

About this Manual

The *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* contain an overview of the policies, practices, and work standard for employees at the local chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

The contents are intended to establish personnel standards for both employees and management and not intended or written to be all-inclusive. The NASW National Office Chapter reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate, or change any of its policies or procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice. The *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* provide a general articulation of the policies, practices and work standards for NASW Chapter offices. Chapters, in consultation with the National Office, may add to or modify provisions based on local needs and circumstances. In addition, in consultation with the National Office, the Chapter, reserves the right to modify or terminate any of its health insurance, pensions or other benefit programs or to require or increase the premiums an employee may be required to contribute for these programs.

Nothing contained in this manual should be construed as creating a contract or a guarantee of employment for any specific duration. Whereas it is hoped that the relationship with the Chapter will be mutually rewarding and long term, either an employee or the Chapter may terminate this relationship at any time.

The personnel policies, practices and work standards contained within this Manual supersede all previous policies, January 2002, and the changes made with this distribution will take effect on the first day of July 1, 2004.

Introduction

The revised *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* were approved by the national Board of Directors at its October 26-27, 2001 meeting and are the result of a review and discussion of personnel practices and issues in NASW Chapters. Chapter leadership and staff and appropriate National Office staff reviewed the proposed revisions and provided recommendations for changes. The Personnel Policies Committee reviewed all the recommended revisions and presented a final revised version of the Personnel Standards to the national Board of Directors.

The personnel policies and practices contained in the *Standards* define the mutual responsibilities and obligations between the Association and chapter employees. The revised *Standards* are intended to provide assistance to Chapter leadership and staff in establishing a common set of rules and overriding policies. The policies contained in this manual are subject to revision and/or addition as deemed advisable by the national Board of Directors, which has responsibility for formulating and adopting policies to govern personnel practices and conditions of employment for all staff positions in the Association. The policies are not viewed as contractual but provide the framework for chapter personnel decisions. They are changed from time to time according to Association needs. The timeframes set in the standards are goals and may be extended by the chapter if necessary to complete the prescribed tasks.

PERSONNEL POLICIES COMMITTEE 2000-2001

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PART I - SECTION 1

Equal Employment Opportunity

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION* GENERAL POLICY

It is the policy of the National Association of Social Workers (hereinafter "the Association", or "NASW".) to take affirmative action to ensure that women and racial and ethnic minorities** are represented and involved in all areas, including elected and appointed positions, personnel units, and fiscal/business transactions. To establish, implement, and maintain diversity throughout NASW, specific goals and activities apply to all levels in the Association, including national, state, and local offices as well as their subsidiaries.

Ultimate responsibility rests with the National Board of Directors to ensure that this policy is enforced. The National Committee on Women's Issues (NCOWI) and the National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (NCORED) are responsible for monitoring affirmative action.

The Executive Director is responsible for implementing this affirmative action mandate. An Affirmative Action Officer shall be appointed to administer the directive and to report to the Executive Director and to the National Board of Directors. Progress reports are to include a full report of activities and results, as well as recommendations for compliance and goal maintenance.

All National units and Chapters and all National Office and Chapter staff must comply with the Affirmative Action Program.*

SECTION II - NONDISCRIMINATION

STANDARD 1 - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of NASW to implement equal opportunity of employment for all qualified employees and applicants for employment in compliance with federal and state civil rights and equal opportunity laws and the Association's commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action.

1. Consideration will be given to all applicants without regard to race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, nationality, or physical or mental disability (visible or nonvisible). An applicant's political beliefs, residence, or membership in a union or in an organization whose primary purpose is the protection of civil rights or the improvement of living conditions and/or human relations will not be considered in the selection process.
2. NASW will maintain a work environment free of harassment or intimidation based on any of the above reasons. Employees who provide information about discrimination or violation of the Affirmative Action or Equal Employment Opportunity policies or who participate in an investigation of discriminatory practices will not be retaliated against in their conditions of employment.
3. The objective of NASW is to obtain individuals qualified and/or trainable for the position by virtue of job-related standards of education, training, experience, and personal qualifications.

*As referenced in the Affirmative Action Program of NASW. Amended and approved by the National Board of Directors, June 1992. **Racial and ethnic minorities are defined as blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, other Hispanics, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, American

Indians, and Native Alaskans. These categories and designations may be modified to conform with changing designations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

4. NASW will recruit, hire, and promote persons in all job positions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, nationality, age, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.
5. Promotion decisions will be in accord with the principles of equal employment
6. opportunity by imposing only valid requirements for promotional opportunities.
7. All personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, and training will be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, nationality, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.
8. Any issues regarding the application of equal employment opportunity should be reviewed with the NASW Office of Human Resources.

STANDARD 2 - NONDISCRIMINATION: DISABILITY AND VETERAN'S STATUS

It is the policy of NASW to hire, promote, and advance in employment on a nondiscriminatory basis qualified Vietnam-era and special disabled veterans and persons with disabilities (visible or nonvisible).

NASW routinely reviews and will modify its personnel policies, practices, and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely affect the hiring and advancement of Vietnam-era and special disabled veterans and persons with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided in the hiring process or in employment for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. As a government contractor and under its nondiscrimination policy, NASW will take appropriate action to employ and advance in employment qualified persons with disabilities. Any questions arising under the application of this Standard shall be reviewed with the NASW Office of Human Resources.

STANDARD 3 - SELECTION

The selection of personnel shall be on the basis of valid criteria and competence designed to ensure appointments of individuals best qualified to perform the Association's functions.

Interpretation

Selection for a position shall take into consideration the individual's qualifications, experience, training, education, and prior NASW employment. The Association shall not discriminate against any applicant because of the applicant's residence, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, nationality, ethnic origin, political belief, union affiliation, or disability (visible or nonvisible).

Guidelines for Administration

In recruiting personnel, the Association shall make known to prospective and current employees the following:

- specific requirements of vacant position
- qualifications sought in candidates for the position
- personnel practices and salary range applicable to position.

For positions such as word processors, clerks, and editors for which a test is required, the test will be approved in advance by the NASW Office of Human Resources and administered to all external and internal candidates. Tests will be validated to determine whether they have an

adverse impact on any particular groups of employees under the EEOC guidelines. Test scores will be considered in conjunction with information available from other sources on the applicant's past performance, experience, education, self-sufficiency, dependability, leadership and other qualities important to success on the job. Reasonable accommodations will be provided if appropriately required.

Applicants will be screened to determine who should become candidates for the position. Job candidates may be interviewed by more than one person. The interview process shall be conducted so as not to show bias in the selection on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, marital status, and age. Any condition under which an employee's status is changed by the Association shall be stated in an exchange of letters between the employee and the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director, from the President of the Chapter Board of Directors.

SECTION III – EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND PROVISIONS

STANDARD 4 - EMPLOYMENT

An applicant selected to fill a position shall receive written confirmation of appointment, title, salary and starting date, information regarding the Introductory Period, statement that any job offer is contingent on production of required Immigration Reform, and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 documentation, and a description of duties.

Guidelines for Implementation

The applicant shall indicate that the terms of the appointment letter are acceptable by signing a copy of the letter. The appointment letter shall be made part of the employee's personnel file. The appointment letter shall indicate that it is not a contract of employment. (See Appendix A for Sample Employment Letter. See Appendix C for contractual arrangements.) Contracts for independent contractor/consultants must be reviewed and approved by the NASW Office of Chapter Services.

STANDARD 5 - RELEASE OF EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Disclosure of employee information to persons outside of NASW (verification of employment, salary, or other confidential information) will be permitted on written request and authorization by a current or former employee.

Guidelines for Implementation

Requests for factual information (dates of employment, salary, position held, and so forth) about a current or former employee shall be referred to the Executive Director or his or her designee for response. A response to a request for verification of employee information may not be provided without written authorization from the current or former employee detailing the information to be provided. Only information that can be verified by documentation shall be released.

STANDARD 6 - PERSONNEL FILES

A personnel file is maintained for each employee. The file is available for the employee's examination.

Guidelines for Implementation

Each employee's personnel file is regarded as confidential information and is treated as such. The only persons with access to the employee's file shall be in the employee's chain of supervision and individuals handling personnel files. Staff personnel files shall contain:

- application and resume
- letters of appointment, agreement or contract, and acceptance
- job description
- copies of transcript, diplomas
- certificates and licenses
- ongoing performance evaluations
- warning letters and records of all disciplinary actions any memoranda or documents related to performance
- memoranda concerning unusual job changes
- warning letters and records of all disciplinary actions
- leave of absence information
- time sheets
- salary actions
- documentation required by state or private regulatory agencies

The Executive Director's personnel file shall be confidentially maintained by the President of the Chapter Board of Directors.

STANDARD 7 - JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A written job description shall be maintained for each staff position. In the event that new positions are created through expansion or reorganization, written job descriptions will be prepared.

Job descriptions are formalized documents containing concise and factual information regarding the minimum requirements to perform a job satisfactorily (see Appendix B, model Job Description for Executive Director, for format and explanation of and examples of factors).

Guidelines for Implementation

Job descriptions identify the basic requirements of the job and not the various aptitudes and abilities of persons performing the job. Job descriptions must be reviewed annually or during staff changes for validity that they reflect actual job content.

STANDARD 8 - NEPOTISM

Persons related to or living in a spousal/domestic partner relationship with a current employee at the time of employment will not be employed in the same Chapter office.

Guidelines for Implementation

Relatives are defined as those in the immediate family, mates (defined as a person with whom the employee is living on a continuous basis), parents, grandparents, siblings, and children. When persons become related and work or volunteer for the Association, one relative may not supervise another relative. Related staff or volunteers will not be involved in evaluating each other's job performance or in making recommendations for salary adjustments, promotions, or other budget recommendations.

STANDARD 9 - EMPLOYMENT STATUS

There shall be an Introductory Period for newly hired, newly promoted, or transferred employees. The status of each regular full-time or part-time employee will be classified in terms of hours worked and applicable federal and state laws.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Introductory Period

Unless otherwise stipulated in these *Standards*, the introductory period for all employees, exempt and nonexempt (see Appendix E for definition) shall be four (4) months (see Standard 38 for the Introductory Period for Executive Directors.) The Introductory Period may be extended by the Association for an additional two (2) months for all positions.

