

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS Standard Operating Procedures

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

References

COA Governing Documents

- Strategic Plan
- Bylaws

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Article

I. PURPOSE

The Commissioned Officers Association (COA) of United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Communications and Public Relations Committee Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) provides operational and procedural guidance for the COA's **Communications and Public Relations Committee (CPRC)**.

This SOP applies to all documents created that are related to all functions within the COA CPRC. It establishes policies, processes, records, and acceptance criteria under the auspices of COA. This SOP does not apply to documents created by other organizations outside of the COA CPRC.

II. MISSION

Advance the mission and visibility of the COA and USPHS by fostering clear and effective communication with members, stakeholders, and the public.

III. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES & ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Committee Responsibility

CPRC shall work with the COA Board of Directors and COA staff to facilitate communication with its members and the public.

Section 2. Structure

The CPRC consists of a Committee Chair, a Vice Chair, a secretary, and Chair(s) of the three Subcommittees [Social Media Subcommittee, Frontline Subcommittee, Special Projects Subcommittee], and active COA members in good standing.

CPRC leadership can designate an individual to serve as a co-chair to allow for mentoring in preparation for leadership transitions and for coverage in case of deployment or other circumstances. The CPRC Chair may form permanent or ad-hoc subcommittees, as needed.

The Secretary role and each of the subcommittee chair(s) positions are one-year terms with the option to extend each year. When known in advance of vacating a subcommittee chair position, the outgoing chair should make every effort to onboard a new subcommittee chair at least 6 months in advance of term ending date.

A. **Chair:** The CPRC Chair shall currently serve on the COA Board of Directors and must be appointed by the Chair of the COA Board of Directors. The Communications and Public Relations Chair acts as a liaison between the COA Board of Directors and the COA CPRC. The CPRC Chair facilitates, organizes, and maintains order in meetings, advises the CPRC on new and existing projects, and reviews and finalizes Committee-specific documents. The current CPRC Chair may have input on the selection of the next Communications and Public Relations Chair and/or Vice Chair.

- B. **Vice Chair:** The Vice Chair is in a leadership support role and mentorship position. The Vice Chair is mentored by the Chair in preparation to become the eventual CPRC Chair. This allows for a smooth transition during leadership changes as well as enhanced effectiveness in Committee dynamics and leadership. The Vice Chair shall act for the Chair in absence of the Chair.
- C. **Secretary:** The CPRC Secretary must be extremely organized and detail oriented. The Secretary must communicate efficiently, plan and prepare for meetings ahead of time, respond to requests of information in a timely manner, and ensure accurate documentation of Committee activities. The Secretary shall carefully preserve, on file, all reports and activities presented to the Board and shall conduct necessary business and professional correspondence.
- D. **Social Media Subcommittee Chair(s):** The Chair is responsible for researching, coordinating, and vetting all social media posts for the COA Facebook and LinkedIn Administrator prior to posting. The Chair will solicit and delegate relevant social media tasks to the subcommittee members. The Chair acts as the liaison between subcommittee members, CPRC Leadership, COA Committees, as appropriate, and the COA Executive Director for submission and approval of social media posts.
- E. **Frontline Subcommittee Chair(s):** The Chair is responsible for providing direction and delegation for publication reviews, conducting interviews, and developing content for *Frontline*. The Chair organizes monthly topics and provides outreach to engage officers to create content. The Chair acts as a liaison between subcommittee members and the CPRC Chair and Vice Chair to advise on new initiatives and existing projects.
- F. **Special Projects Chair(s):** The Chair is responsible for providing direction, delegation and support to ad hoc and special project requests from COA leadership, Board of Directors Executive Committee and the Symposium Planning Committee, as appropriate.
- G. **Committee Members:** Any COA member, in good standing, is encouraged to serve on the CPRC.
 - i. **Composition:** The CPRC aim to be diverse in the following: Agency/Operating Divisions, geographic location, rank, and active-duty status. The size of the CPRC shall be adaptable to meet the CPRC **mission**, as determined by the CPRC Committee Chair.
 - ii. **Recruitment of Committee members:** Wide, open calls for committee members is conducted using a blast e-mail through COA and an announcement in *Frontline*. The call for volunteers is typically done at the beginning of each Operational Year.

