National Association for Home Care & Hospice  
Forum of State Associations  
Operating Guidelines

I. Preamble

In the interest of integrating state home care and hospice issues with national policy, the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) created the Forum of State Associations (hereinafter called the “Forum”). The Forum of State Associations is a membership section of the National Association for Home Care & Hospice established for the purposes set out heretofore. The Forum is governed by the NAHC bylaws and a set of Guidelines created with input from the Forum and approved by the NAHC Board of Directors. The NAHC Board of Directors continues to encourage input and suggestions for the refinement and establishment of NAHC policy and procedures from the Forum. However, the NAHC Board is the governing body of the association, and the Board retains sole authority to establish policy for NAHC and all its subdivisions.

Because NAHC considers unity of purpose, coordinated political strategy, and industry cohesiveness essential at all government levels to achieve the major health care policy changes sought by the NAHC membership, members of the Forum are uniquely important associates of NAHC and its affiliate organizations. Accordingly, it is in the mutual best interest of NAHC and the Forum to work together as partners. NAHC envisions that this partnership will entail a mutual sharing of political, technical and informational resources as well as, where appropriate, the sharing of NAHC financial resources generated by joint programming. This partnership will benefit NAHC and the Forum by strengthening each other’s respective roles, and consequently enabling them to build a strong, unified national voice for the adoption of policies which promote the independence of Americans who, with a combination of health and related services, will be able to remain in the dignity of their homes and communities.

II. Vision Statement

Together, NAHC and the state associations are a powerful, unified voice for home care and hospice providers and recipients. This partnership maximizes state home care and hospice associations’ ability to serve members, seize opportunities for growth and advancement, optimize their potential, and assume their rightful role as the predominant voice of health care in their respective states. NAHC’s strength is increased and enhanced by the unity that is achieved through the participation of the state associations.

III. Mission Statement

The mission of the Forum is to provide state associations access to information, resources, and support that will assist their efforts to promote and strengthen home care and hospice at the state and national levels.
IV. Objectives

The NAHC Forum of State Associations has been established to achieve objectives which are in the mutual best interest of home care and hospice providers at the state and national levels. The objectives of the Forum shall be to work in concert with NAHC to:

A. Recommend legislative, regulatory, and legal actions which benefit the interests of the home care and hospice community;
B. Provide the opportunity for networking and information sharing among those who govern state associations;
C. Enhance communication at all levels within the home care and hospice community and to improve public education;
D. Collaborate on data collection and research efforts to: disseminate and share data collected; create educational materials; and assist members with business development; and
E. Offer opportunities for leadership development for staff and elected leaders of the state associations.

V. Operational Guidelines

A. Membership

Membership in the Forum shall be composed of organizations that have been accepted as State Association members in NAHC (see NAHC Bylaws Article III, Section 1(e) and Article III, Section 2).

B. Conflicts of Interests

The Forum, like all other NAHC affiliates, is bound to promote and preserve the unity between NAHC and its membership. The Forum and its officers may not take positions or actions on behalf of the forum or NAHC which are in conflict with the NAHC positions as established by the Board of Directors. However, nothing in the effort to promote unity on national positions shall negate the right of individual state associations to take positions that reflect the position and values professed by the leadership of the individual state association in the interest of serving their members.

C. Duties and Responsibilities

1. To promote unity within the hospice and home care community;
2. To work with NAHC to recommend and resolve legislative issues that have national implications, in concert with NAHC’s Legislative Blueprint for Action.
3. Whenever possible, educate State Congressional delegation members regarding critical national home care and hospice issues and advocate on behalf of those national issues.
4. To work with NAHC to resolve regulatory issues that have national implications, in concert with NAHC’s Regulatory Blueprint for Action;
5. To work with NAHC and its Center for Health Care Law in bringing legal actions that have state and national implications on behalf of clients, beneficiaries and providers;
6. To assist in a collaborative effort to collect and support data and conduct research at the state and national level;
7. To participate in advancing public information and a positive image for home care and hospice;
8. To support NAHC membership recruitment and retention efforts;
9. To work with their respective NAHC Regional Board representatives to enhance communication and effectiveness at a regional level;
10. To pay their respective State Association Membership dues to NAHC; and
11. To provide the NAHC Chairman and the NAHC Board, reports of its meetings including forwarding of any recommendations on policies or programs for consideration and action by the NAHC Board.