- During the introductory or extended period, employment may be terminated by the Association or by the employee without cause, without prejudice, and without recourse. Before completing the Introductory Period, the employee shall receive a performance evaluation. The review shall be conducted by the employee's immediate supervisor. Successive appraisals will be given annually on the employee's anniversary date of hire.
- A current employee who is promoted to another position is subject to satisfactory completion of the Introductory Period. Employees shall accrue annual and sick leave but may not use annual leave until satisfactory completion of the Introductory Period unless other arrangements have been agreed to at the time of hire.

2. Regular Full-Time Employees

A regular full-time employee has satisfactorily completed the Introductory Period and works a full basic workweek of no less than thirty-five (35) hours, with no prior agreed on time limit in the duration of employment.

3. Regular Part-Time Employees

A regular part-time employee has satisfactorily completed the Introductory Period but works a workweek of less than thirty-five (35) hours, with no agreed on time limit in the duration of employment.

4. Exempt Employees

Exempt employees are not subject to the overtime provisions defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (see Appendix E).

5. Nonexempt Employees

Nonexempt employees are subject to the overtime pay provisions of the FLSA regardless of individual titles or duties. Any employee who does not meet the qualifications of exemption is included in the term nonexempt.

6. Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are engaged for a specified period of time. Length of employment, scope of the job, duties, and compensation are clearly defined. No benefits accrue to this category.

7. Independent Contractors/Consultants

Contractors/consultants are contracted under a written agreement on a time-limited basis to fulfill the terms and obligations of a specific assignment. Contracts must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Chapter Services. The contractor/consultant is responsible for the details and methods of work performed, hires his or her own employees, provides his or her own office and tools, regulates his or her own hours, receives no benefits, has no taxes deducted and is responsible for paying his or her own taxes, and has proof of coverage of Workers Compensation insurance (see Appendix C for more information). A Form 1099 will be issued to for tax purposes.

8. Secondary Employment

Employees shall have the right to engage in secondary employment as long as such employment does not interfere with their responsibilities to the Chapter or entail conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as holding two positions in which decision making in one position can be considered influenced by the interests of the other position_or when the demands of the second position interferes with the assignments of the first.

When secondary employment is to take place during regular working hours, the employee must obtain advance approval from the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director, from the President of the Chapter Board of Directors, who will consider job obligations and responsibilities and potential conflicts of interest. The employee may elect to charge approved time for secondary employment activities against either leave without pay or annual leave.

STANDARD 10 - ANNIVERSARY DATE

The employees anniversary date is the original date of hire.

Seniority status in the Chapter as applied to most benefits will be determined from the original date of hire and be based on continuous service.

STANDARD 11- SENIORITY

Seniority for the application of Association policies shall generally be based on length of service with the Association, recorded in months and years. If seniority is defined or applied differently in a benefit plan document, the document definition shall take precedence.

Seniority shall be computed from the first day of employment with the Chapter and shall not be considered interrupted by absences for paid or military leave. Seniority does not accrue when an employee is on leave without pay. Chapter and National Office pension plan documents may define length of service differently for the purpose of determining benefits or other coverage under the plan.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Seniority is to be considered in all personnel decisions affecting employees as a means of recognizing and, where appropriate, giving preference to employees with longer periods of service with the Chapter. In promotions, consideration shall be given by the Chapter first to experience and needs of the Chapter, including affirmative action goals, skills, ability, and posted job qualifications, and second to length of service. It is understood, however, that the first factors being equal, seniority shall prevail.
2. Prior Association service is portable for staff moving from employment in a Chapter to the National Office, from the National Office to a Chapter, and from Chapter to Chapter. Service portability applies to the accrual rate of annual and sick leave and is considered for promotions as long as the employment is continuous. The employee's prior service qualifies as time served toward a waiting period for eligibility to enter the new retirement plan. The pension plan documents definition of length of service for calculation of the benefit shall be controlling in the application of the pension plan.

STANDARD 12 - EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Employees will receive orientation to the Chapters policies and procedures, the position for which they have been hired, and to internal and external working relationships.

Orientation for all employees will include basic personnel orientation and introduction, an office/facility resources tour, an overview of the Association's purpose, a review of the *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* and the Affirmative Action policy, National NASW and Chapter history, and program goals and objectives.

Guidelines For Implementation

1. The Executive Director will coordinate orientation sessions. The new employee will learn about the Association, Chapter activities, compensation and benefits, and performance expectations. The employee will receive a copy of the *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* and will be asked to sign a document stating that he or she has received and understood the material contained in it.
2. Orientation for the new Chapter Executive Director is a responsibility shared among the Chapter President, the NASW Office of Chapter Services, and the Council of Chapter Executives.

STANDARD 13 - STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Staff development and training programs shall be based first on the needs of the Chapter and the annual budgetary limitations, and second on the needs and potential contributions of the employee.

A staff development and training program should be developed to ensure that employees are managed, developed, and utilized to meet the Chapters goals.

Guidelines for Implementation

Staff development and training policies and practices will be coordinated, monitored, and evaluated by the Executive Director to ensure equitable distribution within the Chapter.

SECTION IV - LEAVES AND HOLIDAYS

STANDARD 14 - ANNUAL LEAVE (VACATION)

Regular full-time employees are entitled to vacation time off with pay at their prevailing compensation rate. The number of annual leave days earned each year shall be based on the Chapters pay periods. The minimum number of days provided are as follows:

- 1-2 years: 10 days
- 3-6 years (inclusive): 16 days
- 7th year and thereafter: 24 days

Regular part-time employees shall be eligible to receive the same amount of annual leave days as full-time employees on a pro rata basis.

The maximum number of annual leave days employees may carry over is the number of days earned each employment year.

Annual leave is to be provided equitably to all regular full-time and part-time employees. Annual leave accrues from date of hire and cannot be taken until successful completion of the Introductory Period.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Chapters shall determine the carry-over date (either June 30, the end of the fiscal year, or December 31, the end of the calendar year) of annual leave.
2. Regular full-time or part-time employees who resign giving proper notice or who are dismissed for any cause shall receive annual leave earned but not taken during the period of employment. The last day of actual work shall determine the period for calculation of annual leave.

STANDARD 15 - HOLIDAYS

Regular full-time employees shall be granted a minimum of 11 paid holidays each calendar year.

In addition to regular holidays, Chapters may consider allowing regular employees to elect to take an additional special observance holiday or to establish five or six core holidays and a list of floating holidays from which they may choose in advance of use.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, Chapter offices are to be closed the following Monday. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, Chapter offices are to be closed the preceding Friday.

2. When an authorized holiday falls on a workday within an employee's vacation period, the holiday will not be counted against annual leave.
3. Regular part-time employees are eligible to receive holiday leave if a holiday falls on their regularly scheduled workday.
4. Employees who are eligible for overtime pay and who are asked to work on a holiday shall receive an additional one (1) hour of pay for each hour worked.

STANDARD 16 - SICK LEAVE

Regular full-time employees shall be granted annual sick leave with pay at their prevailing compensation rate. The number of days earned per year shall be based on the Chapters pay period. Accrued but unused sick leave is not payable on termination. The minimum number of days provided are as follows:

- 1-2 years: 10 days
- 3-6 years (inclusive): 16 days
- 7th year and thereafter: 24 days

Employees may carry over (at the end of the fiscal or calendar year) the number of days earned each year. Employees who currently have accrued more than the number of days earned each year will not lose or accrue additional days until their leave balance is reduced to the number of days earned per year.

Chapters shall provide sick leave with pay to be used when an employee is not able to work because of illness or when the employees presence is temporarily required to care for members of the immediate family.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Sick leave shall accrue from date of employment.
2. Regular part-time employees shall be eligible to receive the same amount of sick leave as regular full-time employees but on a pro rata basis.
3. Chapters shall reserve the right to request medical certification of sickness or physical examination when it is necessary to determine whether the employee is able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations or without harm to himself or herself or to others; when it is in the employees best interest or for purposes of health, safety, or security in the office; or when such sickness constitutes a possible abuse of sick leave. Abuse of sick leave may result in appropriate personnel action being taken, to include written warning, suspension or termination.
4. Absence due to Workers Compensation claims is not charged against sick leave.

STANDARD 17 - FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Regular full-time and part-time employees shall be eligible for leave in accordance with the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 and its implementing regulations.

Chapters shall provide leave to employees who have worked for at least one (1) year at the time leave is requested and have completed at least 1,250 hours of service during the twelve (12) months preceding the leave request.

Note: state or local laws may provide for additional leave. Consult with the National Office regarding any variations.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Eligible employees may be granted up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave in any twelve (12) month period for the following purposes:
 - For the birth of a child, to care for a newborn child, or upon placement of a child with the

employee for adoption or foster care. This leave will normally be taken in one block of time unless arrangements for intermittent or reduced work schedule are approved by the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director, by the President of the Chapter Board of Directors.

- When the employee is needed to care for a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- When the employee is unable to perform his or her functions due to a serious health condition.

2. Accrued annual and sick leave benefits must be substituted for all or part of any otherwise unpaid FMLA leave. The total of paid and unpaid FMLA leave is twelve (12) weeks in any twelve (12) month period prior to the date leave is to commence. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will serve:

- *Child*: Anyone younger than age 18 who is the employees biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a legally dependent adult child. This may include a child for whom the employee has day-to-day responsibility.
- *Parent*: Biological, foster or adoptive parents, stepparents, legal guardians, or any individual who stood in place of parents for the employee when he or she was a child.
- *Spouse*: A husband or wife as defined by applicable state law.
- *Domestic partner*: a person with whom the employee is living on a continuous basis
- *Serious health condition*: An illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider as outlined under FMLA regulations.

Issues under this section or questions involving the application of FMLA should be addressed to the NASW Office of Human Resources for review (see Appendix D for Procedures for Requesting FMLA).

STANDARD 18 - ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Up to five (5) days of administrative leave per situation shall be granted for personal emergencies such as death or serious illness in the immediate family of the employee.

Administrative leave with pay up to a maximum of five (5) business days per calendar year may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director for hazardous conditions such as severe weather.

Interpretation

Administrative leave is paid leave and is not charged against other leave accruals.