IV. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Section 1. CPRC Position Responsibilities

The CPRC Chair must keep the Committee viable and productive through aligning

the meetings and projects to facilitate the mission of the CPRC.

A. Chair: The CPRC Chair will have the following responsibilities:

- i. Create written reports for Committee meetings to communicate project progress and Committee activities. Meeting minutes shall be archived and maintained by the Secretary on a shared platform.
- ii. Prepare written and verbal reports for the COA Board of Directors meetings.
- iii. Review Committee SOP and other Committee documents (as listed in the Committee SOP) at least annually.
- iv. Engage and involve as many Committee members as possible in discussions by soliciting opinions and experiences.
- v. Confirm individual project milestones are met, and if not, identify the cause and rectify the problem.
- vi. Provide orientation to new Committee members to review the mission of the Committee, current projects, time, frequency of meetings, and expectations.
- vii. Lead and promote use and dissemination of the [COA Communication & Public Relations Calendar](#).
- viii. Prepare End-of-the-year Letters of Appreciation for members identified as going above and beyond normal subcommittee workload.
- ix. Mentor the Vice Chair:
 - Conduct regular meetings with the Vice Chair for enhanced coordination
 - Review of available resources:
 1. COA Strategic Plan and Bylaws
 2. The Standard Operating Procedure
 3. COA website

B. Vice Chair: The CPRC Vice Chair will assume the following responsibilities:

- i. Coordinate updating/reviewing the SOP:
 - Start this process in approximately one month after the COA Operational Year begins, after officers are familiar with their responsibilities.
 - Determine the best approach to updating all necessary and required sections.
 - Compile drafts as needed, creating a final SOP draft in time for COA's annual SOP updates.
 - Present any changes or major updates to the SOP at the COA Board Meeting for approval. Request the Chair and Board of Directors review and approve the newest SOP version by signing and dating the document.
 - Confirm upload of the document on the OnBoard Meeting Platform and the COA website by COA staff.
 - Once all new members and continuing members are identified, send a list of member names to the COA Membership & Development Coordinator to check each member is current on dues.

- ii. Coordinate with the Chair to regularly update the [COA Communication & Public Relations Calendar](#).
- iii. Observe the Chair and gather necessary information and knowledge to prepare for the upcoming term as Chair.
- iv. Meet regularly with the Chair to coordinate on and support administrative and leadership CPRC tasks.

C. Secretary: The CPRC Secretary will assume the following responsibilities:

- i. Send meeting requests for monthly and ad hoc meetings.
- ii. Distribute agenda to CPRC members prior to meetings.
- iii. Take meeting minutes for all official Committee meetings and as requested by the Chair. This includes the bi-monthly meeting and additional meetings for the Chair and Vice Chair.
- iv. Prepare and distribute meeting minutes to the CPRC Committee.
 - Maintain accurate records, minutes of all meetings and attendance of the Committee.
 - If the secretary is unavailable to attend the meeting, the secretary must find a suitable replacement.
 - The first draft of meeting minutes for all meetings are sent to the Chair and Vice Chair for review and comment within 72 hours after the Committee meeting.
 - After the minutes are officially approved, final minutes are sent electronically to the Committee Chair and the Secretary for uploading to the shared platform. The shared platform will serve as a permanent archive repository for meeting minutes.
 - Distribute draft minutes for approval via the listserv to all Committee members within a one week after the meeting.
 - Maintain accurate records of Committee meeting attendance.
 - Keep updated contact information for all Committee members (include both work and personal e-mail).
- v. Prepare End-of-the-year Certificates of Appreciation (see "Resources" folder in OnBoard Meeting Platform)
 - Contact subcommittee chair(s) to determine which members actively participated in the subcommittee work throughout the operational year.
 - Determine which subcommittee members went above and beyond in the workloads required.
 - Create a Certificate of Appreciation for each member identified and submit the names to the CPRC Chair and Vice Chair to obtain a Letter of Appreciation.
- vi. Prior to the end of the operational year, the Secretary will contact each of the subcommittee chair(s) to determine if CPRC members will continue serving on the committee or move on to another opportunity. Once all returning members are identified, a list will be sent to the CPRC Chair and Vice Chair.