D. Forum Membership Benefits (Membership benefits include but are not limited to the following items.)

1. Representation on the NAHC Board of Directors;
2. The ability to elect Forum officers;
3. Representation on the NAHC Nominating Committee;
4. Participation in revenue sharing opportunities
5. Priority attention to requests for NAHC speakers at state meetings;
6. Eligibility to secure Directors and Officers liability insurance coverage as riders of the NAHC blanket policy;
7. Eligibility to serve on NAHC standing and special committees;
8. Access to public relations materials;
9. Access to group rates on NAHC publications;
10. Eligibility to nominate candidates for NAHC Awards including the State Legislator of the Year Award;
11. Attendance at an orientation session for new Forum representatives to NAHC;
12. Access to NAHC periodicals, including, but not limited to, NAHC Report, Caring Magazine, Hospice Forum and Homecare News; and
13. Participation in special surveys of interest to the membership.
VI. Forum Meetings

A. Time, Place and Notice

1. There shall be two regular meetings of the Forum held each year at a time and place to coincide with the NAHC Policy Conference in the spring and the NAHC Annual Meeting in the fall. The meetings shall consist of a business meeting and such educational sessions as determined by the Forum Executive Committee. Additional meetings of the Forum may be called at the discretion of the Chairman of the NAHC Board of Directors and or the Chair of the Forum.

2. Announcement of the time, place and agenda of Forum business meetings will be made at least 30 days prior to the meeting. The agenda of the meeting shall be set by the Forum Chair in consultation with the Forum Executive Committee or designated Planning Committee, NAHC Staff and the NAHC Board Chair. Forum members may submit agenda items for consideration by sending them to the Forum Chair.

B. Governance


2. At each Forum meeting, the Forum Secretary shall record all members in attendance and take minutes of the proceedings.

3. The Forum shall be led by an Executive Committee which shall consist of the Chair and two other elected officers, Vice Chair and Secretary (elected according to Section VII of these Guidelines). Up to Five (5) additional members of the Forum shall be appointed by the Forum Chair, taking into consideration geographical representation, a diversity of State Association size, Board Executives or Presidents/Chairs, and ability and willingness to serve by both Association Executives and/or Presidents/Chairman, etc. The Executive Committee shall meet at the discretion of the Forum Chair.

4. The Forum Chair shall appoint such committees or taskforces as are deemed necessary to conduct Forum business and they shall meet according to the needs of said committee or taskforce.

C. Quorum

The Forum shall operate as a committee of the whole. At any officially called business meeting of the Forum, one-third of the Forum members shall constitute a quorum. To effect any action requiring Forum membership approval, a majority of votes present and entitled to be cast at such meeting shall be required.

D. Voting
Each Forum State Association member is entitled to cast one vote on actions requiring membership approval. At all meetings of the Forum, voting shall be in person by the designated representative of the State Association. When more than one person is present and representing the same State Association the voting privilege will be given first to the State Association’s paid executive. In the event there is no paid executive the voting privilege will be given to the Association’s Board President/Chairperson.

VII. Officers

A. Officers

1. Officers of the Forum are the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.
2. Chair -
   a. The Chair shall be elected thru the NAHC election process and shall serve as the Forum of State Associations section representative on the NAHC Board of Directors and shall preside over meetings of the Forum.
3. Vice Chair –
   a. The Vice-Chair shall be elected thru the Forum election process.
   b. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chairman. (See NAHC Bylaws Article VII-(b) Vice Chairman).
4. Secretary –
   a. The Secretary shall be elected thru the Forum election process.
   b. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping minutes of Forum meetings.

B. Eligibility

1. In conformance with NAHC Bylaws, to serve as an officer of the Forum, individuals must be NAHC members, an executive director, or president or chair, or past-president or chair of a State Association Member.
2. Any officer who leaves their qualifying position in the respective State Association or whose state association does not renew NAHC membership shall tender their resignation as an officer of the Forum.

