

National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.

45 Main Street, Suite 606

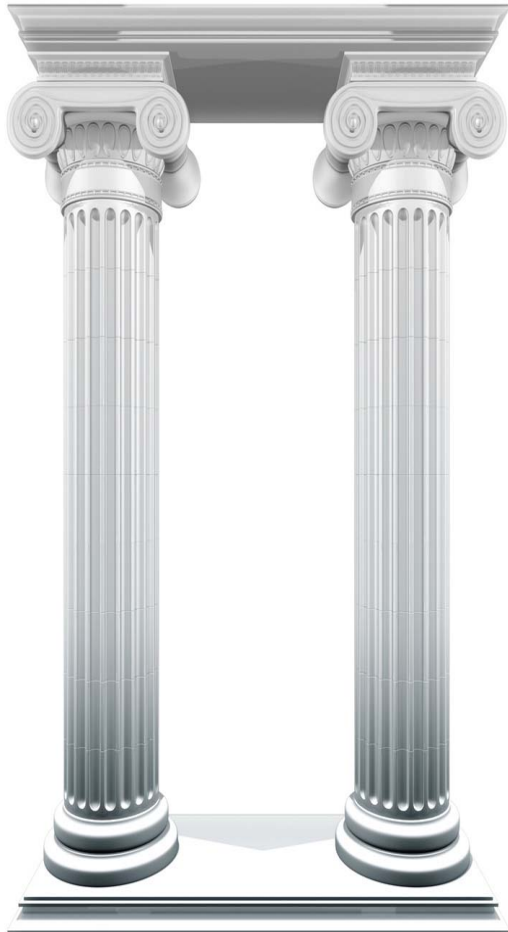
Brooklyn, NY 11201

State Minutes & State Constituency – What's the Connection?

Rationale for this communication: With new people coming into state association leadership roles each year, it is necessary to have ongoing communication to ensure compliance with annual constituency requirements. The NSNA Board of Directors has developed this handout to educate state association leaders with clear, concise and easy to understand instructions. The tool below is to assist state NSNA chapter leaders understand what is **REQUIRED** and **WHY**, as well as, what happens if a state is non-compliant. Plus, we included recommendations to make smooth transitions year after year.

When is Official NSNA Constituency Status granted?

State constituency is granted annually at delegate credentialing which takes place at the NSNA Convention in April. Requirements include the following: full set of Board minutes and Annual Membership Meeting for the previous calendar year; completed and signed Official Application for NSNA Constituency Status, current Board of Director's roster, and the state association's bylaws.



Remember minutes are a legal document

Why does NSNA require copies of State Board and Annual Meeting Minutes?

State minutes are legal documents that may be subpoenaed as evidence in court; by the state District Attorney's office; and by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); as well as by other legal jurisdictions.

Non-profit status: minutes may be required to apply for and renew non-profit status (check with your state's Secretary of State Office for details).

NSNA collects state association dues and is therefore required to produce approved, signed state association minutes as requested by the Independent Auditor and the IRS.

NSNA must comply with more stringent IRS requirements implemented after the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks and Sarbanes-Oxley Legislation (post Enron) to document the legitimacy of state associations: minutes, rosters, and bylaws are acceptable documentation.

State association minutes, bylaws, and rosters are saved by NSNA and added to state association archives to assist them to locate past minutes and as a historical record for nursing history. NSNA has helped many state SNAs recover these important documents in time of need.

What is the REQUIREMENT regarding State minutes?

State associations are required to submit approved, signed Board of Director and Annual Membership Meeting minutes to NSNA. Minutes may be submitted as an attachment to an email to Cathy@nsna.org. NSNA will accept electronic submission via email of approved signed state minutes from the states in which this is acceptable by law; in states where electronic signatures are not acceptable by law, state associations may submit one signed hard copy and email the unsigned electronic file to NSNA. NSNA requires that the

secretary (or another Board member who took the minutes in the secretary's absence) sign the meeting minutes after they are approved. The president may also sign the minutes.

Note that typically, minutes become official at the next meeting when they are approved. Since the board and annual meeting minutes are important legal documents that can have unforeseen consequences, the association would be wise to seek legal advice about how to keep and maintain minutes according to applicable State law.

***Recommendation:** Once minutes are approved and signed, place the original copy in safe keeping and submit a copy to NSNA. Set up a check-off calendar to show when minutes have been submitted and by whom.*

What if we don't hold a meeting every month?

Please be sure to inform NSNA of the months when no meeting are held. The secretary should document in each set of minutes when the next meeting is to be held.

Can NSNA collect State Association dues for non-constituents?

NSNA is authorized to collect dues only for states that have met the requirements for Official NSNA Constituency status. If a state association is not an official NSNA constituent, NSNA will not have the legal right to collect and reimburse dues to the respective states. In addition, the state association will not be eligible to have a delegate seated in the House of Delegates at the Annual NSNA Convention. **Note that individual schools within the state are not affected. Thus, it is imperative for state association Board members and consultants to work together to meet these constituency requirements and ensure state dues revenue, constituency status, and delegate representation.**

If a State loses constituency, how is it regained?

Once the criteria and requirements are met, the state must re-apply for constituency the following year.

***Recommendation:** Incorporate this tool into the activities of New Officer Transition and Information sharing.*

***Recommendation:** Incorporate these requirements in your state's bylaws to ensure accountability and policy continuity.*

***Recommendation:** Contact NSNA immediately when difficulties are identified to reduce potential for ineligibility of constituency status.*

For more information and instructions on how to submit minutes, please go to www.nsna.org; choose Publications/Guidelines for Planning/ Secretaries Handbook. Also, another great resource document - *Tips for SNA Secretaries: Frequently Asked Questions* which can be found on the Secretary/Treasurer web page, which is under Elected Officials/Board of Directors on the www.NSNA.org website or you may e-mail nsna@nsna.org.