

## ACYOA CENTRAL COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

The Central Council is the elected national body of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. The Council is responsible for: (1) overseeing and carrying out all national and regional programs; (2) taking care of the various administrative tasks to maintain the National Organization; and (3) maintaining the National Treasury.

The Council meets at least four times a year, usually at the Diocese in New York City. The Primate, or his representative, presides over all Council meetings. Council members are expected to attend all Council meetings, act and dress appropriately, and be serious and diligent in carrying out the duties of their office and in completing assigned projects.

### OFFICES

#### Chairman

1. Prepares agenda and convenes all Council meetings. Agenda should be prepared in consultation with the Executive Secretary. The agenda, along with a memo announcing each Council meeting, should be sent at least 14 days prior to the Council meeting to the Primate, all Council members, and the Executive Secretary.
2. Implements basic parliamentary procedure during meetings and ensures that pertinent discussion is taking place at all times.
3. Represents the Council and the National Organization on the Diocesan level, as well as in non-Armenian Church circles.
4. Follows up on all activities and responsibilities of the Council as a whole and oversees Council members with regard to their assigned responsibilities.
5. Delegates responsibility to Council members and non-Council members to carry out designated tasks.
6. Maintains correspondence on the national level with the cooperation of the Corresponding Secretary.

### Vice Chairman

1. Works in cooperation with the Chairman and takes over for the Chairman at any given time.
2. Handles additional assigned duties and responsibilities.

### Treasurer

1. Maintains the national treasury of the Organization, including accurate accountings of all financial aspects of the Council and related activities.
2. Prepares a complete and thorough report for each meeting.
3. Pays bills immediately.
4. Keeps the entire Council and the Executive Secretary apprised of the financial situation of the Organization at all times.
5. Maintains the dues-paid membership list of the ACYOA and compiles the Membership Directory.
6. Corresponds with each chapter regarding submission of dues (includes initial letters, reminder notices, preparation of individual lists for chapters, etc.).

### Recording Secretary

1. Records the proceedings of all Central Council meetings.
2. Sends copies of the minutes within three (3) weeks following each Council meeting, to the Primate, fellow Council members and the Executive Secretary.
3. Affixes signature to important documents as needed.

### Corresponding Secretary

1. Handles all correspondence of the Council as directed.

All Council members will be sending out correspondence of one form or another. Copies of all correspondence should be sent to fellow Council members, and the Executive Secretary.

Copies of correspondence relating to regional conferences (and other national or regional matters) should be sent to the Chapter Chairmen, Delegates, and Parish Priests.

Copies of correspondence to a chapter outside of your designated region should be sent to the Council member who is liaison to that region and where a regional committee has been established, the chairman of the regional committee.

All Council members are expected to maintain accurate and organized files at all times.

All correspondence should be on ACYOA letterhead and should utilize proper formats. See Appendix "A."

Additional information and comments are noted under "Communication."

### REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Each Council member, excluding the Council Chairman, will be assigned as liaison to a region. The regions are as follows: Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West, New England, and South. The Council Chairman shall oversee all regional assignments.

Each Council member is responsible for maintaining contact with the parishes and chapters in his/her assigned region.

Additional information and comments are noted under "Communication."

### ADMINISTRATIVE/PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS

Council members will be assigned national and regional programs to coordinate and administrative responsibilities to execute. Progress reports should be given at each Council meeting.

Additional information and comments are noted under "Communication."

### COMMUNICATION

The Central Council's main goal should be to constantly work toward improving overall communication within the Organization -- within the Council as well as between the Central Council and the chapters as every communicable avenue pursued will help to foster a greater sense of trust between the Council and the local chapters. We have to get to know the chairmen on a more personal level and let them get to know us. When we are criticized we have to respond in a positive light, because much of the criticism we receive is through ignorance of lack of knowledge. We have to educate the chapter chairmen and make them realize that our output depends on their cooperation and commitment -- as we are only as good as they are. Outlined below are some of the avenues of communication which should be pursued:

## Letters

- a. The Chairman should send out a letter of introduction, stressing communication, outlining areas of mutual cooperation, listing goals, summarizing proposals and amendments passed at the General Assembly, notifying them of programs in the upcoming year, and other miscellaneous information (i.e. requesting bids for events in the coming year, etc.). The letter should also state the date of the first Central Council meeting and ask for input regarding various aspects of the organization prior to the meeting so that those topics can be discussed at the meeting. Enclosed with this letter should be a listing of Central Council members (including administration and program assignments as well as regional assignments), a copy of the Chapter Chairmen and Contact listing, the various administrative forms each chapter is required to use, and information on the Point System. (Note: Our administrative forms should be revised ASAP -- before this letter goes out).
- b. A letter should be sent to each Chapter Chairman upon election, congratulating them on being elected, outlining areas of mutual cooperation, informing them of who their Central Council liaison is, advising/reminding them of national and regional programs, Hye Hokin, Dues, etc., and enclosing a copy of the Central Council listing, the Chapter Chairmen and Contact listing, and the necessary forms required. This will make each Chairman directly aware of who they can call when they want any information, and also inform them of some of their general responsibilities, as the outgoing Chairmen many times fail to do so. (Information similar to that in letter of introduction).
- c. Letters of thanks should be sent to ACYOA members who assist the Central Council in any small capacity. These individuals may not necessarily qualify for Certificates of Appreciation, but they should be recognized in some small way.
- d. After each Central Council meeting, a "progress report" should be sent out to the Clergy, Chapter Chairmen and Delegates summarizing the issues discussed.
- e. The Central Council Chairman and the Executive Secretary should coordinate correspondence so that efforts are not duplicated.

## Telephone Contact

- a. Liaisons should keep in touch with their respective chapters on a monthly basis to obtain information on activities and to listen to their concerns and assist them in any way they can.
- b. Approximately 4-6 weeks prior to each Central Council Meeting, a letter should be sent out notifying each chapter of the Council meeting, and requesting that they contact their respective Central Council member by

a given deadline if they have any concerns or issues which they would like the Council to discuss.

### Visitations

- a. As a general rule, we should try to visit each chapter once. However, when visitations are made, they should be made for a reason. Additionally, before a Council member goes on any visitation, especially the first several ones, he/she should read the Membership Handbook and Resource Handbook thoroughly so that when questions arise they can be answered with relative ease.
- b. Weaker chapters should be given first priority when scheduling visitations.
- c. When visitations are made, each Central Council member should make it a priority to discuss the programs and goals of the organization, offer assistance to the local chapter when necessary, and go over the various assignments of fellow Council members (administrative and program assignments). It should be very clear to the chapter what each Council member's responsibilities are. Additionally, the Central Council should promote the Executive Secretary and vice versa so that due credit is given to both the Council as a whole and the Executive Secretary. The Council and the Executive Secretary should work as one united group, promoting each other.
- d. Council members should try to schedule visitations to coincide with chapter meetings and activities. Formal arrangements should be made with the Chapter Chairman and the Parish Priest should be notified.
- e. The Central Council Chairman and the Executive Secretary should be consulted/notified prior to each visitation.

### Hye Hokin/Armenian Weekly Papers

- a. Hye Hokin is our greatest communication tool and we have received much praise in support of it. However, there is room for improvement. We should include sections on comments from readers and articles from chapters (not in each issue, only if and when material of this nature is sent in). We should also have one page set aside in each issue profiling two ACYOA members. Many ACYOA members are not only very active within their respective chapters but also very active within other areas of the parish and local Armenian community. Additionally, we have many individuals who are young professionals indirectly promoting our heritage in non-Armenian circles. If this comes to fruition, there must be a specific procedure through which individuals are selected because we will be leaving ourselves open to some criticism.
- b. The Central Council Chairman should submit an update on Central Council activities to keep everyone apprised of what we are doing.

- c. Each year the Central Council should submit a "Meet the ACYOA Central Council" article with pictures in Hye Hokin and The Armenian Church as well as the weekly papers. Additionally, Council members should be contributing material to the weekly papers and should be quoted on occasion. Equal emphasis should be put on the Executive Secretary and the ACYOA Central Council.

#### Conferences

- a. A possible way of increasing communication and creating a more positive feeling between the chapters and the Central Council might be to have a conference with all Chapter Chairman, discussing national programs and goals, Hye Hokin, concerns of local chapters, and ways to improve areas of mutual cooperation as well as communication. As it is now, the only time the Council as a whole sees the chapter chairmen (only a few chapter chairmen) is at the General Assembly. We should get to know these people on a more personal basis to make it easier for the chapter chairmen and the Council to work together during the course of the year.
- b. Regional conferences should be convened at least once a year to discuss and initiate regional and interchapter activities.