Guidelines for Implementation

The immediate family shall consist of spouse, parents (step and foster), grandparents, domestic partners (defined as a person with whom the employee is living on a continuous basis), brothers, sisters, children, or legal guardians. One (1) day shall be granted for death of relatives other than the immediate family.

STANDARD 19 - JURY DUTY

All regular full-time and part-time employees shall be on paid status while on jury duty.

Employees will be allowed to serve on federal or state juries and be reinstated after their service has ended without loss of pay, benefits, and seniority.

Guideline for Implementation

Where applicable, jury pay will be deducted from the employee's regular salary. A copy of the jury summons and any other related documentation must be turned in order for employees to receive pay.

STANDARD 20 - MILITARY LEAVE

Military leave must be granted in accordance with applicable federal law.

Reservists and members of the National Guard who are deployed into active service and employees who are drafted into the military shall be treated the same as other employees on leave. The employee must be reinstated to his or her former position or to a position of the same status, pay, and benefits.

Employees who are members of the National Guard or Reserves and are directed to participate in periodic field training will receive unpaid military leave for a maximum period of fifteen (15) calendar days annually.

Guidelines for Implementation

Employees who are indefinitely deployed in active service via the draft or an act authorizing the President of the United States to order to active duty the National Guard and Reserve components of the Navy, Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps are entitled to military leave. Military leave is leave of absence without pay and terminates either ninety (90) days after the employees discharge from the service or one (1) year after the employee is released from hospitalization continuing after discharge. The employee will be reinstated to his or her former position or to a position of similar status and pay if the employee notifies the Chapter of discharge no fewer than sixty (60) days prior to the employees planned return.

STANDARD 21 - LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

All regular full-time and part-time employees shall be eligible to request leave without pay.

Requests for leave without pay shall be in writing, providing both the purpose of the leave and the length of time desired. The maximum amount of time allowed to be requested shall be six (6) months and will be subject to approval by the Executive Director, or in the case of the Executive Director, by the President of the Chapter. The Executive Director has discretion to grant or deny requests based on needs of the chapter, status and seniority of the staff person and any other relevant information. No benefits shall accrue while the employee is on leave without pay status. Leave without pay will be considered as a break in service when calculating seniority.

STANDARD 22 - COMPENSATORY TIME

Employees who are exempt (see Standard 9 for description of exempt status) from the FLSA shall be entitled to compensatory time off under certain circumstances as follows:

- Compensatory time will be granted to exempt employees with advance approval of their supervisor.
- Compensatory time will be used within thirty (30) days except under special circumstances and provided that responsibilities are properly discharged.
- Unused compensatory time is not payable upon termination.

Exempt employees who are required to work beyond regularly scheduled hours for special events, weekend meetings, and other Chapter activities shall be entitled to time off.

SECTION V - COMPENSATION

STANDARD 23 - SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Salary administration shall be in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Deductions from each employee's paycheck include mandatory and voluntary deductions. Mandatory deductions for Social Security, state and federal taxes, and garnishments by court order are made without written authorization of the employee. Voluntary deductions are made only with the written authorization of the employee.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Pay periods must be established by the Chapter and made known to all employees in writing.
2. An itemized statement of all deductions from the employee's wages must accompany each paycheck.
3. The Chapter is authorized to deduct from any final wages, annual leave, or amounts due an employee upon termination, monies due the chapter in repayment for advances, overpayments, loans, or debts due and about which the employee has been previously apprised.
4. Salary schedules shall be made available to all employees. Salaries for newly hired Chapter Executive Directors shall be in accordance with the minimum hiring salary established by the National Board of Directors. Chapters with four (4) or more employees shall develop a salary classification plan that includes elements of job analysis, market pricing of positions, job ranking of positions, and a salary schedule.
5. Employee salaries are to be reviewed annually. These reviews take into account the employee's performance, the Chapter's ability to pay, national and local salary patterns, comparisons between similar types of positions, and contractual agreements.

STANDARD 24 - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRING SALARY

The Executive Director hiring salary schedule will be reviewed at annually by the Personnel Policies Committee of the National Board of Directors.

A review of the hiring salary schedule will occur periodically. If a decision is made to adjust the hiring salary, the adjustment will become effective July 1 of the following fiscal year. If the Executive Directors salary falls below the minimum of the hiring schedule the Chapter must take action to bring the salary up to the minimum.

STANDARD 25 - OVERTIME

Classification of exempt and nonexempt employee are determined by the FLSA (see Appendix E). Exempt employees are those professional, administrative, and technical employees who, because of their training, the exercise of independent authority in their work, and their level of expertise, are not subject to the overtime requirements defined by the FLSA.

Nonexempt employees are subject to the overtime pay provisions of the FLSA regardless of individual titles or duties. Any employee who does not meet the qualifications for exemption is included in the term nonexempt.

Nonexempt employees are hourly wage earners or those who are paid for the number of hours they work in a pay period. Federal law requires these employees to be paid overtime when they work more than forty (40) hours in any one week. The law also restricts the use of compensatory time in lieu of overtime.

Exempt employees are usually salaried, and no federal or state law requires them to be paid for overtime. However, compensatory time is offered in certain situations (see Standard 22).

Guidelines for Implementation

1. All overtime for nonexempt employees should be approved in advance. Hours worked in excess of forty (40) in any workweek must be compensated at the rate of one and one-half (1½) times the hourly rate of pay. Overtime must be paid in the same pay period in which it is earned.
2. Nonexempt employees shall be paid for overtime in any one (1) week at the rate of time and one-half over the established workweek. Holidays and sick leave shall be considered as time worked for the purpose of calculating overtime.

3. Regular part-time nonexempt employees shall be paid overtime in the same manner consistent with full-time employees (at the rate of time and one-half) for hours in excess of forty (40).
4. Employees requested to work on Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday will be guaranteed a minimum of one-half (2) day worked or will be credited with having worked a minimum of one-half (2) day. All nonexempt employees shall receive double time for Sunday and holiday work.
5. Time spent by a nonexempt employee at the discretion of the Chapter in out-of-town travel before or after the employees normal workday schedule shall be considered as time worked. Such travel time shall be interpreted as that time to travel to and from the employee's home or to or from the destination.

SECTION VI - BENEFITS

STANDARD 26 - PROVISION OF BENEFITS

A health care plan that includes hospitalization, major medical, dental, prescription, vision coverage, life insurance; long-term disability; and a retirement program shall be provided for regular full-time and part-time (20 or more hours per week) employees. Retirement programs shall be in place by the beginning of the second year of employment.

No employee may engage in an intimidating or retaliatory act against chapter or national employees who file complaints or otherwise exercise their rights under the privacy regulations issued under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). No employee may condition treatment, payment, enrollment or eligibility for benefits on the provision of an authorization to disclose protected health information by a participant in a chapter or national sponsored group health plan. No employee may permit or require a participant in a chapter or national group health plan to waive his or her rights under HIPAA.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Through a written summary of plan benefits and other information, the Chapter shall make known to employees the types of insurance available, the family members eligible for coverage, the date coverage is effective, and the costs to the employee.
2. If an employee declines to join the group health insurance plan, he or she must sign a waiver (see Appendix F, Health Insurance Waiver Form).
3. Chapters shall provide terminating employees the option of continuing their health insurance in compliance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) (see Appendix G, COBRA Form).

SECTION VII - PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINE

STANDARD 27 - PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Employees shall receive at least once per year a written performance appraisal that will objectively assess their performance and accomplishments relative to the job description and established work expectations, unless stipulated otherwise by contractual agreements.

Regular performance appraisals shall be conducted to provide useful and relevant information to supervisor and employee for assessing current job performance, sustaining good performance, and improving future performance; to provide information to support various personnel actions; and to facilitate and improve communication between supervisor and employee.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Supervisors and employees shall meet annually to develop mutually agreed-on work expectations for the coming review period. Work expectations shall be documented.
2. Standards shall be reviewed to reassess and possibly modify the work expectations to meet new work priorities or changes in direction.

3. Employees shall have a written work evaluation at the conclusion of the Introductory Period, on promotion to a new position, at the annual review date, and at any other time at the request of the immediate supervisor.
4. The evaluation process involves both a written summary and a full discussion between employee and supervisor.
5. Employees shall sign the written work evaluation indicating acceptance, or in the case of disagreement with its content, signifying that the employee has read the evaluation. A copy of the evaluation is furnished to the employee. The employee shall have the opportunity to file a statement covering any points on which there is disagreement, and the statement shall be placed in the employees personnel file.

STANDARD 28 - PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

The Chapter uses progressive discipline to ensure staff compliance with performance standards, ethics and conduct. Except in cases of repeated willful or flagrant violations of these standards, formal disciplinary measures will not be taken until informal attempts to correct the problem have failed. If it is found necessary to use formal disciplinary measures it is intended that the discipline be administered fairly, without prejudice and only for cause. Disciplinary actions are of several levels, including oral and written warnings, disciplinary probation, performance probation, suspension with and without pay; and termination. The frequency and/or severity of misconduct determines which level of disciplinary action is required.

Progressive discipline is not required for all offenses. The Chapter reserves the right to terminate employees for commission of serious or repeated infractions, without progressive discipline guidelines or counseling (see Standard 29 for guidance).

Documentation of both oral and written warnings will be signed by the supervisor and employee and kept in the employee's personnel file. The document should include identification of the date, violation, indication of necessary improvement, and information concerning further disciplinary action that could result from failure to show improvement.

The Chapter must consult with National Office (Human Resources, Chapter Services or General Counsel) prior to implementing decisions on disciplinary actions or terminations.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Employees may be placed on performance probation in order to allow for improvement of the problem identified at the time of probation. The employee will be provided with documentation that identifies the problem, indicates the necessary improvement, specifies the length of probation period, and informs the employee of further disciplinary action that could result from failure to show satisfactory improvement within the specified period.
2. Employees may be suspended for disciplinary reasons without pay. The employee will be given written notice of the reasons for the action, and a copy will be made a part of the employee's personnel record.
3. Documentation of both oral and written warnings should be signed by the supervisor and employee and kept in the employee's personnel file. If the employee refuses to sign, the supervisor should so note on the documentation. The employee's signature indicates receipt of the document but not necessarily his or her agreement with it. This document should include identification of the date and violation, indication of necessary improvement along with a time frame, and information concerning further disciplinary action that could result from failure to show improvement.

