

# Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Committee Handbook

September 20, 2008



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## **Introduction**

Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (ArizonaRID), and the AD-HOC Committee Guideline Handbook Committee on which they serve, trust that the Committee Handbook will help each committee throughout performance to lead and achieve their objectives and add value to ArizonaRID, their members, and other stakeholders.

This handbook is intended to aid you and to be self-explanatory.

This handbook includes 5 sections:

- Bylaws
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Policy and Procedure Manual
- Committee
- Appendix

This handbook has been developed with the assistance of similar bylaws/handbook at the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), Ohio Chapter of RID, and Robert's Rules of Order.

This resource provides you with a guide as you form your committee and work with its members. The handbook clearly and thoroughly explains the purpose and structure of a committee and the roles of its members. It can serve as a tool for all committee members.

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## **I. Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf By-Laws**

### **Article V: Committees**

#### *Section 2: Standing Committees*

A. The Board of Directors by a plurality vote of the quorum, shall have the right to establish any standing committee deemed necessary to carry out the objectives of the organization as set forth in these Bylaws and/or mandated by the voting membership.

B. The Board of Directors shall determine the operating guidelines for each active committee. These guidelines shall include, but not limited to, specific objectives and time lines.

C. Standing committees shall be comprised of members in good standing of the organization and be approved by the Board of Directors.

D. The President upon approval of the Board of Directors shall appoint the Chairperson of each standing committee.

E. Each member of the Board of Directors with the exception of the President shall be a member of at least one standing committee.

F. Members of the Board of Directors shall not be chairpersons of standing committees.

G. The standing committees of this organization shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Bylaws Committee: for recommending bylaws changes and to assure that the current bylaws are adhered to.

2. Fundraising Committee: for generating financial support for the organization's activities

3. Membership Committee: for the recruitment and orientation of new chapter members, plus the maintenance of membership lists.

4. Nominations Committee: for generating lists of names of members willing and interested in serving on the various committees and other elected capacities within the chapter.

5. Professional Development Committee: for developing and planning workshops and other professional development activities.

6. Publication Committee: for the organization's newsletter.

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7. Legislative Committee: for keeping abreast of possible legislation affecting the field of interpreting.

*Section 3: Special Committees*

A. The Board of Directors shall appoint any special and/or ad hoc committees as may be deemed necessary to carry out the activities of the organization.

B. By majority vote of the voting membership during any membership meeting shall mandate the Board of Directors appoint a special and/or ad hoc committee.

## II. Parliamentary Procedure

“Tools and Strategies for Conflict Management: I’m Okay, You’re Okay – How to be Different Together”

Conflict happens. It happens anytime two or more people come together with differing thoughts, ideas, life experiences, world-views, and/or approaches to the world at hand. It is also experienced anytime incompatible activities occur – that is when one-activity blocks, prevents, or interferes with the completion of another activity.

When considering this notion of managing conflict, timing is crucial. The best time to manage a conflict is **before** it occurs. It is extremely difficult to manage a conflict, particularly in a respectful manner, when the people engaged in the conflict are in the heat of the moment. It is much better to discuss the management when people are calm, clear headed, and rational.

One of the most effective tools in managing conflict is establishing a set of “Group Norms”, which are sometimes known as “Ground Rules”. The reason for setting the ground rules is to establish an environment that is comfortable, “safe” and respectful of people’s differences so that they can most effectively work together. When people have discussed and agreed on how they will “be” with each other in a group, and specifically, how they will deal with conflict when it occurs, they are much more apt to work together more effectively and respectfully.

Some general guidelines for establishing group norms include:

- “When” to engage in the conflict must be chosen and agreed upon by group members.
- Goal: produce a successful and productive solution – it is NOT about winners and losers.
- Everyone’s contributions are received respectfully and valued equally.
- Members are critical of ideas, not of people who express them.
- All views are brought out and explored before new, creative solutions are sought.
- As much as possible, situational power must be balanced to promote free and honest exchange of ideas.
- Incentives for finding a creative resolution must be defined.

(Johnson & Johnson, 1991)

When establishing ground rules with a group, there are three key questions you will want to explore together:

- How will we, as a group, communicate with each other?
- How will we, as a group, relate to each other?
- How will we, as a group, manage disagreement and conflict?

