

**US Department of Health and Human Services
Health Resources and Services Administration
Bureau of Health Professions**

National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP)

Briefing Guide for Council Members

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Table of Contents

Authorizing Legislation.....	3
Purpose	3
Function.....	3
Composition of Membership	3
Roles and Responsibilities.....	4
Meetings.....	5
Reports.....	6
Travel Policies and Procedures	6
Reporting Requirements.....	6

BRIEFING GUIDE

Authorizing Legislation

The National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP) is authorized by Section 851 (42 U.S.C. 297t) of the Public Health Service Act as amended. The Council is governed by provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), as amended, which sets forth standards for the formation and use of advisory committees. NACNEP was established as the National Advisory Council on Nurse Training on September 4, 1964 and renamed in 1988.

Purpose

The Federal Government has long recognized the important role of the public in developing effective policies. Advisory committees are a way of ensuring public and expert involvement and advice in Federal decision-making. Congress enacted the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) which established the guidelines under which all Federal advisory committees must operate.

The Secretary and, by delegation, the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), are charged under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, as amended, with responsibility for a wide range of activities in support of nursing education and practice which include: enhancement of the composition of the nursing workforce, improvement of the distribution and utilization of nurses to meet the health needs of the Nation, expansion of the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of nurses to enhance the quality of nursing practice, development and dissemination of improved models of organization, financing and delivery of nursing services, and promotion of interdisciplinary approaches to the delivery of health services particularly in the context of public health and primary care.

Function

NACNEP advises and makes recommendations to the Secretary and Congress on policy matters arising in the administration of Title VIII including the range of issues relating to the nurse workforce, nursing education and nursing practice improvement. NACNEP may make specific recommendations to the Secretary and Congress regarding Title VIII programs particularly within the context of the enabling legislation as a means of enhancing the health of the public through the development of the nursing workforce.

Additionally, NACNEP provides advice to the Secretary and Congress in preparation of general regulations and with respect to policy matters arising in the administration of this title including the range of issues relating to nurse supply, education and practice improvement.

Composition of Membership

NACNEP membership consists of the HHS Secretary or delegate (who is an ex-officio member and chairs the council) and at least 21 (at most 23) individuals who are not officers or employees of the federal government. Members serve overlapping four-year terms and meet at least twice each year.

Members are appointed by the HHS Secretary and include:

- nine members from leading authorities in the various fields of nursing, nurse education (advanced, secondary and associate degree programs), advanced practice nursing groups (representing, for example, nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives and nurse anesthetists), hospitals, and other institutions and organizations that provide nursing services;
- two members who are practicing professional nurses;
- two members from the general public;
- two members who are full time students enrolled in schools of nursing.

All members are appointed as Special Government Employees (SGE). The SGE category applies an important but limited set of conflict of interest requirements to a group of individuals who provide important but limited, service to the Government. SGEs provide temporary service to the Government (not to exceed 130 days during any period of 365 consecutive days with or without compensation). SGEs are recruited because they provide outside expertise or perspectives that might be unavailable among an agency's regular employees. SGEs are generally used as advisory committee members, individual experts or consultants.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair:

The HHS Secretary (or the delegate of the Secretary, who shall be an ex officio member and shall serve as the Chairperson)

- Presides at all committee meetings and manages the agenda;
- Ensures that all rules of order and conduct are maintained during each session;
- Calls on individuals for opinions and comments.
- Calls for a vote when required;
- Manages public participation during the public comment period; and,
- Certifies the accuracy of the minutes of each committee meeting prior to their distribution.

Designated Federal Official (DFO):

- Convenes, attends, and adjourns Council meetings;
- Approves the Council meeting agenda;
- Assures that deadlines are met and that the Council is meeting its objectives;
- Assures that reports, transcripts, minutes, working papers, drafts, studies, agendas, or other documents prepared for or by the advisory committee are maintained;
- Initiates all nominations and personnel actions for new members;
- Initiates letters of invitation and certificates of appreciation for Council members as appropriate;
- Responsible for preparing, submitting, and assuring approval of Council charter renewals and all annual reports on Council activities;
- Assures that Council members understand their responsibilities while serving on the Council and assuring that all initial and annual reporting forms are submitted and complete;
- Provides orientation to new members; and,
- Serves as the Chair for Council meetings if necessary.