SECTION VIII - TERMINATION

STANDARD 29 - TERMINATION BY EMPLOYER

In the event the Chapter gives notice of termination, the length of such notice, unless specified

otherwise within these Standards, shall be two (2) weeks for nonexempt positions and three (3) weeks for exempt positions. Equivalent payment in lieu of notice may be given at the discretion of the Executive Director. No notice will be granted in the case of gross misconduct (see Standard 36 for guidance). National Office (Human Resources, Chapter Services or General Counsel) must be consulted to confirm misconduct as gross prior to taking action to dismiss an employee immediately.

STANDARD 30 - TERMINATION BY EMPLOYEE

Any employee who elects to terminate employment with the Association must submit in writing to the Executive Director two (2) weeks notice in advance of termination if the employee is nonexempt or three (3) weeks notice in advance of termination if the employee is exempt, unless stipulated otherwise within these *Standards*. Lack of notice equivalent to the above requirement is chargeable against annual leave.

Both NASW and the employee are free to terminate the employment relationship at their discretion. In the event either party elects to terminate employment, the above provisions relating to notice shall apply, unless stipulated otherwise in these *Standards*. Gross misconduct is a term with legal implications and consequences.

Therefore, National Office (Human Resources, Chapter Services or General Counsel) should be consulted prior to taking action.

Guidelines for Implementation

- All dismissals must be stated in writing, setting forth the reasons for the actions.
- An employee may be dismissed without notice or pay in lieu thereof in cases of gross misconduct or illegal acts, in which the termination has been reviewed and approved by the NASW Office of Human Resources.
- Except as otherwise provided in these *Standards*, employees who resign giving proper notice or who are dismissed for any cause shall receive annual leave, or pay in lieu thereof, earned but not taken during the period of employment. The last day worked shall be considered the employees termination date for purposes of calculating earned annual leave.
- An employee whose services are terminated during the Introductory Period or who resigns before satisfactorily completing it is not eligible to receive pay for accrued annual leave.
- Whether voluntary or involuntary terminations, employees must be notified of his or her right under COBRA to continue group health insurance coverage.

STANDARD 31 – LAYOFFS

Layoffs shall be construed as removal from a position because of reorganization or reduction in force.

The Chapter will make every effort to minimize the negative impact on employees if a reduction in the work force becomes necessary. In some cases, a program may have to be reduced in size or terminated if funds for its operation are no longer available. If this type of cutback must occur, the Chapter will reduce staff progressively, using the following means:

- voluntary reductions in the workforce, including employees who may take early retirement, leaves of absence, or reduction in hours
- attrition
- elimination of part-time positions
- transferring the employee from a terminated position to a vacant position if he or she can meet the minimum qualifications of the position and has satisfactory performance evaluations

In determining which regular employees are laid off, the Executive Director shall consider factors such as needs of the Chapter, breadth of skills, experience, and job qualifications, and length of service.

STANDARD 32 - SEVERANCE PAY

Unless otherwise stipulated in these *Standards*, severance pay shall be awarded as follows to employees who have completed the Introductory Period and have been laid off because of a reduction in staff positions or reorganization. In addition to notice pay:

- Employees with less than six (6) months of service shall receive one (1) weeks salary at their current rate of pay.
- Employees with six (6) but not twelve (12) months shall receive two (2) weeks salary at their current rate of pay.
- Employees with twelve (12) months of service shall receive three (3) weeks salary at their current rate of pay.
- Each additional full six (6) months of service shall entitle an employee up to an additional half-weeks pay up to a total maximum severance pay of thirteen (13) weeks.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Severance pay is payable to regular full-time and part-time employees on their last day worked.
2. An employee who has been discharged for cause has no right to severance pay.
3. Employees who have been laid off within the preceding twelve (12) months shall be informed of vacancies occurring in positions that require comparable skills and experience as that position to which the employee was last assigned, if the employee signs a request for such information and provides a current address.
4. No employee shall receive severance pay for a period for which severance pay has already been paid.
5. For an employee who has been laid off and then rehired, the layoff constitutes a break in service, and the employee's status is that of a new hire.

SECTION IX - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

STANDARD 33 - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Unless otherwise stipulated in these *Standards*, any employee who has a complaint concerning rates of pay, hours, conditions of employment, the application or interpretation of the terms of these *Standards*, disciplinary action, termination, demotion, denial of promotion, layoff, or discrimination based on those categories outlined in Standard 1 and its interpretation has the right to file a grievance according to procedures outlined in this policy. Employees may not file a grievance challenging the substance of a performance evaluation.

Interpretation

No employee will be discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or suffer any reprisal as a result of filing a grievance or participating in the investigation of a grievance.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Employees shall attempt to resolve the problem informally with their supervisor as soon as possible. If a solution cannot be reached, the employee may present a formal grievance within 30 days of the occurrence.
2. The Executive Director will have ten (10) business days to consider and respond to the grievance. If an extension of the time limit becomes necessary, all involved parties will be notified.
3. The decision of the Executive Director will be final and binding on all parties, except as provided in #4 below.
4. Where there is an alleged violation of established personnel policies and practices by the Executive Director, such violation will be reviewed by the Chapter Personnel or Executive Committee whose decision will be made in consultation with the National Office Human Resources Manager. The decision will be final and binding on all parties,

and a decision shall be issued within 30 days of the receipt of the complaint, absent extenuating circumstances requiring additional time.

SECTION X - WORKPLACE POLICIES

STANDARD 34 - ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

NASW complies with all federal, state, and local laws that regulate or prohibit the possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or illegal drugs. All NASW employees are prohibited from possession, use, manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of nonprescribed controlled substances in the workplace. If a Chapter receives a federal contract or grant, it is also required to meet the conditions of the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. All employees are expected and required to report to work whether on site at the NASW office or off site and remain at work in appropriate mental and physical condition. Employees who report to work exhibiting signs of alcohol or drug abuse are presumed to be unfit for duty and may be disciplined appropriately and/or referred for counseling.
2. If an employee violates the drug and alcohol policy, the employee will be disciplined under the progressive discipline policy.
3. The use, sale, or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol or abuse by NASW staff while on the job may also result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination and may also result the filing of a criminal report.
4. An employee is required to report within five (5) days any criminal drug statute conviction occurring in the workplace to his or her immediate supervisor.
5. All employees are expected to cooperate fully with law enforcement authorities in the investigation and prosecution of illegal use, possession, manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of controlled substances in the workplace.
6. Alcohol will not be served at NASW offices whether during or after business hours.
7. Chapter funds should not be used by chapter employees for the purchase of alcohol.
- 8.

STANDARD 35 - SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

NASW will not tolerate sexual harassment of its employees. Any action taken to respond to allegations of sexual harassment must first be reviewed with National Office (Human Resources, Chapter Services, General Counsel or the Affirmative Action Officer). The following behaviors are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination:

- unwelcome sexual advances
- insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct directed against another employee
- requests for sexual acts or favors
- threats, demands, or suggestions that an employee's work is contingent upon toleration of or acquiescence to sexual advances
- retaliation against an employee for complaining about such behavior
- any other unwelcome statements or actions of a sexual nature that are sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to unreasonably interfere with an employee's work performance or that create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Any person who has a complaint of sexual harassment against a superior, a coworker, a vendor, or a member should bring the problem to the attention of the Chapter. Complaints in writing may be raised with any of the following persons: Executive Director, Chair of the Personnel Policies Committee, President of the Board of Directors, or Vice President of the Board of Directors. If the complaint is against the Executive Director the complainant should contact the President of the Chapter Board of Directors. National Office (Human Resources, Chapter Services or General Counsel) shall be notified regarding such complaints by the President.

2. The Association prohibits retaliation against anyone for having raised such a complaint in good faith or for cooperating with an investigation of a complaint. Complaints will be investigated within ten (10) business days after notification and handled as confidentially as possible in the manner described below.
 - Complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated as promptly as possible by the Executive Director. If the complaint is against the Executive Director the complainant should contact the President of the Board. The allegations of the complaint and the identity of the persons involved shall remain confidential from those who have no need to know in order to conduct full and impartial investigation, remedy violations, monitor compliance, and administer the policy. Persons involved in the investigation will be requested and expected to maintain confidentiality.
 - The investigation will include, but not be limited to, discussion with both parties and witnesses. Where appropriate, a report shall be forwarded to the President of the Chapter Board of Directors with recommendations concerning remedial action. The President will review the recommendation; determine the corrective action, if any; notify all parties of the decision; and implement the decision.
 - The complaint process shall be completed within forty-five (45) calendar days. If additional time is needed, all parties shall be notified in writing.

STANDARD 36 - STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Association expects its staff members to observe certain standards of conduct and courtesy. Infractions of the Association's Standards of Conduct (listed below) will be cause for progressive discipline and/or termination of employment:

1. breach of confidentiality of information concerning the affairs of the Association
2. falsification of employee application or other Association records
3. leaving work during working hours without appropriate notice
4. insubordination toward supervisor, including failing or refusing to follow directions or accept jobs as assigned
5. use of abusive language or displaying of disrespectful behavior such as fighting or inappropriate gestures toward any staff member or volunteer and displaying of inappropriate behavior on or off the job that could possibly damage the reputation of the Association
6. displaying racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, or sexist behavior or disrespect of religious beliefs
7. violation of the Association's policy on drug or alcohol use
8. violation of the Association's policy on sexual harassment
9. possession of a weapon while on Association premises
10. creating or contributing to unsafe or unsanitary conditions by act or omission
11. destruction or misuse of Association records and unauthorized possession, reading, copying, or disclosing of information contained in such records to unauthorized persons
12. theft, fraud, or misappropriation of property belonging to the Association or to any employee, client, or visitor
13. soliciting tips or gratuities (money or gifts) for rendering services that are considered normal assigned duties
14. misusing the telephone (lengthy personal conversations and unauthorized long-distance calls), lack of courtesy when talking on the telephone, and failure to assist callers who are inappropriately transferred
15. misuse of Association computer equipment, e-mail, and Internet, improper installation of software or violation of Association policies regarding computer use.
16. failure to correct an inefficiency or behavior despite a warning and the opportunity to do so
17. threatening, intimidating, or coercing another employee or client by word or deed
18. engaging in criminal conduct while involved in work activities or the conviction of a crime
19. dress that is inappropriate for office environment
20. These infractions of the Association's Standards of Conduct are not listed in order of importance.

