

# **NWA Committee and Task Force Guidelines**

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## Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to serve as a resource for NWA's Board, Staff, and Membership regarding Committees and Task Forces of the Association. NWA hosts and participates in a variety of groups. This document does not encompass all groups; it covers only NWA's "Committees" and "Task Forces" as defined in NWA's Bylaws.

## Definitions

### Committees

Committees work on major policy issues to support the Association's long-term goals, following guidance from the Board of Directors.

### Task Forces

Task Forces may be created to carry out the work of the Association at the direction of the Board to address specific short-term goals or initiatives. The Board of Directors can approve a Task Force for up to two years. After that period, the Task Force may be renewed for one additional year if the Board votes to extend it.

## Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Promising Practices Regarding NWA Committees and Task Forces

NWA is committed to developing and applying an EDI lens to each facet of the Association's work; in concrete and evolving ways.

In all business related to committees and task forces, NWA staff, Board members, and committee and task force members shall be committed to EDI work.

EDI considerations should be routinely made in the following areas, but are not limited to:

- The charge of the group;
- Recruitment for the group;
- Group composition;
- Member commitment to and knowledge of EDI considerations;
- The scope of work of the group.

### Charges for Committees and Task Forces

*To develop a charge, use the **Committee or Task Force Charge Templates**, this document, and NWA's Bylaws.*

According to NWA's Bylaws, the Board is responsible for approving a **charge** for each Committee and Task Force. This charge outlines:

- The scope of the Committee's or Task Force's work; to include any recurring annual deliverables/tasks
- The length of time they will work
- Who will be part of the Committee or Task Force
- The Section Standing Committee that will oversee their activities

Charges should reflect a commitment to EDI principles as well as NWA's [Mission, Vision and Health Equity Statement](#).

Once the committee or task force's charge is considered complete, committees and task forces may be sunset. Any ongoing work will then be reviewed by the Section specified in the Board's charge.

\*There are five Section Standing Committees: State Agency, Nutrition Services, Breastfeeding, Local Agency, and Vendor Management.

### Section Standing Committee Oversight of Committees and Task Forces

Each committee or task force is assigned to one of the five section standing committees, who oversee their work; and are available for guidance as needed. There are five Section Standing Committees: State Agency, Nutrition Services, Breastfeeding, Local Agency, and Vendor Management.

As of August 2024, the committees and task forces are assigned as follows. These oversight assignments will be reconsidered annually by the Board:

<b>Committee or Task Force</b>	<b>Section Standing Committee</b>
Annual Conference	State Director Section
Tech Conference Committee	Vendor Section
Nutrition Ed and BF Conference	Breastfeeding Section
Breastfeeding Promotion	Breastfeeding Section
Communications/Outreach	State Director Section
Evaluation	State Director Section
Farmers Market Programs	Vendor Section
Policy	Local Agency Section
WIC Workforce Development	Local Agency Section
Infant and Maternal Mortality in WIC	Nutrition Services Section
Risk Identification and Selection Collaborative (RISC)* *This group is a USDA/NWA Work Group	Nutrition Services Section
<i>Promotional Items - Paused for 2025</i>	<i>Nutrition Services Section</i>
<i>WIC Hub - Paused for 2025</i>	<i>Local Agency Section</i>
<i>Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion - Paused for 2025</i>	<i>Local Agency Section</i>

## Committee and Task Force Work Plans

Committees and Task Forces can develop work plans to be reviewed/updated annually by the Chair in consultation with the Staff Liaison and Section Liaisons. Work plans may be shared with Section Standing Committees overseeing the groups' work.

[Here](#) is an annual work plan template that can be used. Ideally, high level annual deliverables should be included in the charge; especially if they are recurring commitments.

## Committee and Task Force Duration

There are no specific parameters in the Bylaws regarding the duration of a **Committee**; though the goals of the committee, the work, and a desired outcome within a specified timeframe should be outlined in the committee's charge.