Member:

- Serves as a source of independent expertise and advice on policy and program activities carried out by the Council;
- Attends scheduled meetings of the full committee in their entirety and, as appropriate, any meetings of subcommittees of which he/she is a member;
- Reviews material before meetings or conference calls to allow for effective discussion, commenting, and voting on issues brought before the Council;
- Responds in a timely matter to emails and calls regarding Council activities;
- Reads and understands provisions related to conflict of interest (COI) ethics and confidentiality and completes required forms relating to these areas;
- Protects and maintain as confidential any privileged information disclosed in the meeting;
- Schedules additional time outside of the meetings to work on various tasks in support of NACNEP (writing reports, obtaining data, corresponding with experts in the field, identification of speakers, identifying meeting topics, etc.);
- Promptly notifies the DFO or Chair of any changes in personal schedule that may prevent his/her participation in all or part of scheduled meetings; and,
- Completes necessary paperwork to ensure compensation for his/her duties.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees may be established with the approval of the Secretary or designee. Subcommittee members may be members of NACNEP. The subcommittee shall make recommendations to be deliberated the full Council. HRSA's Committee Management Officer will be notified upon the establishment of the each subcommittee and will be provided information on the subcommittee's name, membership, function, and estimated frequency of meetings.

Writing Committee

The Writing Committee's responsibility is to review, critique, and provide written comments and/or revisions to the drafts of the NACNEP Reports to the Secretary and Congress. The Writing Committee is led by a chair that is selected during the Council meeting. Participation on the Writing Committee is voluntary, and members must be willing to review and respond to all drafts in a timely fashion to ensure that reports are finalized and submitted through the HRSA Clearance process efficiently and effectively. The Writing Committee chair must be willing to synthesize feedback from Committee members, convene conference calls with the Committee as needed, and convey feedback to the DFO regarding the status of the reports.

Meetings

NACNEP meetings shall be held at least two times a year at the call of the DFO or designee. Meetings shall be held jointly with other entities as appropriate including the Council on Graduate Medical Education; Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-Based Linkages; and the Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry. No later than 14 days prior to the convening of a meeting, the Council shall prepare and make available an agenda for the meeting. Prior to or during their meetings, the Council shall distribute relevant materials on the issues to be addressed. No later than 30 days after the adjournment of this meeting, the Council shall prepare and make available to the public a summary of the meeting and any actions taken by the Council based upon the meeting.

Reports

The Council shall annually prepare and submit to the Secretary, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, a report describing the activities of the Council including its findings and recommendations.

Travel Policies and Procedures

Members shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of Title 5, USC while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Council. Any such travel shall be approved by a Federal Government official in accordance with Standard Government Travel Regulations.

Travel vouchers must be signed by the designated federal employee certifying the expenses were incurred for performing official travel. The designated employee signs the voucher in GovTrip on behalf of members. Members are responsible for adhering to the following procedures:

- After completion of travel, the member must submit all original receipts for all expenses incurred (except meals) to the designated employee within one week of travel.
- The voucher is prepared by the designated employee and is based on the information that is submitted. A copy of the completed voucher is printed and sent to the member to verify the accuracy of information. If correct, the member must sign the voucher and return this original signed copy back to the designated employee.
- When the original signed voucher is received, the designated employee must upload it into the document section of GovTrip.
- For members who are driving their privately owned vehicle (POV) to the meeting, driving directions must be obtained from MapQuest.com to determine distance measurements between the place of origin and the meeting destination. These documents should be included in with expense receipts.

Reporting Requirements

All members are responsible for annually completing Financial Disclosure forms with the Federal Agency annually. In order to protect the public's trust, it is necessary to ensure that Government employees, including SGEs, uphold the highest ethical standards. One of the ways this can be accomplished is by collecting financial disclosure information from Government employees and reviewing it to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Most SGEs file a confidential financial disclosure report which is not available to the public. All members will be notified by the NACNEP DFO when and to whom to submit their annual OGE Form 450. Continued membership on the Council is dependent upon its timely submission. Completed forms are reviewed for completeness and conflicts by HRSA's ethics officials, taking into consideration the duties and position of Council members when assessing for potential conflicts of interest. Members may receive follow-up questions from the HRSA ethics official regarding additional information that is needed, or simply to answer incomplete entries. When the form is complete and does not disclose any conflicts of interest, the form is signed and processed.

Council members are subject to legal restrictions concerning foreign activities. Consequently all SGEs must submit annually a Foreign Activities Questionnaire, HHS Form 697. In addition Council members must also complete annual training on Ethics rules and regulations. All members will be notified by the NACNEP DFO when these forms and training are due. Continued membership on the Council is dependent upon their timely completion and submission.