STANDARD 37 - USE OF CHAPTER PROPERTY

Employees will not directly or indirectly use or allow the use of property, equipment, or supplies belonging to the chapter or located on the chapter's premises for any purpose other than chapter business, unless special written permission is obtained from the Executive Director. Furthermore, no staff member shall willfully alter, mutilate, abuse, or waste any property, equipment, or supplies belonging to the chapter or located on chapter premises. The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

STANDARD 38 - SOFTWARE COMPLIANCE

Anyone using software on a chapter computer is responsible for complying with that software's license agreement. If an illegal copy of software is discovered, it will be removed and the offending employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

The purpose of this standard is to ensure compliance with license agreements and applicable copyright laws regarding the purchase and use of computer software. This policy applies to all employees of the Chapter and any software purchased by the chapter for use with any of its computers.

PART II

SECTION X - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMPLOYMENT, EVALUATION, MEDIATION AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

STANDARD 39 - EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

The Chapter Executive Director will operate under an Employment Agreement (see Appendix) signed by the executive director, president of the Chapter and NASW director of Chapter Services and Continuing Education. Included with this agreement will be four attachments: a position description, a compensation/benefits/leave description, performance standards and an annual evaluation process. The proposed Agreement must be submitted to NASW Office of Chapter Services at least 30 days prior to the start date. Failure to meet the deadline may delay the start date.

Employment agreements will ordinarily be for no more than a three (3) year period. Continuing employment agreements should be submitted to Chapter Services no later than 30 days prior to the end of the current contract.

STANDARD 40 - INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

The Introductory Period and initial contract for the position of Executive Director shall be one (1) year. The employee who satisfactorily completes the Introductory Period shall become a regular full-time or part-time employee subject to continued satisfactory work performance in the position. Upon satisfactory completion of the Introductory Period, the Executive Director may be offered an Employment Agreement for up to three (3) year period.

Notwithstanding the prior statement in the event the needs of the chapter change, the chapter has the discretion not to review or continue the agreement. In the event not to renew, the Executive Director shall receive three weeks notice and at least four weeks of severance pay. The period of time may be extended for up to 60 days by the Chapter Board. The limited extension shall not constitute renewal or negotiation of a new agreement.

Interpretation

The Introductory Period will be used to determine whether the Executive Director has the skills to perform the job satisfactorily and or meets the needs of the chapter.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. The Chapter Board of Directors or designee will meet with the Executive Director to arrive at mutually agreeable work expectations for the Introductory Period. Work expectations will be detailed in writing. A copy of the work expectations shall be appended to and become a part of the Employment Agreement to be placed in the employee's personnel file.

2. The Introductory Period should be used to monitor progress, provide appropriate feedback on strengths and weaknesses, and assist the new Executive Director in learning about the Association beyond the formal orientation.

STANDARD 41 - PERFORMANCE REVIEW

A committee shall be established to conduct the introductory and subsequent reviews of the Executive Director's performance. The composition of the Committee shall be determined by the Chapter Board of Directors in advance of the period for which the Executive Director will be evaluated.

Interpretation

The purposes of the evaluation of the Executive Director's performance are to help the Board of Directors fulfill its responsibility for ensuring that the Chapter is well managed; to guarantee that the mission and goals of the Chapter are being carried out; to strengthen and support the Executive Director to ensure that the work expectations for the position are being met; to strengthen and support the Chapter's governance structure; and to allow for a review of the relationship between the Board of Directors and the Executive Director. If possible, the Board of Directors should establish a standing Evaluating Committee to evaluate the Executive Director, which may be the Executive Committee of the Board.

This process also uses the results of the performance evaluation to make decisions about the Executive Director's salary and, in some instances, to decide continuation of employment.

The criteria for evaluation and composition of the Committee should be developed in advance and be based on the mutually agreed-upon performance objectives and on the Executive Director's job description and contractual agreements. A fair and valid evaluation must measure performance in the context of reality, not against an ideal that may or may not be achievable.

More specifically, the performance appraisal process should aim to:

- provide feedback on job performance, strengths, and weaknesses
- allow comment and evaluation of job objectives and criteria through two-way communication
- identify critical job elements, performance objectives, and job expectations
- reduce ambiguity regarding job performance and criteria
- identify training needs
- provide valid information related to personnel decisions affecting the employee.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. The Evaluating Committee will consider and decide on the methods of obtaining information needed to make accurate assessments, the manner of selecting respondents, the manner in which to handle conflicting reports, individual committee members roles, and time frame for completion of the process.
2. The Executive Director should complete a self-evaluation of his or her own work that can be used as a starting point that stimulates candid communication with the Evaluating Committee and Board of Directors about professional successes and problems. The Executive Director needs the opportunity to take stock of his or her own performance and measure it against performance objectives. The Executive Director's perspective on the Chapter and on the role of leadership can be valuable. Given the complexities of the daily management environment, the Evaluating Committee and the Board of Directors will be able to make a fairer judgment of the Executive Director's performance if they understand more clearly the constraints and challenges.
3. The Evaluating Committee will base the evaluation on explicit expectations agreed on early in the Board of Directors relationship with the Executive Director. The Executive Director should be invited to contribute his or her perspective on the needs of the Chapter and how his or her leadership and management skills can be best applied.
4. The Executive Director with an Employment Agreement for a three (3) year period shall receive at least two (2) performance reviews. The final review shall occur no later than thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date of the Employment Agreement. An agreement by the parties may extend this period for up to sixty (60) days in order to complete the performance

review. The limited extension shall not constitute a renewal or negotiation of a new agreement. The extension shall not result in additional severance being paid as outlined in Standard 45. If an extension is not agreed to a decision shall be made on the documentation available and a failure to complete a second evaluation shall not impede or effect a decision.

5. A written evaluation report shall be completed. The report provides closure to the process and is a forward-looking document as well. The Executive Director shall sign the report to indicate his or her agreement about the conclusions and recommendations, or in the case of disagreement, to acknowledge receipt of the document. The report shall include goals for the coming year. These goals give the Board of Directors and the Executive Director specific opportunities to build on strengths, be positive about areas of potential improvement, and review their vision for the Chapter.
6. The Executive Director shall be given the opportunity to review and comment on the evaluation report. The performance appraisal report and written comments shall be placed in the Executive Directors confidential personnel file.
4. Should the Evaluating Committees report identify less than satisfactory performance, an action plan identifying inadequate performance areas and measurable objectives shall be developed by the Evaluating Committee and presented in writing to the Executive Director, with a copy to NASW Office of Chapter Services.
5. Information obtained in the process shall be kept confidential. Written materials that support the evaluation process shall be maintained by the President of the Board of Directors. Committee members notes and unrelated items shall be destroyed at completion of the process by the President of the Board of Directors or Chair of the Evaluating Committee. Related documentation shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years.

STANDARD 42 - ADDRESSING PERFORMANCE ISSUES DURING THE TERM OF EMPLOYMENT

The position of Executive Director changes and frequently becomes more complex as the position takes on new dimensions to reflect the changes occurring in the Chapter, which can elevate or modify performance expectations. Concerns about the Executive Directors' performance, must be stated in writing, specifying the performance areas that are of concern, and be presented to the Executive Director and President, or in the case of the President having serious concerns, to the Executive Director, the Board of Directors and Office of Chapter Services. If the concerns are adequately documented, the following process will occur:

1. A statement identifying inadequate performance areas and a plan to address those areas shall be developed by the President and Officers of the Board of Directors and presented in writing to the Executive Director.
2. The Executive Director shall be given a minimum of three (3) months and a maximum of six (6) months to improve in the areas identified.
3. An interim progress review shall be completed midway through the assessment period. This review shall be documented and placed in the Executive Director's personnel file.
4. At the conclusion of the assessment period, the Officers of the Board of Directors shall present in writing to the Executive Director, the Board of Directors, and the NASW Office of Chapter Services, their evaluation of the Executive Directors progress.

Interpretation

It is important that a formal mechanism be established for Board members to make known concerns they may have about the performance of the Executive Director. This mechanism will allow for investigation of complaints and issues raised. In many instances the concerns may go no further than discussion with the Executive Director or the President of the Board of Directors. However, if there are substantive concerns, the Board of Directors will follow the process outlined above.

STANDARD 43 - MEDIATION

Both the Chapter Board of Directors and the Executive Director have the right to contact the NASW Office of Chapter Services to request mediation for a proposed termination or in instances

where issues of performance cannot be resolved. The cost of mediation shall be shared by the Chapter and the National Office.

Interpretation

Mediation is a dispute resolution process in which a facilitator or neutral third party assists disputing parties to reach an agreement or resolution to their conflict. The mediation process is informal, and the mediator's role is advisory. The mediator may offer suggestions and point out issues that the parties might have overlooked, but resolution of the dispute rests with the parties themselves. Mediation proceedings are confidential and private to help preserve goodwill and positive working relationships and to maintain the privacy of any agreement between the parties to resolve their differences.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. If either party desires mediation, the requests will be submitted to the NASW Office of Chapter Services.
2. Chapters may submit names of mediators for their use or the use of other Chapters. The NASW Office of Chapter Services will present a list of at least three (3) mediators. The parties shall alternate striking names from the list until one name remains.
3. After a mediator has been selected and approved by the parties, the process will be set in consultation with the parties.
4. The mediation process shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days of the request for mediation, unless all parties agree to continuation.
5. The mediator will prepare a written report of the mediation process and submit it to both parties, the Chair of the National Personnel Policies Committee, and the NASW Office of Chapter Services.
6. If mediation does not result in resolution of the conflict, either party may request the National Personnel Policies Committee to hear the case within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the report of the mediator. The decision of the National Personnel Policies Committee shall be final and binding on all parties.

