NAP Body of Knowledge



Education and Training in Parliamentary Procedure
For
Members, Leaders, and Parliamentary Consultants

Parliamentary procedure education for the world

NAP Body of Knowledge: The Standards for Parliamentarians

A clear, consistent foundation for creating pathways of learning.

Have you ever gone to a time-wasting, unproductive, and maybe even disorderly meeting? Since meetings are part of most people's everyday lives, chances are you have been subjected to one or more meetings that make you want to swear off of meetings forever.

This is exactly why the world needs more parliamentary procedure and parliamentarians. The question is how can we get the public to sit up and take notice?

A strong, defined base of knowledge, skills, and practice provides a clear solution. The body of knowledge is the framework for an orderly approach to parliamentary procedure education rather than a haphazard collection of random programs. When you build a house, you need blueprints. The body of knowledge is that blueprint for achieving great people in great meetings.

The body of knowledge helps define what a profession is. It provides consistency on how things are approached and learned. It takes into account the breadth of diversity related to how parliamentary procedure may be used.

Members can use the body of knowledge to decide what to focus on in study and can move from achievement to achievement based on their needs.

Leaders may use the body of knowledge to determine which skills to hone, what knowledge will help them be more effective, and how to become more confident in leading organizations.

The body of knowledge provides parliamentary consultants with the minimum criteria they should master in order to serve their organizations and clients well, and defines the skills and knowledge that must be maintained.

The general public could use it to learn more about what parliamentarians and parliamentary procedure have to offer them.

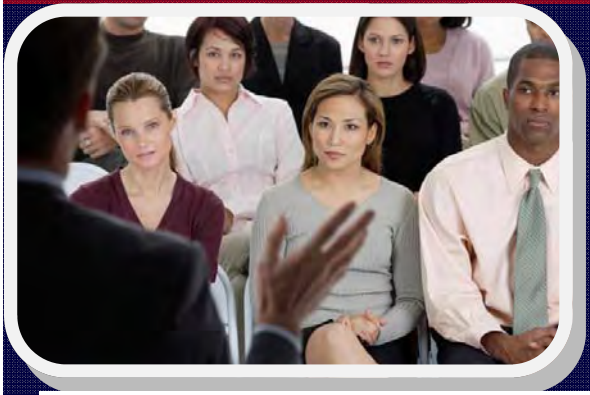
NAP will use the body of knowledge as the guide to create education that helps all members build their knowledge, grow their skills, and attain recognition for their accomplishments.

Every profession needs a body of knowledge to say to the world: This is who we are. This is what we do.

What It Means to You

- Members: Pathways of study leading to certificates of achievement.
- Leaders: Programs in skills and practices that provide confidence in leadership.
- Consultants: Credentials backed up by defined, clear, and consistent standards. Earning and renewing credentials based on standards.
- NAP: Programs of study to build all members' knowledge and skills.





Setting the Standards for Members of Any Organization

What should members of any organization know about parliamentary procedure? What should they be able to do?

Member education is directed at ordinary members of a voluntary society and should cover all aspects of parliamentary procedure needed to participate fully in meetings of an assembly or a committee.

Domain 1: Meetings

Members should understand the basic procedures by which meetings are conducted and be able to introduce, debate, and vote on business in a meeting.

A member should know:

- The role of the presiding officer and the secretary in a meeting.
- Basic rights of members to attend meetings, make motions, speak in debate, and vote.
- That action may not be taken without a quorum.
- The standard order of business.
- How an agenda is adopted.
- How a meeting adjourns or takes a recess.
- How to obtain recognition.
- The six steps for processing a motion.
- The rules of decorum in debate, including germaneness.
- The length and number of speeches permitted in debate.
- Standard vote requirements to adopt a motion.
- How action may be taken by unanimous consent.

A member should be able to:

- Move an amendment to an agenda.
- Draft and move a main motion that is clear and concise.
- Discuss a pending motion while observing normal rules of debate.
- Vote on a pending motion by voice, show of hands, or ballot.

Domain #2: Motions

Members should have the knowledge and skills to use common motions during a meeting.

A member should know:

- The purpose and effect of the following motions: amend, refer, postpone, limit and extend limits of debate, previous question, request for information, reconsider, and rescind and amend something previously adopted.
- Common forms of amendment, including the motions to add, to insert, to strike out, and to strike out and insert words.
- The distinction between primary and secondary amendments.
- The distinction between standing and special committees.
- Common methods of appointing or electing committees.
- Basic committee procedure, including the role of the chairman, rules of debate in committees, and the manner in which a committee reports.
- Limitations on renewing a motion at the same meeting.
- The purpose and effect of giving previous notice of a motion.

A member should be able to:

- Draft a primary amendment that is germane to a main motion.
- Move, in proper form, the motions to amend, refer, postpone, limit and extend limits of debate, previous question, request for information, reconsider, and rescind or amend something previously adopted.
- State, for each motions listed above, whether it is debatable and the vote required for its adoption.
- Given two ranking motions from those listed above, determine which takes precedence over the other.
- Present a committee report containing a recommendation.

