ballot - ***due June 1***

Election Email sent and Website Posted

Election Period Ends

Executive Director/Tally Committee Report Results

Candidates Notified of Results

Election Results Announced

Officers Take Office

Appendix 6:

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF THE APA CALIFORNIA ELECTIONS PROCESS

- Members of the organization are able to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior on the part of their peers.
- Given accurate and complete information, members of the organization will make intelligent and reasonable election choices.
- Guidelines should be as specific as possible and should be adopted by the Board to minimize the need for situational staff interpretation.

The elections process should strive to achieve 13 goals:

1. To offer members a high caliber of candidates from which to choose.
2. To offer each office a range of candidates that reflect a diversity of views within the Association.
 - a. Some continuity.
 - b. Some fresh views.
3. To ensure that, *in toto*, candidates are drawn from a broad range of backgrounds and reflect a wide range of member views. These include but are not limited to:
 - a. Sections
 - b. Students
 - c. Elected officials
 - e. Planning commissioners and citizen planners
 - f. Academics
 - g. Consultants
 - h. Governmental planners
 - I. Private planners
 - j. Women
 - k. Blacks, Hispanics and other minority groups

Appendix 6:

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

OF THE APA CALIFORNIA ELECTIONS PROCESS (continued)

4. To ensure a process of candidate solicitation and selection that encourages and considers all members interested in running for office and those the nominating committee and other members consider to have potential for national leadership.
5. To ensure strong leadership of the organization by requiring proven capabilities by candidates.
6. To guarantee equal access to APA California resources by all candidates.
7. To provide members with the information to make an informed selection among candidates, at a reasonable cost to the organization.
8. To promote equitable campaign procedures that minimize disparities in financial or technological resources among candidates.
9. To minimize the need for staff interpretation of guidelines by having, as specific-as-possible, Board adopted policies covering a wide variety of situations.
10. To minimize administrative and financial burdens of the campaign process on APA California.
11. To encourage participation in the nominating process.
12. To encourage members to vote.
13. To maintain a character of campaigning appropriate to the dignity of planning and the Association.

Any election related activities are expected to be consistent with this philosophy. Candidates and members are referred to points 5, 6, 7, 9 and 12 in particular. To implement this philosophy the board has adopted campaign policies, and guidelines for background / experience and position statements. Please attempt to be specific enough to be useful but not so specific as to challenge members to find loopholes. When applied in a mature manner by candidates and members the philosophy, policies, and guidelines should together provide for an open, fair, informative, and self-policing elections process.