STANDARD 44 - RECOMMENDATION OF TERMINATION (OTHER THAN IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL)

Should a decision, in consultation with the Office of Chapter Services, be made by the Evaluating Committee or the Officers of the Board of Directors to recommend to the Chapter Board of Directors termination of the Executive Director, in considering the recommendation the Board has the following options:

1. Accept the recommendation to terminate employment and articulate grounds for the action. If termination is based upon unsatisfactory performance, the performance probation period must have been completed. Termination for cause is defined as willful, negligent, or repeated failure to perform essential requirements of the position.
2. Reject the recommendation to terminate employment.
3. Modify the recommendation to terminate employment.
4. Hold the recommendation in abeyance pending the outcome of the mediation process, if selected.

Interpretation

Any decision to terminate the employment of the Executive Director must be made in consultation with the National Office (Chapter Services, Human Resources or General Counsel) and shall be in compliance with all policies and applicable laws.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. The Executive Director shall be given an opportunity to address and respond to issues raised before the Chapter Board of Directors.
2. The meeting with the Executive Director shall be scheduled within ten (10) days of receiving the recommendation for termination. The time line may be extended by mutual agreement in writing.

3. The Executive Director at any step in this process has the right to be accompanied by a colleague (but not a lawyer or current member of the Board of Directors) or a member of the Chapter during meetings in which disciplinary action is to be discussed and considered.
4. If a decision is made to proceed with termination a minimum of thirty (30) days notice or payment in lieu of notice shall be given to the Executive Director. Severance pay is not authorized or required for termination. Contractual arrangements must be reviewed for adherence to agreements.

STANDARD 45 - NON-RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT (OTHER THAN IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL) AND SEVERANCE PAY

If a decision is made by the Chapter to not renew the employment agreement, severance pay will be paid as outlined below:

- 1 year: 4 weeks pay
- 2-3 years of service (inclusive): 2 months of pay
- 4-5 years of service (inclusive): 3 months of pay
- 6-8 years of service (inclusive): 4 months of pay
- 8-10 years of service (inclusive): 5 months of pay
- 11-15 years of service (inclusive): 6 months of pay
- 16-19 years of service (inclusive) 9 months of pay
- 20 or more years of service: 12 months of pay, except that:

Chapter Executives who have five (5) years of service as of January 1, 2002, will receive severance as outlined below:

- 5 years of service: 5 months of pay
- 6-10 years of service (inclusive): 6 months of pay
- 11-14 years of service (inclusive): 8 months of pay
- 15-19 years of service (inclusive): 9 months of pay
- 20 or more years of service: 12 months of pay.

If the Chapter chooses not to renew the Employment Agreement, the Executive Director will be entitled to severance pay according to the above Severance Schedule. A minimum of thirty (30) days notice will be given for non-renewal of contract.

Interpretation

Severance pay is payable at the current salary rate on the last day worked or as negotiated with the Chapter Board of Directors. Standard 45 shall be made part of the Employment Agreement.

Guidelines for Implementation

Executive Directors whose agreements are not renewed may request one of the following options: (1) having severance compensation paid in a lump sum on the last day worked or (2) having severance compensation prorated over a period of up to twelve (12) months.

If the Executive Director requests to have the severance pay prorated, health benefits will ordinarily be continued for the designated period of time to the extent permitted by the health insurance program, unless the Executive Director begins work for another employer or as an independent contractor/consultant.

STANDARD 46 - DISMISSALS WITHOUT NOTICE

If termination of the Executive Director is proposed due to gross misconduct or unethical, illegal, or fraudulent conduct, dismissal will be without notice and without benefit of the mediation process. National Office must be consulted to confirm appropriateness of dismissal under this Standard.

Interpretation

Dismissal under this Standard requires legal review to ensure proper application to the situation at hand. NASW Office of Human Resources, Chapter Services or General Counsel must be consulted prior to taking any action. An executive director may be suspended or placed on leave pending completion of a review. The review shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days and may be with or without pay.

Guidelines for Implementation

Unproved allegation of employee misconduct should be investigated so that the Chapter has all the facts before taking action. Investigations must be conducted with regard for an employees reputation and should be kept confidential.

PART III**SECTION XII - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRANSITION GUIDELINES****STANDARD 47 - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESIGNATION**

When a Chapter Executive Director resigns or chooses not to renegotiate an Employment Agreement, the Chapter Board of Directors is to be notified in writing and a copy of the notification is to be sent to the NASW Office of Chapter Services.

Interpretation

In most instances the Executive Director has discussed the decision to end his or her employment with the Chapter President. However, the formal termination letter should be addressed to the Chapter Board of Directors and a copy sent to the NASW Office of Chapter Services.

Guidelines for Implementation

It is important to alert the NASW Office of Chapter Services through a copy of the termination letter so that Chapter files in the National Office remain current, National Office staff can be informed, and the initial consultation and technical assistance regarding the transition process can begin.

STANDARD 48 - NOTICE OF TERMINATION

When voluntarily terminating employment, the Executive Director should give at least forty-five (45) days notice, unless stipulated otherwise in an existing Employment Agreement. The notification period does not include use of any accrued leave due under these Standards or an Employment Agreement.

Interpretation

In the absence of a specific provision in these Standards or an Employment Agreement, the required notice of termination of employment is forty-five (45) days. This time period does not include use of accrued leave.

Guidelines for Implementation

Balancing the needs of a Chapter and an outgoing Executive Director during a transition period is always difficult. Although the outgoing Executive Director has no role in the search process, there are numerous significant tasks to complete. Rarely will an outgoing Executive Director give notice of termination far enough in advance for the search process to be completed. The Chapter Board of Directors needs time to develop with the outgoing Executive Director a plan for the departure process and an interim staffing plan for the duration of the transition process.

STANDARD 49 -TRANSITION PLAN

After the Executive Director has formally resigned in writing, the Chapter President and Executive Director, in consultation with the NASW Office of Chapter Services, shall develop a work plan for the remaining period of time. The elements of that plan should include but not be limited to the areas of:

- personnel
- fiscal and business operations
- legal issues
- programmatic activities
- interorganizational issues
- executive director transition plan

Interpretation

The Chapter must have a plan for the part of the transition process that covers the outgoing Executive Director's remaining days. This plan is best negotiated between the President and the outgoing Executive Director because of the timing of Board of Directors meetings. The NASW Office of Chapter Services can provide assistance based on the experience of National Office staff with the transition process in numerous other Chapters. The Executive Director Transition Plan prepared by the outgoing Executive Director is a status report that brings the interim and/or new Executive Director up to date with critical issues, location of key financial and legal documents, and computer files.

Guidelines for Implementation

See Appendix K for an outline of the type of information to include under the topics identified in the Standard.

SECTION XII - INITIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STANDARD 50 - TRANSITION PLAN

The Chapter Board of Directors shall meet to review the *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* and develop a formal Transition Plan covering a one-year transition period, including the transition duties of the outgoing Executive Director; office coverage during any time that the Chapter will be without an Executive Director; and an introduction, orientation, and training schedule for the new Executive Director. The Transition Plan is to be submitted to the NASW Office of Chapter Services for review and approval prior to implementation. At this time, any Board member who wishes to become an applicant for the position of Executive Director may not continue on the Board of Directors and must submit a written resignation from the Board.

Board of Director members' will, to the best of their ability, ensure confidentiality and privacy in regard to records and discussions about the search process and all prospective candidates. A confidentiality statement should be signed by all members of the Board and Search Committee (see Appendix L for sample statement).

Interpretation

The Chapter Board of Directors must plan for an extended period of transition in order to continue essential member services and programs and to meet legal/financial deadlines such as audit and tax reports.

Guidelines for Implementation

Because the Executive Director search process typically takes six months and the new Executive Director needs at least an equal amount of time to learn the operations and culture of the Chapter, the Board of Directors must adjust expectations and programming to reflect this reality. Transition inevitably means that for a year Chapter operations will not be business as usual. Having the

Transition Plan reviewed and approved by the NASW Office of Chapter Services gives the Chapter Board of Directors the advantage of receiving consultation and technical assistance on their Transition Plan, based on the experiences of other Chapters and sound association management practices.

STANDARD 51- SEARCH PREPARATIONS

The Board of Directors must review the Chapter's personnel policies and the Executive Director position description to determine if changes are needed and receive approval for proposed changes from the NASW Office of Chapter Services prior to the initial meeting of the Search Committee.

Interpretation

The position description and personnel policies are crucial elements in the search process; they guide key activities such as advertising and contract negotiations. The Chapter Board of Directors is responsible for determining that both documents are up to date but may delegate initial review to the Personnel Committee or Executive Committee.

Guidelines for Implementation

It is strongly recommended that Chapters have a separate Personnel Committee with Board representation and that the Executive Committee not automatically serve in that capacity. When a Chapter is in transition, a heavy burden of responsibility for Chapter functioning inevitably falls on the President and Officers. Having a separate Personnel Committee appropriately eases the load of the Officers and yet provides the attention and expertise necessary to undertake this important task. If this is not possible, an option would be to form an Ad Hoc Task Force consisting of members of the Board and Officers.

To begin the search process without determining that these documents are in accord with current *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters* and the Chapter's own unique needs is to risk problems and delays at a later point in the process. The NASW Office of Chapter Services will solicit review and approval of proposed changes from the NASW Office of Human Resources and facilitate consultation as needed. During the review of these documents, Board members usually begin the critical process of identifying the knowledge, skills, and expertise necessary or desirable in the new Executive Director. This is a critical point in the Board's role in the search process because it affords the opportunity for Board members to come to terms with the reality that the position of Executive Director is an association management position, requiring a different mix of knowledge, skills, and experience (see Appendix B) that are compensated accordingly.

STANDARD 52- ASSESSMENT OF CHAPTER NEED

The Chapter Board of Directors is to identify the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to compete successfully for the position of Executive Director keeping in mind that the position is an association management position, requiring a different mix of knowledge, skills and experience.

Interpretation

Board members need to spend time assessing the current level of office operations, member services and programs, and legislative activities in relation to their vision, goals, and priorities for the Chapter. The outcome of this assessment is to be an identification of the knowledge, skills, and experience needed in an Executive Director.