#### Assignments/Programs

- a. Part of the reason why we are not able to communicate as efficiently and frequently as we can with each chapter is because we are tied down with too many administrative responsibilities. As the Council consists of members who either hold down full-time jobs or are in school, some of the administrative details can be transferred to the Executive Secretary's office. Since we are purchasing our own computer, there is no reason why the Membership Handbook and Chapter Resource Handbook cannot be produced from that office. These are just two examples.
- b. On the other hand, the Council has not been as visible to the general membership as it should be. In addition to visitations, it should be actively involved in coordinating the various programs (i.e. retreats, seminars, etc.). Each Council member should have a role in organizing, executing, coordinating, and/or directing regional programs. Local programs should also be encouraged and assistance given when necessary. National programs should be highly promoted and publicized in the parishes. We cannot expect a parish to participate in a program they know little or nothing about. In addition, deadlines that are set will never be met if chapters are not reminded, informed, and made to understand what our needs are. Additionally, one or two Council members should have some kind of involvement with the coordination of the Cultural Weekend, assisting the Executive Secretary in any manner. In this way, we will be promoting the ACYOA Central Council -- and placing it in the forefront where it belongs.
- c. Assignments should be divided evenly between all Council members so that there is a balance. If a Council member is assigned as liaison to a

specific project, only that Council member should be in contact with the chapter coordinating the project. There has to be a certain amount of trust and respect between each Council member, and between the Council and the Executive Secretary. If one Council member is not completing an assignment or task in an acceptable manner, another Council member should not "take it upon himself to see that it gets done" and/or "act in any manner which would appear manipulative, thus causing poor relations between Council members and within the Council as a whole." Problems should be channeled through the Chairman and resolved diplomatically.

### PROPER FORMS OF ADDRESS

#### Primate

When greeting the Primate (or any archbishop or bishop), you say while bowing to kiss his hand:

Orhnetzek Surpazan Hayr or  
[Bless Me Your Eminence]

Asdvadz Oknagan, Surpazan Hayr  
[May God Help Your Eminence]

He will answer:

Asdvadz Orhneh or  
[May God Bless You]

Asdvadz Bahaban  
[May God Protect You]

When speaking with the Primate, you address him as Surpazan Hayr or Your Eminence.

When addressing a letter to the Primate, the following form should be used:

His Eminence  
Archbishop Torkom Manoogian  
Primate  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America  
630 Second Avenue  
New York City, NY 10016-4885

Your Eminence:

I respectfully request the attention of Your Eminence on the . . .

[remaining body of letter]

[close with]

Your obedient servant,  
or  
Most respectfully,

**Celibate Clergy**

When greeting a celibate member of the clergy, you say while bowing down to kiss his hand:

Asdvadz Oknagan, Hayr Soorp  
[May God Help You, Holy Father]

When speaking with a celibate member of the clergy, you address him as Hayr Soorp or Father.

When addressing a letter, always use: The Very Reverand Father . . .  
Close the letter with: Respectfully yours,

**Married Clergy**

When greeting a married member of the clergy, you say:

Orhnia, Der  
[Bless Me, Father]

When speaking with a married member of the clergy, you address him as Der Hayr or Father.

When addressing a letter to a married member of the clergy, always use: The Reverand Father . . . Close the letter with: Respectfully yours,

**Diocesan Executives**

When addressing letters to Diocesan Executives, always use the following forms:

Ms. Syraun Palvetzian  
Diocesan Executive Director  
Diocese of the Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10016-4885

Mr. Douglas Tashjian  
ACYOA Executive Secretary  
Diocese of the Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10016-4885

Use the same form for the Department of Religious Education, etc.

**ACYOA Central Council**

Use the following form when addressing letters to Council members:

Ator Perian  
Chairman  
ACYOA Central Council  
(street)  
(city/state/zip)

Tram Kopekian  
Treasurer  
ACYOA Central Council  
(street)  
(city/state/zip)



**ACYOA Chapters**

Use the following form when addressing letters to Chapter Chairmen:

Medz Baronian  
Chairman  
Choorvliet ACYOA Seniors  
(street)  
(city/state/zip)

**REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES**

All expenses incurred while performing duties related to the ACYOA Central Council are to be reimbursed by the Organization. Reimbursement forms, along with actual receipts (or copies of actual receipts), should be sent to the Council Treasurer on a monthly basis. A reimbursement check should be mailed by the Treasurer within two weeks of the receipt of a reimbursement form and receipts.

Reimbursement may be made for the following:

**Travel:** Council meetings, parish visitations, General Assembly, program coordination, regional conferences (in designated region), or for any other specific reason decided upon by the Central Council.

Reimbursement for driving will be made at the rate of \$.\_\_\_\_\_ per mile.

**Lodging:** Council meetings, parish visitations, General Assembly, program coordination, regional conferences (in designated region), or for any other specific reason decided upon by the Central Council.

Lodging for Council meetings and the General Assembly shall be based upon \_\_\_\_\_.

**Meals:** Up to \$\_\_\_\_\_ a day for: Council meetings, parish visitations, program coordination, or for any other specific reason decided upon by the Council.

General Assembly: Cost of package plan.

Regional Conferences: If the meeting is held in conjunction with a breakfast or luncheon and the host chapter is unable to make an expenditure, this may be considered.