Notice the phrase “as a group” is used in each question. This is to help people in the group understand that *the group*, and each individual in the group, has a responsibility to establish

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the ground rules, and then enforce and follow them. There is a level of accountability that occurs when you develop and agree upon these rules as an entire body. It is also understood that it is not the lone responsibility of the board chair, or the president, to enforce these rules – everyone has a shared responsibility to make sure the group as a whole maintains the tone that is set with the ground rules.

Once the group has established the ground rules, it is important that the group agrees to support and follow them. Do not assume that silence is agreement. It is very important to ask the group questions like “Are these ground rules acceptable to you?” or “In this group, can you live with these ground rules?”

Once the rules are established, each time the group convenes, the first order of business should be to revisit them. Not only does this serve as a good reminder, but it also allows for people to modify, change, add, or delete rules. This is especially important as the group works together over a period of time and begins to develop as a team. When each meeting begins, read the list of ground rules aloud. When finished, ask the group “Are there any additions or changes needed for these rules? If not are they acceptable to you? Can you live with these?” Everyone needs to be able to answer “yes” before moving on.

The key to effectively using ground rules as a tool for conflict management is in the revisiting of the rules each time the group convenes. If a person is absent, or a new person is added to the group, it becomes a new group. Because of this, it is crucial that the rules be reviewed together on a regular basis.

The list of ground rules for a group should not be lengthy. Address issues in a succinct fashion by listing phrases or short sentences. Some examples that might be helpful to get you started include:

How will we, as a group, communicate with each other?

- Take turns
- Raise hands
- Sign or speak, or both? (work with the interpreter?)
- Take responsibility for our comments by making “I” statements
- Search for meaning
- Search for clarity
- Paraphrase, repeat for understanding
- Open, honest, accurate, and complete communication is expected

How will we, as a group, relate to each other?

- Keep side comments to a minimum
- Pagers off; cell phones off
- Respectful listening
- Laugh, have fun
- Reality check\*\*
- Everyone participates
- Future focus

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- We are all accountable for this process and our team's outcome
- We will expect mistakes; that's okay

How will we, as a group, manage disagreement and conflict?

- Challenge the issue, not the person
- Agree to disagree
- Consensus seeking – “I may not like this, but can I live with it?”
- Identify our needs for time and space
- Identify a time and space for discussing a resolution
- Ask for help if we cannot resolve the issue ourselves (mediator)

\*\*The reality check has proven to be a useful ground rule if you suspect keeping the discussion focused on one topic at a time might be difficult. The concept behind this is that in a discussion, anyone in the group can call a “reality check” if they do not see the relevance of the discussion to the topic at hand. Once “reality check” is stated, the group must stop the discussion and clarify how the discussion is related to the original topic. If it cannot be explained clearly, the group must hold that discussion for a later time, and get back to the original issue. This ground rule was a lifesaver for a board of directors that had a tendency to talk “off point”, which resulted in all-day board meetings. The meeting times were cut in half, due in part, to the “reality check.”

If you establish ground rules and don't believe they are working, here are some questions to ask:

- Are we revisiting them each time we meet?
- Is there “buy in” from everybody?
- Do they need to be modified? Additions made?
- Do people understand that they are “group” norms and that each member in the group has responsibility in making these work?

Conflict is inevitable. It will happen, and if managed well, it can be the source of energy and creativity for many ideas and great activities. Ground rules, as one tool for that, can also establish a safe and welcoming environment for people of different backgrounds and experiences. While they take time to establish and maintain, you will find, in the long run, the time is well spent.

Excerpt from Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. Affiliate Chapter Handbook Section 5

## 2. “Meetings, Parliamentary Procedure/Bylaws: The Gavel Stops Here!”

In a board meeting where there are not more than a dozen members present, some of the formality that is necessary in a large assembly would hinder business. The rules governing such meetings are different from the rules that hold in assemblies, in the following respects:

1. Members are not required to obtain the floor before making motions or speaking, which they can do while seated.
2. Motions need not be seconded.