- D. Subcommittee Chair(s): The subcommittee chairs will assume the following responsibilities:
- i. Scheduling and managing subcommittee meetings.
 - ii. Determine meeting frequency and times that meet the operational tempo needed for the workload of the group.
 - iii. Communicate subcommittee needs, concerns and requests with CPRC leadership throughout the operational year.
 - iv. Provide directions, information and updates to subcommittee members regarding work taskings and deadlines.
 - v. Develop written and verbal reports of subcommittee projects and report up to CPRC leadership.
 - vi. Provide a written end-of-year report detailing subcommittee accomplishments and challenges faced throughout the operational year.
 - vii. Provide an annual end-of-year review of subcommittee members, determining returning members and those vacating the subcommittee.
 - viii. Conduct an annual review of the CPRC SOP and provide timely edits at the end of the operational year for publication.
 - ix. Identify members that deserve a Certificate of Appreciation (COA) or Letter of Appreciation (LOA); for LOAs chair(s) will need to provide a list of accomplishments over the operational year demonstrating work warrants issuance of an LOA by CPRC leadership.
- E. Subcommittee Members: All CPRC members are expected to participate on a CPRC subcommittee. They are to fulfill the following roles and responsibilities:
- i. Be willing and able to give the necessary time to attend meetings and perform any assigned duties. CPRC Meetings occur at the discretion of the Chair but generally occur quarterly for one hour. Subcommittee meetings occur at the discretion of the subcommittee Chair(s), this will be determined at the start of the operational year.
 - ii. Actively participate in discussion and be willing to listen to and respect others' viewpoints.
 - iii. Think in terms of the welfare of the group rather than personal interests.
 - iv. Accept and follow through on assignments.

Section 2. Meetings

The CPRC shall hold at least quarterly meetings when subcommittee chairs shall report on each of their various activities. The meetings are scheduled at the discretion of the Committee Chair or Vice Chair. The COA CPRC operational year is July 1 to June 30. The meeting schedule will be sent to the Committee Members with a videoconference link and a calendar invite.

Section 3. Certificate of Appreciation Eligibility

Committee members who wish to receive a certificate of participation in the

CPRC must attend at least half of the scheduled committee meetings and/or report they will not be in attendance prior to the meeting date/time. Active participation is encouraged and plays a role in Certificate of Appreciation consideration, which is at the discretion of the CPRC Chair.

Section 4. Letter of Appreciation Eligibility

Committee members who wish to receive a letter of appreciation must meet all the requirements of the certificate of appreciation eligibility listed in section 3 and show work that goes above and beyond generally expected duties of the subcommittee. Subcommittee Chair(s) will be responsible for determining the benchmarks for a committee member to receive a letter of appreciation.

V. SUBCOMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Social Media Subcommittee

The Social Media Subcommittee Chair(s) will assume the following responsibilities:

- i. Overseeing the proposal, solicitation, and creation of monthly content to post on social media.
- ii. Coordinating time-sensitive posts with CPRC Leadership, Director of External and Legislative Affairs, and the Executive Director of COA.
- iii. Coordinating sharing of COA posts and influencers to share on other Facebook pages related to Officers. Some examples include Commissioned Corps Officers USPHS (UNOFFICIAL), USPHS Commissioned Corps, Local COA branch pages, Retired US Public Health Service (USPHS), Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG).
- iv. Implementing use of current COA hashtags.
- v. Participating in and helping to coordinate social media as part of the USPHS Commissioned Officers Foundation Scientific and Training Symposium.
- vi. Obtaining and tracking COA Photo Release Form (Appendix A) for all photo submissions for social media posts.
- vii. Monitoring the CPRC-specific social media email:
coaphsfacebook@gmail.com

Section 2. Frontline Subcommittee

The Frontline Subcommittee Chair(s) will assume the following responsibilities:

- i. Scheduling, leading, and managing Frontline Subcommittee meetings as needed, including setting agendas and tracking action items.
- ii. Developing and coordinating monthly *Frontline* content themes, including proposing topics aligned with COA priorities and emerging public health issues.
- iii. Overseeing and/or conducting interviews for Officer Spotlights and other requested articles.
- iv. Coordinating outreach, marketing, and engagement efforts (e.g., calls for articles) with CPRC leadership, COA branches, and Board of