Guidelines for Implementation

It is essential that the Chapter Board of Directors engage in this process in order to charge the Search Committee properly. Without a clear charge, for example, Search Committees could raise or lower educational and experience requirements as needed to fit their assessment of the Chapter and the position, only to learn after their task was completed that the parameters used were not shared by the Board of Directors. Delegation of responsibility for complying with this Standard to any group other than the Board of Directors or to shorten the process by limiting the time needed for discussions to achieve consensus has been ultimately more time-consuming for

many Chapters. During Board discussions, it is helpful to identify what knowledge, skills, and experience are essential for each applicant recommended to the Board as opposed to those that are desirable.

STANDARD 53 - SEARCH PROCESS BUDGET

The Chapter Board of Directors establishes a budget for the search process to provide for the work of the Search Committee and Board of Directors, such as meeting expenses, advertising, applicant travel expenses for interviews, a visit to the Chapter office, reference checks, and contract negotiations.

Interpretation

The timing of Executive Director departures and budget development is almost never in sync, leaving the Board of Directors, with assistance from the Chapter Treasurer and Finance Committee, to craft a budget for the search process from existing resources and set parameters for the Search Committee.

Guidelines for Implementation

The Search Committee needs to approach its work knowing what it can spend so that it develops a reasonable search process. The advertising budget, for example, can vary tremendously from Chapter to Chapter depending on Chapter size and geographical area and whether the position is full-time or part-time. Travel expenses for candidates are an unknown until the process is nearing completion. Some Chapters consider paying none or only partial travel expenses to save money. This practice sends a negative message to the applicants in which the Chapter is most interested. The search process works both ways; as a Chapter is evaluating an applicant, the applicant is evaluating the Association.

STANDARD 54 - SEARCH COMMITTEE CHARGE

The Chapter Board of Directors shall charge the Search Committee in writing to:

- conduct the search process in accordance with the *Personnel Standards for NASW Chapters*
- stay within its budget allocation
- provide progress reports to the Board of Directors on specified dates
- conclude the search process and submit recommendations to the Board of Directors within four to six (4-6) months
- keep all work and deliberations of the Search Committee confidential
- not allow participation in the process by any Committee member for whom issues of nepotism (see Standard 8) or a dual relationship exists in which the Committee member may or appears to accrue personal advantage from the recommendation of a particular applicant
- not engage the outgoing Executive Director in the search process
- use a designated support staff member to refer interested persons making inquiries about the position to the Search Committee, process financial transactions relate to the Committee's budget, handle logistics for Committee meetings, and arrange for distribution of advertisements as directed by the Committee.
- recommend for interview by the Board of Directors no fewer than two (2) candidates, each possessing the knowledge, skills, and experience identified as essential by the Board.

Interpretation

The parameters of the Search Committees work must be unquestionably clear. The financial resources, confidentiality of the process, appropriate use of remaining staff members, and exclusion from the search process of any Committee member having a nepotistic or dual relationship with any applicant are essential components of a process that is in fact and in appearance fair and equitable to all applicants. The Chapter Board of Directors should specify its desire to have applicants either ranked so that the preferences of the Search Committee are known or pooled so that Board members can approach their interviews with the final candidates without knowing the preference. The Board of Directors must interview the final candidates and

make the hiring decision.

Guidelines for Implementation

The Association seeks to ensure that the search process is fair and equitable for all applicants in order to obtain the best qualified candidate for the position of Executive Director. In addition, the Association must assume a risk management approach to the conduct of the search process. When questioned about the search process or when faced with issues affecting the decision of whether to interview or select a candidate, it is best to make a well-reasoned decision in order to avoid favoritism or discrimination. Keep in mind that this is an area in which appearances of favoritism and discrimination can be as damaging as actual favoritism or discrimination. Although the Board of Directors decides if the candidates are ranked or pooled, ranking is preferable because it allows Board members to know the opinion of the Search Committee at the conclusion of deliberations.

STANDARD 55 - SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The Search Committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, including one current member of the Chapter Board of Directors, one member of the Personnel Committee, Chapter Services staff member, members of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, members who represent various special interest groups within the Chapter, and members with experience in personnel management. One National Chapter Services staff member will be designated as full voting member.

Interpretation

The Board of Directors needs to appoint a Search Committee whose members collectively possess the particular expertise needed to carry out their charge successfully and reflect a cross-section of the Chapter membership to the greatest extent possible. Attention must be paid to the legalities of the hiring process.

Guidelines for Implementation

Having a Search Committee that reflects the Chapter's diversity is desirable. However, each Chapter has a unique and dynamic blend of significant constituencies within its membership, making it unrealistic to require that all Chapter Search Committees have a set number of members representing its list of constituencies. If the Chapter has a President-Elect when the Search Committee is appointed, it is usually best for that person to chair or at least be on the Search Committee because his or her relationship with the new Executive Director will be a critical factor in the success of the Executive Director and the Chapter for several years. Once the Search Committee has been appointed and has begun its work, appointing any additional members is not recommended.

SECTION XIV - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

STANDARD 56 - SEARCH COMMITTEE PREPARATION

In preparation for writing the position announcement and advertisements, the Search Committee is to review its charge from the Chapter Board of Directors to ensure that the needed education, knowledge, skills, and experience are clearly conveyed to potential applicants, and that Committee members are prepared to evaluate applicants for overall fit with those criteria.

Interpretation

The Board of Director's charge to the Search Committee is to be clear and specific. In situations in which the Search Committee is unclear about any part of its charge or members strongly disagree with the charge, these problems must be worked out between the Committee and the Board prior to moving forward with the search process.

STANDARD 57 - RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

All applications and subsequent communications to applicants are to be sent to the Chair of the Search Committee or another member to whom the Search Committee has delegated this responsibility.

Interpretation

In order to preserve confidentiality of the process, all applications and communications must be sent directly to the Chair of the Search Committee or to another member to whom the Committee has delegated this responsibility.

Guidelines for Implementation

Applications and other applicant communications should not to be sent to the Chapter office. Members and others calling or sending inquiries to the Chapter office should be referred by staff to the Chair or another designated member of the Search Committee for information. Because Chapter Executive Director searches nearly always attract applications from current or former leaders (staff and volunteer) of the Chapter or other Chapter and National leaders, it is important to make every reasonable effort to keep the process confidential in fairness to all applicants.

STANDARD 58 - ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF APPLICATIONS

A written acknowledgment of receipt of applications and a timetable for the search process are to be sent to each applicant within seven (7) business days.

Interpretation

Because this acknowledgment is the first formal communication from the Chapter to the applicant, it should provide prompt and appropriate information about the search process.

Guidelines for Implementation

Providing a prompt and informative acknowledgment to applicants is the best way to make a good impression on applicants and at the same time reduce the need for subsequent inquiries regarding the status of an applicant's application. A personal letter with standard language is best; however, a "Dear Applicant" form letter is better than not acknowledging receipt of applications.

STANDARD 59 - APPLICANT SCREENING

The Search Committee shall conduct the preliminary screening of applications based on the minimum requirements stated in the job description and vacancy announcements.

Interpretation

Initial screening is the responsibility of the Search Committee. Screening may be done by the Chair, another Committee member, some other mutually determined group of Committee members, or the full Committee.

Guidelines for Implementation

No matter how clearly worded the Search Committee makes the advertisement, some individuals will apply with the hope that something in their cover letter or resume will convince the Committee to make them an exception to the stated minimum requirements. It is the responsibility of the Search Committee to determine the process and to conduct the screening.

STANDARD 60 - APPLICANT POOL AND RATING

The pool of qualified applicants must be evaluated on the stated criteria and skills they bring to the position. If the pool of applicants is too small, the search process and timetable will need to be extended to allow for additional advertising and recruiting. At least six to eight (6-8) qualified applicants are needed if the Search Committee is to recommend at least two (2) candidates to the

Chapter Board of Directors.

If the Search Committee determines that the recruitment process has ended with an insufficient pool of qualified candidates, the Committee is to evaluate its recruitment activities to determine how potential qualified applicants can be reached more successfully. A status report is to be made to the Chapter Board of Directors on actions to date and plans for extending the recruiting phase of the search process.

A rating system is to be developed to evaluate applicant's strengths and weaknesses, knowledge, skills, and experience required for the position.

Guidelines for Implementation

Sample rating formats used by other Chapters in the screening process are available from the NASW Office of Chapter Services. If the Search Committee concludes its recruitment process only to find that the pool of qualified candidates is insufficient, the Committee needs to evaluate the recruitment process and determine how it might reach qualified potential applicants more successfully during the extended search.

The Search Committee is to evaluate the recruiting process when it is determined that it did not result in an adequate pool of qualified applicants. A status report to the Chapter Board of Directors is crucial because any delay in the original timetable is likely to affect the Chapter's Transition Plan. The Board of Directors will need to review its plan in light of the Search Committee's decision to extend the recruitment process.

Guidelines for Implementation

The decision to extend the recruitment period is often difficult, because the Search Committee desires to complete the search as quickly as possible. Many times the quickest way to complete the search process is to extend the initial recruitment phase so that an adequate pool of qualified applicants is available for interview.

Applicants often withdraw for a variety of reasons between the time they apply or are recommended to the Chapter Board of Directors and the interviewing stage. Sometimes the Board of Directors is unable to negotiate an Employment Agreement with the applicants they have interviewed. Given the possible situations that may arise during the selection and negotiation process, having a large pool of qualified applicants gives the Chapter more options to consider in less time than a new search can be conducted.

STANDARD 61 - INTERVIEW PROCESS

The Search Committee is to determine the number of applicants to be interviewed, what information about the Chapter will be provided to applicants prior to an interview, what information will be provided by applicants (including the response to the request). Please let us know if you require special accessibility or accommodations), and the number of votes an applicant must receive in order to be recommended to the Chapter Board of Directors.

Interpretation

The Search Committee decides how many candidates need to be interviewed in order to have at least two (2) applicants to recommend to the Board of Directors. After the initial screening of resumes to identify applicants meeting the stated minimum qualifications, Committee members decide if they will conduct one or more rounds of interviews. Prior to any round of interviews, the Committee needs to determine what information about the Chapter and Association will be provided to applicants in advance and what, if any information applicants are to be asked to provide the Committee at or before their interview.