Some committees may be considered "permanent" as their role as a separate group related to their scope of work makes long-term sense. At maximum, a 6-year work-plan timeline should be created with the development of a new charge, regardless of the assumed "permanence" of the group.

**Task Forces**, however, are limited to two (2) years, though a charge may be renewed for one (1) year upon a vote of the Board of Directors.

## Annual Charge Review

Annually, in partnership with the Committee/Task Force Chairs, Section Liaisons and NWA staff, the Board will review all committee and task force charges to determine the status of the work and the continued need for the committee or task force over the coming year.

## Size and Composition of Committees and Task Forces

Each committee/task force has its membership numbers set in its Charge. NWA recommends that there be no fewer than 8 people on each committee/task force and no more than 15 (excluding staff and section liaisons).

Other individuals can be appointed to Committees and Task Forces, including NWA Partners and non-members, but at least two-thirds of each Committee and Task Force's positions need to be members of NWA (WIC staff and State or Local WIC Agencies with current NWA membership).

The composition of committees and task forces should be designed to reflect the community it is intended to serve/those impacted by the decisions and work done by the group. Committees and task forces should be as diverse\* as possible to include a wide range of perspectives and lived experiences.

\*i.e., geographic location, demographic/identity information (race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, sexuality, etc.), job levels and roles, and areas of expertise.

### A Note on Non-Members and Partners on Committees and Task Forces

Committees and Task Force charges may delineate different levels of authority for various roles (i.e., members vs. partners vs. non-members).

## Committee and Task Force Member Terms

Chairs and members of Committees and Task Forces terms are **three-years**, and members can choose to serve for **two consecutive terms**, unless the Committee or Task Force is sunset or the charge states differently. If, after two terms, a member wants to remain on the committee or task force, they need to re-apply.

Terms typically begin and end in February/March and August/September to match the recruitment and appointment periods, which occur twice a year.

## Recruitment, Application and Appointment Process

After consulting with Association Staff, the Chair of each committee or task force appoints members based on the committee's charge.

Applications for open positions are accepted twice a year, in the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. Open positions and application deadlines are promoted with the help of the Member Services and Communications teams to attract a diverse range of volunteers.

Staff, Section Liaisons and Chairs are invited to review applications using a rubric provided by NWA. Chairs make the final appointment decisions. Once appointments are confirmed, the Member Services team will send official notices, including details about the charge, roles, term dates, committee leads, guidelines, and next steps.

## Committee and Task Force Meetings and General Procedures

### Meeting Schedule

Committees and Task Forces generally meet at least once a month. The exact frequency and duration can vary based on their work plan, unless otherwise specified in their charge.

### Meeting Location

All meetings are hosted virtually. Meetings can be scheduled on the NWA Online Community; calendar invites should be owned by the staff liaison for the committee/task force.

### Quorum

A majority of members constitutes a quorum. To hold a meeting, at least one-third of members must be present, including the Chair and Staff Liaison.

### Communication with the Section Standing Committee Overseeing the Group

Chairs should regularly update their section liaison about the group's progress and seek feedback. Section liaisons will report monthly to the Section Standing Committee using this [reporting tool](#) provided by NWA. Once a year, Chairs, Staff, and Section Liaisons will join an NWA board meeting to review their work and update their charge.

### Communication Touchpoints - Chairs, Section Liaisons, and Staff Liaisons

On a regular basis, Chairs, Section Liaisons, and Staff liaisons should touch base to plan meetings and agenda and discuss the work of the group

### Meeting Documentation

Chairs are responsible for sending out meeting agendas and taking minutes. Minute-taking can be shared among members if needed.

### Document Storage

Meeting documents, agendas, and minutes will be stored in NWA's internal shared files and on the NWA Online Community. The Staff Liaison and Chair will coordinate this.