- Directors representatives to promote diverse and timely submissions.
- v. Monitoring and managing the CPRC-specific Frontline Subcommittee email inbox: coa.frontline.sc@gmail.com, including assignment of article reviews and communication with authors.
 - vi. Leading and managing the article review process, including:
 - Assigning reviewers and ensuring timely turnaround (per Article Review SOP timelines).
 - Ensuring alignment with [Frontline Publication Guidelines](#) and [USPHS Brand Guidelines](#).
 - Tracking article review submissions and metrics.
 - vii. Maintaining article tracking systems and reporting, including providing a summary of reviewed articles as requested by CPRC leadership.
 - viii. Coordinating with CPRC leadership on updates to the Frontline Publication Guidelines and recommending strategies to increase article submissions and visibility.
 - Reminding authors when submitting articles and photos that all by-lines, pictured Officers or officers mentioned in the article must be an active dues paying member of COA.
 - ix. Leading *Frontline*-related efforts for major COA initiatives as requested by CPRC leadership, including coordination of article development for the Commissioned Officers Foundation USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.

Section 3. [Special Projects Subcommittee](#)

Special Projects Subcommittee Chair(s) will assume the following responsibilities:

- i. Scheduling and managing subcommittee meetings.
- ii. Planning the annual COA Photo Contest:
 - Maintain the scheduled due dates for the current year.
 - Draft an advertisement for a call for photos to be used for social media and Frontline. This is in partnership with the Social Media Subcommittee and Frontline Subcommittee Chairs.
 - To enter the contest, the member must review and sign a consent form which includes all photo contest rules and requirements. A signed consent form must be submitted by submitters to jstuart@coausphs.org.
 - The COA staff coordinates a judging panel mixed with COA and Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Board of Directors members to decide the three top winners.
 - The prizes should be confirmed each year by CPRC leadership with COA leadership. In the past, the three top winners are awarded the following: 1st place annual COA membership for 1 year, 2nd place \$100 gift card, 3rd place \$50 gift card.
 - The COA staff obtains and tracks COA Photo Release Forms (Appendix A) for each photo submission.
 - Provide recommendations on how to elevate and improve dissemination for messaging of the Photo Contest.
- iii. Planning the annual COF USPHS Symposium Coin Design Contest:

- Draft an advertisement for the Coin Contest for social media and *Frontline*.
 - Draft an announcement for *Frontline* to inform the winners.
 - Provide recommendations on how to elevate and improve dissemination for messaging of the Coin Contest.
- iv. Provide project support for ad hoc requests from COA leadership, Board of Directors Executive Committee and Symposium Planning Committee where appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix A. COA Photo Consent Form



COA Photo Use
Consent Form.pdf



Photo Use Consent Form

I, _____ do hereby give the Commissioned Officers Association (COA)
INSERT NAME OF SUBJECT IN PHOTO

and its successors and/or assigns, the absolute and irrevocable right and permission with respect to
the photograph(s) taken on _____ at _____
INSERT DATE INSERT LOCATION

and submitted to COA by _____
INSERT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP SUBMITTING PHOTOGRAPH(S)

- (a) To copyright same in its own name or any other name that it may choose.
- (b) To edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish and distribute this photo for purposes of publicizing COA programs or for any other lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written or electronic copy, wherein my likeness appears.
- (c) To use, reuse, publish and republish the same in whole or in part, individually or in conjunction with other photographs or images, in any medium, and for any purpose whatsoever, including but not limited to illustration, promotion, advertising and trade, and publication in all COA publications and media of any kind or description, including but not limited to COA's website; and
- (d) To use my name in conjunction therewith if it so chooses.

I hereby release and discharge the photographer, his or its heirs, executors, assigns and any designees (including any agency, client, broadcaster, periodical or other publication) from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of such photographs, film or tape, including but not limited to any claims for defamation or invasion of privacy.

I am of legal age (age 18 and over), an active COA member, and have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents thereof.

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

Mobile phone: _____

Personal e-mail: _____

Signature: _____

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