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3. There is no limit to the number of times a member can speak to a question, and motions to close or limit debate generally should not be entertained.
4. Informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending.
5. Sometimes, when a proposal is perfectly clear to all present, a vote can be taken without a motion's having been introduced. Unless agreed to by unanimous consent, however, all proposed actions of a board must be approved by vote under the same rules as in other assemblies, except that a vote can be taken initially by a show of hands, which is often a better method in such meetings.
6. The chairman need not rise while putting questions to vote.
7. The chairman can speak in discussion without rising or leaving the chair; and, subject to rule or custom within the particular board (which should be uniformly followed regardless of how many members are present) he usually can make motions and usually votes on all questions.
8. The meeting will be opened to the public; however, the discussion and making motions or recommendation will be limited to the committee members. The meeting shall take place in person, via Video Phone, or videoconference.

**Note:**

- However, in the event of a contested issue or large group of individuals, reverting to the formality of Robert's Rules of Order (RRO) is recommended. Keeping this recommendation in mind, members of the affiliate chapter (especially the board of directors) should become familiar with RRO and running business meetings. Bummy Burstein's book, Bummy's Basic Parliamentary Guide, provides an excellent, easy to use guide on RRO and running business meetings.
- If the discussion become serious and persistence, the meeting should revert to the formality of RRO and is recommended.

Excerpt from Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. Affiliate Chapter Handbook Section 16

**3. "Successful Scribing: How to Take Effective Board/Committee Minutes"**

**Introduction:**

The keeping of records for a Board of Directors or committee plays a crucial role as it provides key documentation of the organization/committee. The only major difference between keeping records for a committee and that of a board secretary is that the record keeper often does not process the correspondences for the committee as do most board secretaries.

Record keepers and secretaries will retain a membership roll of attendees at each meeting (whether it be teleconference, videoconference or face-to-face), keep the minutes of each meeting and provide a list with action items and timelines established during each meeting.

A competent record keeper is indispensable to a board or committee. Besides recording

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the events of each meeting, record keepers are responsible for filing the approved minutes, helping to prepare for meetings, and other duties as assigned by the President/Committee chair.

**General Guidelines:**

Many members find themselves in the position of taking minutes without a clue of how to go about it. The following is a guide for making this task easier:

- Ensure that all of the essential elements are noted, such as type of meeting, name of the organization, date and time, venue, name of the chair or facilitator, main topics and the time of adjournment.
- For a more formal process, meetings include approval of previous minutes and all resolutions. Remember, committees do not create motions, only resolutions to the board of directors. These resolutions may be worded so that they become motions from the board as the board accepts them (for more information on this topic see: *How to Bring a Recommendation to the Board*).
- Prepare an outline ahead of time based on the agenda, and leave plenty of white space for notes. By having the topics already written down, you can go directly to a new topic without pause.
- Prepare a list of expected attendees and check off the names as people enter the room or join the teleconference or videoconference. You may pass around an attendance sheet for everyone to sign as the meeting starts. This may be important to do if you have many visitors to your meeting. Their presence needs to be noted in the minutes.
- To be sure about who said what, you may make a map of the seating arrangement, and ask for introductions of unfamiliar people.
- Do not make the mistake of recording every single comment. Concentrate on getting the gist of the discussion and taking enough notes to summarize it later. Think in terms of issues discussed, major points raised and decisions made. Rarely do you want to assign any statements to any particular person. You are not providing a dictation of the meeting.
- Use whatever recording method is most comfortable for you: a notepad, a laptop computer, a tape recorder, a video recorder, a steno pad, shorthand. If applicable, it might be a good idea to make a sound or video recording of important meetings as a backup to your notes. Understand these “process minutes” are for your use only. You will transcribe the official minutes for distribution from these process minutes. Process minutes are not to be distributed to the committee or to the board. They are used as a reference tool only.
- If you are an active participant in the meeting, be prepared! Study the issues to be discussed and have your questions ready ahead of time. If you have to concentrate on grasping the issues while you are making your notes, they may not make any sense to you later. This does not mean that your dual tasking skills are weak but your use of the same part of the brain to process similar functions in different fashions—simultaneously—may be overloaded. If this is the case, the use of sound / video recordings (if applicable) may be important.
- Transcribe your minutes while your memory is fresh. Do not wait too long to type

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up the minutes. Be sure to have the minutes approved by the president/chair and/or committee prior to forwarding to the board of directors.

