

HOW TO DEVELOP CHAPTER OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Sample Chapter Operating Procedures in this Handbook provide guidelines for the person drafting such a document for a Chapter. Both the Executive Director of the AGO and the Vice President are available to help or consult while the document is in development.

All Chapter Operating Procedures must be in agreement with the National Bylaws (see Bylaws, Section I) and must be submitted for review and approval to the Chapter membership, to the Regional Councillor and to the Vice President. In the case of any conflict between Chapter Operating Procedures and National Bylaws the authority of National Bylaws prevails.

STEP ONE. The Dean and Executive Committee agree that such Operating Procedures should be created.

STEP TWO. The Dean assigns the task of creating a draft of Chapter Operating Procedures to a person or persons familiar with the Chapter, its committee structure and its current activities and operations.

STEP THREE. The Dean and Executive Committee examine the draft of the Operating Procedures, amending and editing as necessary. This step may continue through several drafts.

STEP FOUR. The Executive Committee votes to approve the Operating Procedures. The National Bylaws provide that “the presence at the commencement of such a meeting of not less than a majority of the Members thereof shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.”

STEP FIVE. The Chapter Membership votes to approve the Operating Procedures. Prior to this vote the Executive Committee must ensure that each Chapter member receives a printed copy of the Operating Procedures for review. The membership may vote either by mail or at a regular meeting of the Chapter, provided members are notified that a vote will be taken at a particular meeting. If the vote is taken at a regular meeting the Executive Committee shall announce in advance what number or proportion of Chapter membership will constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

STEP SIX. The Dean or a designate sends copies of the Chapter-approved version of the Operating Procedures to the Regional Councillor and to the Vice President for review and approval. As a courtesy a copy should also be sent to the Executive Director at AGO Headquarters.

STEP SEVEN. After approval, the Operating Procedures Committee or an individual appointed by the Dean conducts an annual review of the Operating Procedures. The annual review assures concord between the Chapter document and the most recent revisions of the National Bylaws and confirms that the Operating Procedures continue to meet the needs of the Chapter. In some Chapters it may be sufficient to conduct a review only every two years.

A Chapter Executive Committee must regularly amend Chapter Operating Procedures in order for them to be up-to-date and effective. Both the Executive Director and the Vice President can offer consultation on Operating Procedures. A current version of the AGO Bylaws is available on the AGO web site <<http://www.agohq.org>> for reference. Amended or revised Chapter Operating Procedures, while not always requiring approval by the Chapter membership, Regional Councillor and Vice President, should be forwarded in complete form to National Headquarters.

The Sample Chapter Operating Procedures that follow serve as a model for Procedures that might be adopted by a Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. This model does not precisely represent the Operating Procedures of any particular Chapter. In drawing up operating procedures a Chapter normally makes adjustments to suit needs of the Chapter members as well as the needs and customs of the local community. Prior to submitting the Operating Procedures for final approval Chapters may consult with the Regional Councillor, Vice President and Executive Director of the Guild, all of whom are available to offer guidance. Please note that in the Sample Chapter Operating Procedures italicized notes offer clarification and give examples of possibilities for format or content. Such comments should not be included in Chapter Operating Procedures.