Domain #3: Rules

Members should know how to read the rules of the organization and be able to demand enforcement of those rules.

A member should know:

- The role of bylaws and other custom rules, the role of the parliamentary authority, and the distinction between them.
- The vote needed to adopt or amend bylaws, special rules of order, and standing rules.
- The standard organization of bylaws.
- The role of bylaw provisions in nominations and elections.

A member should be able to

- Raise a parliamentary inquiry.
- Raise a point of order.
- Appeal a decision of the chair.





Setting the Standards for Leaders of Any Organization

What should leaders of any organization know about parliamentary procedure? What should they be able to do?

Leader education is particularly directed towards any member who is, or may become, a chairman of a major committee, a director, or an officer of a voluntary society and should cover all aspects of parliamentary procedure that a voluntary society would ordinarily require.

Domain 1: Conduct of Meetings

Leaders should have the knowledge and skills to prepare an agenda and chair a meeting of an assembly or executive board.

A leader should know:

- The precedence of motions; ranking motions.
- The vote needed to adopt common motions.
- The rules of debate and how debate is conducted; which common motions are debatable.
- How to maintain order when presiding.
- The duty of the chair to remain publicly impartial while presiding.
- The chair's responsibility to ensure that all members know what is being debated and voted on.
- How to take the vote by voice, by show of hands, by rising, and by ballot.
- The standard order of business.
- How agendas are created, adopted, and amended.
- The difference among the various types of meetings.
- Rules and limitations relating to the conduct of electronic meetings and electronic voting.
- How to handle points of order and appeals.
- The basic types of rules and how their ranking order.

A leader should be able to:

- Demonstrate effective and efficient presiding techniques including the handling of common motions:
    - Main motion, amendments, postpone to a certain time, commit or refer.
    - Limit or extend limits of debate, close debate or previous question,.
    - Reconsider, rescind, amend something previously adopted.
    - Point of order, appeal, and suspend the rules.

Domain 2: Minutes and Other Records

Leaders should have the knowledge and skills to prepare and approve minutes.

A leader should know:

- The proper contents of minutes.
- How a minutes approval committee functions.
- How minutes are approved and amended before and after adoption.
- The different types of records—including financial records—kept by an organization.

A leader should be able to:

- Take notes during a meeting and prepare minutes from them.
- Approve and correct minutes.
- Prepare and give a treasurer's report.

Domain 3: Nominations and Elections

Leaders should have the knowledge and skills to conduct nominations and elections for office.

A leader should know:

- The basic methods of nominations.
- The rules for motions relating to methods of nominations.
- The rules for motions relating to methods of voting and the polls.
- Procedure for conducting ballot elections.
- Procedure for conducting viva voce elections.
- Rules relating to bylaws and elections.

A leader should be able to:

- Count ballots.
- Prepare a teller's report.
- Preside over nominations and election by voice or ballot.



Domain 4: Committees

Leaders should understand the relationship between a committee and the full membership and be able to lead a major committee.

A leader should know:

- The difference between a standing committee and a special committee.
- The methods of appointing committees.
- How a committee conducts business .
- When and how a committee reports.
- The ex officio member's role in committee meetings.
- The duties and operation of common committees .
- How to create a timeline and establish reasonable goals for a committee.



A leader should be able to:

- Chair a committee meeting.
- Create a committee plan of work.
- Prepare and deliver a committee report.

Domain 5: Officers and Boards

Leaders should understand the relationship between individual officers, the board, and the membership, and the duties of each.

A leader should know:

- The duties of officers and other board members.
- How a board conducts business, including rules for small boards.
- Limitations on the powers of officers and boards.
- The role and value of a parliamentarian and how to work with a parliamentarian.
- When and how officers and boards report.
- How to work with one's fellow officers and one's successors.
- How to create a timeline and establish reasonable goals for a board or for an officer's term.

A leader should be able to:

- Create and present reports.
- Write and review basic financial reports.

Domain 6: Bylaws And Other Governing Documents

A leader should understand the form and function of bylaws and other governing documents and how to amend governing documents.

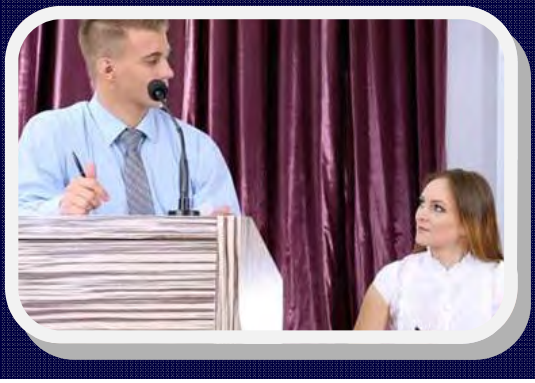
A leader should know:

- The hierarchy of governing documents
- The standard contents of bylaws and other governing documents.
- Which rules must be placed in each type of governing document.
- How governing documents are amended.
- Limitations on suspending the bylaws.
- The importance of consulting the bylaws and other governing documents.