C. Term of Office

1. Officers of the Forum shall serve a two-year term following the annual meeting at which they are elected.
2. Officers may serve a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms.
3. Appointed members of the Executive Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Chair.
D. Nominations

1. Forum Chair and NAHC Nominating Committee Member –
   a. The slate of candidates for Chairman of the Forum and NAHC Nominating Committee (no more than two candidates for each position) shall be selected by the NAHC Nominating Committee which is composed of representatives of each of NAHC’s auspices, and elected at-large by the full NAHC membership, in accordance with a set of criteria and standards for candidate selection as approved by the NAHC Board of Directors.
   b. Nominations for Forum Chair and NAHC Nominating Committee may be submitted by any member in good standing for consideration by the NAHC Nominating Committee.

2. Forum Vice-Chair and Secretary –
   a. The slate of candidates for Vice-Chair and Secretary (no more than two for each position) shall be selected by the Forum Nominating Committee and presented to the Forum members during the regular Forum election.

E. Voting

1. Chairman:
   a. Voting for Chairman of the Forum shall be consistent with policies prescribed for all NAHC voting sections.
   b. Forum ballots shall be sent as part of NAHC annual balloting process by mail to official Forum Voting members.

   c. Completed ballots shall be returned to a certified accounting firm.

2. Vice Chairman and Secretary:
   a. Vice Chairman and Secretary shall be elected by the Forum on alternating years from the election of the Chairman

3. Balloting
   a. Balloting will be conducted by mail to Forum voting members.
   b. The State Executive shall be the voting member unless otherwise specified to the Forum Executive Committee.
   c. NAHC Voting members are given 15 working days to mark their ballots and return them in the provided pre-addressed envelope.
   d. Completed ballots shall be returned to the independent third party election official contracted by NAHC for counting and certification.
   e. Election results shall be opened and read at the Forum Business Meeting held during the NAHC Annual Meeting.
f. Failure to comply with the ballot return mail instructions shall result in an invalid ballot. Using a copy of the original ballot shall result in an invalid ballot. Write-in ballots may not be counted per existing NAHC Bylaws.

g. Each Forum State Association member is entitled to cast one vote by ballot during each annual election. When more than one person represents a State Association the voting privilege is given to that State Association’s paid executive. In the event there is no paid executive the voting privilege will be given to the State Association’s current Board President/Chair.

F. Vacancies

1. Chair –
   a. The Executive Committee shall recommend the appointment of a new Chair who shall serve until the next regular NAHC election.
   
   b. The appointed Chair will be the Forum recommendation to the NAHC Board of Directors to serve as the Forum section designee on the NAHC Board of Directors. If approved by NAHC Board the designee shall serve until the next regular NAHC election.

2. Vice-Chair -
   a. The Forum Chair shall appoint a qualified Forum member to serve as Vice Chair.
   b. The newly appointed Vice-Chair shall serve until the next regular Forum election.

3. Secretary -
   a. The Forum Chair shall appoint a qualified Forum member to fill the unexpired term of the Secretary.
   b. The newly appointed Secretary shall serve until the next regular Forum election.

VIII. Nominating Committee

1. The Forum Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee, consisting of five members, taking into consideration geographical representation, a diversity of State Association size and ability and willingness to serve.
2. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve a single term of one year.
3. The Nominating Committee shall elect a chairperson from among its own members.
4. The Nominating Committee shall be limited to one individual per voting member organization.
5. Vacancies in the Committee shall be filled by appointment by the Forum Chair.
6. Members of the Executive Committee shall not serve on the Nominating Committee.
7. The Nominating Committee, through the Chairperson, reports directly to the Forum membership.
8. For its initial year the Nominating Committee shall consist of five members of the Executive Committee.

IX. NAHC Bylaws

In any matter not addressed by these guidelines, the Forum shall be governed by the NAHC bylaws and where there is ambiguity be resolved by the full NAHC Board. The Forum Operating Guidelines will be automatically amended in the event that changes are made to the NAHC Bylaws.

Approved by the Task force on Forum Operating Guidelines
Adopted by the NAHC Board of Director’s Executive Committee, July 22, 1993
(Revised 1997)
(Revised 2006)
(Revised by Forum - 2008 & Approved by NAHC Board of Directors October 10, 2008)