- Concise and coherent minutes are the mark of a professional. The very process of recording minutes can give you a deeper understanding of the issues faced by your committee along with the ability to focus on what is important.

**Preparation:**

- Have ready the minutes of previous meetings and any other material you may need.
- Obtain a list of committee members and an agenda from the chair.
- Prepare a sign-in sheet to pass around. The sheet should request the following of visiting attendees: name, institutional affiliation, preferred mailing address, e-mail address, and designation of member or observer.
- If applicable, you may wish to use a tape recorder or video recorder to back up your notes.

**What to Include:**

- Identify name of the group.
- Indicate place, time and date of the meeting.
- State kind of meeting (teleconference, videoconference, electronic mail, or face-to-face).
- List names of board/committee members present (indicate what representation each may have).
  - List names of board/committee members absent.
  - List observers: indicate name, affiliation and contact information (from sign-in sheet if used).
  - If applicable, include a statement that the minutes of the prior meeting were approved, revised or not read.
    - List items discussed in order listed on the agenda. Briefly describe main points discussed and state actions taken. A transcript of the discussion is not necessary, but be sure to include actions, votes, resolutions, motions, etc.
    - Keep the minutes to the point. Give complete information but do not ramble.
    - A structured format will help keep the minutes succinct. For example, you may wish to use headings such as "Agenda Item" followed by subheadings "Discussion" and "Action Taken."
  - Minutes should always be objective and impartial (avoid first person pronouns if at all possible). They should be factual and devoid of editorial opinions and comments.
    - If a member of the board/committee is assigned a task or volunteers for an assignment, state clearly the person's name and the responsibility accepted.
  - Record the time the meeting was adjourned and the place, time and date of the next meeting.
  - Include recording secretary's signature and typed name (unless identification is given at beginning).

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**Action Items:**

At the end of or on a separate sheet attached to the minutes, have "Action Items" listed along with the responsible board/committee member. Be sure to have any timelines that are designated for each action item.

**Distribution of Minutes:**

Transcribe the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting is held but no later than two weeks after the meeting(s). Distribute them to the board president/committee chair and board/committee for review. (Some presidents/committee chairs prefer to review prior to the board/committee and will distribute them to board/committee members and meeting visitors for review.) Once any corrections are made and they are approved, the committee record keeper will send the minutes to the Board of Directors. For board minutes, once any corrections are made, they are placed in the official minute book.

Excerpt from Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. Affiliate Chapter Handbook Section 29

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**III. Policy and Procedure Manual**

1. When a committee is appointed “with authorization”, this means with authorization to take all steps necessary to carry out its duties as the Board of Directors assigns. The committee chairperson shall submit an activity report to the board for an approval.
2. When a committee has been appointed, its chairperson should call for a meeting. If its chairperson fails to call for a meeting, the committee can call for the meeting by any two of the serving committee members.
3. In small committees the chairperson usually acts as secretary, but the chairperson can appoint a member as a secretary of the committee or every meeting.
4. A committee has no power to punish its members for disorder or other improper conduct related to its proceedings, but should report the facts to the board.

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## **VI. Committee General Duties**

### Committee

1. Upon the Board of Directors' approval, the President shall appoint all committee chairpersons, including standing, special and/or ad hoc committees, composed of at least three voting members in good standing to serve for a specified term.
2. The committee chairperson shall appoint all committee members with the Board of Directors' approval. Limit to between 2 and 4 members plus liaison and chairperson
3. Terms of service on Standing Committees shall be two years from the day the chairperson was appointed, or at the Board of Directors' discretion.
4. Terms of service on special and/or ad hoc committees shall be until the objectives of the committee are met, or until the Board of Directors deems the committees' purpose no longer relevant to the organizational needs of Arizona RID. Terms of service shall not be the same as standing committees.
5. Vacancies in the chairperson of any committee shall be filled by appointment of the President with the Board of Directors' approval. The resigning committee chairperson may make a recommendation of a replacement to the Board of Directors.
6. The President shall designate a member of the Board of Directors to serve as a non-voting member of each committee.
7. A majority of three voting members of the entire committee shall constitute a quorum.