Consensus among Search Committee members regarding which applicants most closely meet the parameters set by the Board of Directors is the ideal. However, the Search Committee needs to determine prior to the interviews the number of votes needed for an applicant to advance to the next round of interviews should the Committee not be able to achieve

consensus. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority is highly recommended.

Applicants need to be informed that the Association supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will make reasonable accommodations as required and appropriate for the individual. Questions regarding compliance with such requests should be directed to the National Office (Chapter Services, Human Resources or General Counsel).

Guidelines for Implementation

On the basis of the experiences of many Chapters, Search Committees need to interview at least six to eight (6-8) qualified applicants in order to identify at least two (2) applicants for recommendation to the Board of Directors. The size of the applicant pool is critical because many times the applicants interviewed by the Search Committee and recommended to the Board of Directors will withdraw prior to or after the Board interview, the applicants will not emerge from the Board interviews as viable candidates, or the Board may not be able to negotiate a contract with the candidate they select.

If the Search Committee has a sufficient pool of qualified candidates, the Chapter has more options available for consideration. Only one round of Search Committee interviews is necessary.

In order to give applicants the opportunity to respond to interview questions from a base of common information, the Search Committee should send each applicant the following Chapter materials in advance of the interview:

- annual report
- audit and budget
- strategic plan/program objectives
- National and Chapter bylaws
- personnel policies
- benefits summary

The cover letter to the materials should include the following:

- an interview time and location
- information on the interview format
- procedure for reimbursement
- identification of items the applicant is to provide before or bring to the interview (such as writing samples or reference letters)
- the timetable for the next steps in the search process after conclusion of the interview

When scheduling interviews, allow at least one to one and one-half (1 to 1.5) hours to conduct a thorough interview with additional time allotted for Committee discussion after each. Arrange interview schedules to ensure that applicants do not encounter one another entering or leaving the interview site. Schedule no more than four (4) interviews per day to manage the process appropriately and keep Committee members fresh and equally attentive to all applicants.

STANDARD 62 - NOTIFICATION OF STATUS

Once the Search Committee has scheduled the interviews, letters are to be sent to the remaining applicants notifying them of their status.

Interpretation

All applicants are to be informed of the status of their application at this point and at each step in the search process.

Guidelines for Implementation

Applicants should be treated with courtesy and respect throughout the process. The image of the Association in the minds of applicants will endure long after the search process is concluded. Because only one person can be hired, how the remaining applicants feel about the way the

Chapter conducted the search process is critical. Status letters should identify the next steps in the process and the projected timetable for their completion. Applicants not selected for interviews should be thanked for their interest in the position.

STANDARD 63 - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Search Committee is to develop interview questions that enable the Committee to assess an applicant's knowledge, skill, and experience in those areas identified in the job description and by the Chapter Board of Directors as necessary and desirable. The final questions should be reviewed to be certain that they solicit the information the Committee seeks and are appropriate to ask in the context of an employment interview. All questions are to be asked of all applicants interviewed.

Interpretation

Considerable time is required to develop questions that are most likely to provide the information in which the Search Committee is interested. Parameters are placed on the list by the length of time allotted for each interview and by legal constraints regarding the appropriateness of soliciting certain types of information.

Guidelines for Implementation

What a Chapter seeks in a new Executive Director depends on the state of its internal operations, external relationships, strategic plan goals, and political challenges. There are basic competencies needed by all Chapter Executive Directors. Questions in basic areas of association management are being collected by the NASW Office of Chapter Services so that future Search Committees may benefit from the past work of other Chapters. The NASW Office of Chapter Services can be a resource in evaluating questions and assisting the Search Committee in reforming risky questions to solicit the same information in a more appropriate way.

STANDARD 64 - SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

Upon completion of its work, the Search Committee is to make a written report to the Chapter Board of Directors that will include the following items:

- review of the search process
- demographics of the applicant pool and final candidates
- questions asked of candidates by the Search Committee
- questions recommended for use by the Board in conducting its interviews
- the list of recommended candidates with resumes (pooled or ranked)
- Search Committee meeting minutes
- an accounting of Committee expenditures.

Interpretation

The Search Committee Report is a key document that appraises Board members of the process and progress of the Committee and prepares the Chapter Board of Directors to proceed with the concluding stages of the search process.

Guidelines for Implementation

Much of the information included in the Search Committee Report, such as advertisements, letters, and demographics of the applicant pool and final candidates, will have been generated at different points throughout the process and is not created just for the report. The better the Search Committee organizes and manages its work from the beginning, the easier it will be to prepare a report at this point.

SECTION XV - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STANDARD 65 - REFERENCE CHECKING

References for candidates who will be interviewed by the Chapter Board of Directors should be checked by the President or other designee. At least three (3) persons identified by the candidate as references and the candidate's current employer should be contacted by telephone and asked a list of appropriate questions. References are not to be solicited from anyone whom the candidate has not given the Chapter written permission to contact. The President is to work with the NASW Office of Chapter Services to ensure that the reference solicitation process is conducted in a manner that will not place the Association at risk.

Interpretation

References are an essential part of the hiring process, and it is important to obtain independent informed assessments regarding a candidate's work prior to making an offer of employment. The process of obtaining references is a sensitive area, and it is important that no actions are taken that would place the Association at risk for legal challenge.

Guidelines for Implementation

Assistance with questions that can be asked to solicit as much appropriate information as possible is available through the NASW Office of Chapter Services.

STANDARD 66-CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS

The Chapter Board of Directors is responsible for determining how the candidate interviews are to be conducted, what questions are to be asked and by whom, and what numbers of votes are required for selection of the person who will be offered the position (only Board members who were present for all interviews can vote) (see Standards 60, 61, and 62 and their Interpretation and Guidelines for Implementation).

Interpretation

Individual members of the Chapter Board of Directors must be informed participants in Board activities at this point in the search process. Depending on the size of the Board, the scheduling of Board meetings, and other practical considerations, the Board may choose to do this planning during a regular or special meeting or may ask the Executive Committee to consider and recommend options.

Guidelines for Implementation

Planning and preparation must be completed in advance of the meeting at which candidates are interviewed. Most Chapters will find it easier to convene the Executive Committee more frequently than the entire Board of Directors. The Executive Committee can prepare plans and options as a group and keep Board members informed and engaged through the mail, ensuring that by the time interviews begin, all Board members are informed participants in a process they designed. Standards 60, 61, and 62 provide guidance for the preparation and logistics of conducting interviews and should be reviewed and followed carefully. The issue of the number of votes a candidate must receive in order to be selected as the person to whom an offer will be made is important. If the Board cannot achieve unanimity about which candidate should be offered the position, at least three-fourths (3/4) of the voting members should be in agreement on one candidate.

STANDARD 67 - EMPLOYMENT OFFER

The Chapter Board of Directors is responsible for setting the salary and benefits, relocation expenses reimbursement, start date, quantifiable performance expectations, and evaluation process. The President is to negotiate terms with the candidate selected by the Board, using the Draft Employment Agreement for Executive Directors (see Appendix I). The President must

ensure that the salary and benefits set forth in both the initial offer and the final employment agreement are reviewed to ensure all legal and personnel requirements of the Association are met. The agreement is signed by the Director of the NASW Office of Chapter Services or designee as required for the agreement to become effective.

Interpretation

The Board of Directors is responsible for hiring an Executive Director. The practical task of negotiating the terms of a mutually acceptable employment agreement is best left to one person. The NASW Office of Chapter Services will provide the President with a copy of the Draft Employment Agreement to be used in negotiations and will coordinate with the Association's General Counsel the process of clarifying or modifying portions of the Draft Agreement as negotiations proceed. Chapters cannot retain outside attorneys for review and consultation regarding the contract (or any other purpose) without written authorization from the Association's General Counsel.

Guidelines for Implementation

The Board of Directors exercises oversight of the hiring process by setting parameters within which the President can negotiate the Employment Agreement. The experiences with personnel issues and employment negotiations in many Chapters led National Office staff to develop a Draft Employment Agreement. This agreement is a draft because each Chapter has unique needs and certain sections may need to be modified to reflect that fact and because the final Employment Agreement must have specified schedules attached that will be different for each Chapter. The NASW Office of Chapter Services staff will provide the President with the Draft Employment Agreement, assist in the process of modifying the draft and preparing the required schedules, and consult with the Association's General Counsel as appropriate.

STANDARD 68 - RETENTION OF SEARCH PROCESS MATERIALS

Upon conclusion of negotiations and the hiring of a new Executive Director, the following items are to be archived:

- the chronological log
- resumes with attachments
- applicant pool demographics
- Search Committee minutes
- reports to the Board of Directors

All other remaining documents are to be destroyed at this time.

Interpretation

Specified documents are to be kept so that the Chapter has a record of the process and procedures adopted for the selection process. This record is required by the Association in the event that questions are raised at a later time.

Guidelines for Implementation

It is critical that appropriate documents are developed and used throughout the search process and that those documents critical to the process are maintained. It is not necessary to keep documents other than those specified in the Standard.

STANDARD 69 - TRANSITION PLAN REVIEW

Before the start date for the new Executive Director, the Chapter Board of Directors is to review and revise as needed the Transition Plan (see Standard 45) developed at the beginning of the

transition period, particularly the sections regarding the orientation and training of the new Executive Director and expectations for Chapter office operations and programming during the next six (6) months. When changes are necessary, the newly modified Transition Plan is to be submitted to the NASW Office of Chapter Services for review and approval.

Interpretation

The Transition Plan and any changes made as necessary to reflect the status of the Chapter's operations at this time are to be reviewed at this point, particularly the unique orientation and training needs of the person hired and the impact that person's knowledge, skills, and experience will have on the Chapter's operations and expectations for operations over the next six (6) months. The revised Transition Plan is to be submitted to the NASW Office of Chapter Services for review and approval.

Guidelines for Implementation

Many items in the Transition Plan will be appropriate without modification, such as plans for announcing the selection of and introducing the new Executive Director to the membership and various Chapter constituencies and outside organizations. Depending on the length of time the Chapter took to conclude the search and hiring process, expectations for certain programs and services may need to be modified to reflect the actual performance expectations contained in the Employment Agreement. The NASW Office of Chapter Services can provide consultation and technical assistance during their review and approval process and enable the Chapter to benefit from the experiences of other Chapters during this new phase of the transition process.