A leader should be able to:

Draft a bylaw amendment.

Give previous notice of a bylaw amendment.



Setting the Standards for Parliamentary Consultants

What should parliamentary consultants know about parliamentary procedure? What should they be able to do?

Consultant education is designed to prepare a parliamentarian to serve as a paid or unpaid consultant to client organizations of which he or she is not a member.

Domain 1: Motions and Meeting-Related Procedures

A Consultant must:

- Apply a thorough knowledge of main, subsidiary, privileged, and incidental motions and of motions that bring a question again before the assembly, including each motion's purpose and standard descriptive characteristics, to circumstances encountered in a meeting.
- Apply a thorough knowledge of parliamentary rules and procedures to the conduct of meetings, including rules and procedures related to:
  - Quorum, the standard order of business, agendas, programs, and orders of the day;
  - Minutes, including their proper form and the procedures for approving and correcting them;
  - Recognition of members, including assignment of the floor when more than one member claims it and interruption of a member assigned the floor;
  - Handling motions and taking action without a motion by unanimous consent;
  - Debate, including permitted length and number of speeches, decorum, the chair's participation in debate, discussion outside of debate, and principles of debatability of motions;
  - Voting, including standard and unusual bases for decisions, rights and obligations in voting, and actions that would render a vote null and void;
  - The different types of business meetings and the relationship of meeting and session;
  - Motions that are not in order, including dilatory motions and improper motions;
  - Renewability of a motion during the same session or at a later session;
  - Previous notice of motions and giving proper notice of meetings; and
  - The conduct business in board and committees, including modified rules for small boards.

Domain 2: Governing Documents

A Consultant must:

- Identify the types and appropriate content of governing documents and the procedures necessary to adopt, amend, revise or rescind them.
- Conduct review of governing documents to ensure consistency, clarity, and relevance to the organization's needs.
- Determine how higher authorities (statutes, parent bodies, etc.) will impact an organization's documents.
- Write clear and logical governing documents.
- Write scripts for adopting, revising, and amending bylaws.
- Interpret governing documents according to standard principles.
- Identify which rules may be suspended and the procedures for suspending them.
- Distinguish between customs and written rules, and advise clients when customs and rules conflict.

Domain 3: Serving as Parliamentarian in Meetings & Conventions

A Consultant must:

- Help the client before the meeting to prepare an agenda, to review meeting procedures, and to plan solutions to anticipated problems.
- Advise the client on drafting and adopting rules to govern the meeting.
- Train and assist the presiding officer to preside effectively.
- Write scripts for the conduct of the meeting and for specific motions.
- Provide parliamentary advice to the client during the meeting.
- Meet with the client after the meeting to assist with the drafting of minutes, to assist with the incorporation of adopted amendments into the bylaws, to review the conduct of the meeting, and to answer client questions.

Domain 4: Teaching

Consultant must:

- Design and present effective and appealing educational programs.
- Apply basic adult learning theory.
- Measure participant knowledge and performance.



Domain 5: Business and Ethics

A Consultant must:

- Comply with the Joint NAP/AIP Code of Ethics.
- Comply with local business legal requirements.
- Develop a business plan.
- Prepare business proposals, contracts, and invoices for professional services, and establish a method of setting fees.

Domain 6: Governance

A Consultant must:

- Advise clients regarding the rights and responsibilities of a board.
- Advise clients regarding the responsibilities of individual officers and individual board members.
- Advise clients regarding methods and considerations in the appointment and instruction of committees and regarding limitations on the authority of committees.
- Distinguish between various types of governance structures.

Domain 7: Consulting Skills

A Consultant must:

- Work with client to solve problems.
- Work effectively with other consultants and staff.
- Advise client on and write scripts for disciplinary procedures including removal of officers.
- Prepare formal parliamentary opinions in writing.
- Answer parliamentary questions orally.

Domain 8: Nominations, Elections, and Voting

A Consultant must:

- Advise clients on and write scripts for the conduct of nominations, elections, and voting by standard and alternate methods.
- Organize and instruct tellers.
- Handle election challenges.





Definitions

Body of Knowledge: A standard that defines and categorizes the skills, knowledge, competencies, and abilities of an individual in order to be successful in a given field or profession.

Competencies: The ability of an individual to do a specific task properly.

Domains: A broad knowledge area that contains the grouping of various tasks or jobs that relate to that area.

NAP Strategic Plan for Education

Goal: NAP will provide educational resources and skills training to the public and members at all levels of interest.

Strategies:

- Identify core competencies to develop standardized expertise at each level of learning.
- Create a defined body of knowledge.
- Develop curriculum for each level of proficiency.
- Develop educational materials in a number of different media for a variety of audiences.
- Develop a cadre of teachers.

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