### Appointment Procedure

1. The President shall assign each Board of Director member to serve as a non-voting member on a committee.
2. The Board of Directors calls for committee chairpersons from the membership with letters of interest.  
The letter of interest shall consist:
  - History of leadership such as leading a meeting
  - Personal skills and expertise
  - Goals and objectives
  - Dual membership is required (ArizonaRID and RID).
3. The Board of Directors shall select a chairperson of each committee and notifies a chairperson by a letter or an E-mail.
4. Chairpersons perform the work of the committee until the two-year term expires.
5. If a committee chairperson is interested in serving another term on the standing committee, the chairperson submits a letter of interest to the new president stating interest in serving.

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## Responsibilities or Duties

### Chairperson

- Reports regularly to the board identifying the committee's charge, outline timelines established, and report progress made
- Submits meeting minutes to the board.
- Writes reports for the newsletter
- Works with the board of director member (liaison) who is assigned by the President
- Presides over the meetings and the work of the committee
- Responds to issues in a timely and expeditious manner
- Notifies membership of the committee meeting 30 days in advance including a tentative agenda when a majority of committee members and the board liaison may attend.
- Manages the committee budget
- Approves expenses made by the committee members before submission to treasurer
- Submits an activity report (Appendix A) to the board for an approval before proceeding.
- Delivers reports during the annual membership and business meetings
- Submits committee budget proposal to the Board of Directors 60 days before the business meeting.
- Submits the egroup email address and password to the board (Do not use personal email address) when the committee has its own listserv.

### Board of Director as a Liaison

- Serves as an intermediary between the Board of Directors and committee
- Encourages and monitors committee actions, issues, and duties
- Brings committee's recommendations to the Board of Directors
- When an AD-HOC committee is formed, the Board of Directors will define the purpose, duties, outcome, and set the time line when needed.

### Committee Members

- Must be a voting member in good standing of the affiliate chapter
- Complete tasks as assigned or agreed upon by the Chairperson
- Attend committee meetings
- Support the Chairperson in accomplishing the goals of the committee
- Request advance approval for expenses of activities from the Chairperson
- The listserv will be limited to the committee members, board liaison, and president. The listserv will be limited to committee business, such as planning, discussion, and set up meetings.

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**V. Appendix**

**A.** Activity Report

**B.** Expenditure Form

**C.** Trash It or Stash It: Essential Document Retention Guidelines

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**Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf  
Committee Activity Report**

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee

\_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson

Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Activity:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue on second page

Budget:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The committee as a whole has agreed with the activity.  Yes  No If no, the activity was  
agreed by majority vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Attach  
Receipts  
Here

## Arizona RID Expenditure Approval Form

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Budget Category:

Administrative: \_\_\_\_\_ By-Laws: \_\_\_\_\_ Fundraising: \_\_\_\_\_  
Legislative: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominations: \_\_\_\_\_  
Professional Dev't: \_\_\_\_\_ Publications: \_\_\_\_\_ Grievance: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unbudgeted: \_\_\_\_\_ Donations: \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitality: \_\_\_\_\_

Pay to the Order of: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount to be Expended: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address of where to mail the check:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: Check One: Chair Member

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Authorization:

Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorization: \_\_\_\_\_

Print this form, fill it out, attach all receipts and turn in to the Committee Chair for a check.

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Trash It or Stash It: Essential Document Retention Guidelines

Affiliate chapters often request guidance as to what kind of documents should be kept and for how long. The following table provides the minimum requirements:

<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Minimum Requirement</b>
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank Reconciliations	2 years
Bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts (still in effect)	Permanently
Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Depreciation Schedules	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Employment applications	3 years
Expense Analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Year End Financial Statements	Permanently
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, etc	Permanently
Internal audit reports	3 years
Inventories of products, materials, and supplies	7 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Minute books, bylaws and charter	Permanently
Patents and related Papers	Permanently
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Tax returns and worksheets	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Trademark registrations and copyrights	Permanently
Withholding tax statements	7 years