Committee and Task Force Meetings may be recorded with the permission of all members of the group present at the meeting. Recordings must be saved and housed in NWA's central files related to the group. Recordings should not be shared outside of the group without permission of the group and agreement by NWA Leadership.

## Creating and Sunsetting Committees

The Board of Directors creates new committees and task forces. When a committee or task force completes its charge, it is disbanded, and ongoing work is transferred to the relevant Section.

## Committees and Task Forces Role Responsibilities

### Chair

This role is filled by an NWA Member of the Section\* overseeing the work of the committee or task force. Committee Chairs terms are three-years and Chairs can serve for two consecutive terms; unless the Charge of the group says something else. Committee and Task Force Chairs are appointed by the Section Standing Committee overseeing the group, after an initial application process via NWA staff.

\*Committee and Task Force Chairs do not need to sit on the Section Standing Committee, but should be in the same member section as the section standing committee that oversees the group.

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1. Attend and Lead Meetings:* Attend all committee/task force meetings. Share meeting agendas in advance on the online community and ensure minutes are taken by a member or designated secretary. Meeting leadership may rotate among members.
- 2. Manage Online Community Group:* Oversee the committee or task force's NWA Online Community group by posting updates between meetings as needed and sharing documents with the group. The committee may also use the online community to engage NWA members with their work.
- 3. Regular Communication Touchpoints and Message Relay:* Maintain regular contact with the Section and Staff Liaison regarding meetings, agendas, and the group's work. Support the Section Liaison to submit high-level monthly reports (using [this form](#)) to the Section Standing Committee overseeing the group.
- 4. Annual Charge Review with NWA Board:* Collaborate with the Section and Staff Liaison(s) to attend an NWA Board Meeting once a year where you will discuss the committee's charge, review its objectives, make updates to the charge as needed, and provide updates on accomplishments/work completed.
- 5. Recruit and Appoint Members:* Work with committee members on recruitment application questions, review final applications with NWA staff, and appoint new members to the committee/task force.

6. *Orient New Members*: Welcome and guide new members on their roles and the committee's work.

### Co-Chair (Optional Role; as requested by the Chair of a Committee)

This role is filled by an NWA Member of the Section\* overseeing the work of the committee or task force. Committee Co-Chairs terms are three-years and Co-Chairs can serve for two consecutive terms; unless the Charge of the group says something else. Committee and Task Force Co-Chairs are appointed by the Section Standing Committee overseeing the group, after an initial application process via NWA staff.

\*Committee and Task Force Chairs do not need to sit on the Section Standing Committee, but should be in the same member section as the section standing committee that oversees the group.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

Co-Chairs can either fully share the responsibilities outlined for the Chair (see above) or serve as a backup when the Chair is not available to lead the committee for a period of time. If a Chair's term ends, the Co-Chair will assume the Chair role, following the original term parameters, and may request a Co-Chair during the next call for volunteers.

### Section Liaison

This role is filled by members of NWA's Section Standing Committees. Each NWA committee and task force has one Section Liaison from the Section Standing Committee with oversight of the group\*. Section Liaisons stay in the role as long as they're part of the overseeing Standing Committee and are confirmed by the Board Chair.

*\*For example, since the Breastfeeding Committee's work is overseen by the Breastfeeding Section Standing Committee, one of the seven representatives on the Breastfeeding Section Standing Committee will serve as the Section Liaison on the Breastfeeding Committee.*

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. *Attend All Meetings*: Participate in every scheduled meeting. If unable to attend more than two meetings in a row, works with the Section Standing Committee with oversight to discuss replacement.

2. *Regular Communication Touchpoints and Message Relay*: Maintain regular contact with the Chair and Staff Liaison regarding meetings, agendas, and the group's work. Act as a communication link between the Section Standing Committee and the Committee/Task Force. This includes submitting high-level monthly reports (using [this form](#)) to the Section Standing Committee overseeing the group.



*3. Support Recruitment:* Assist NWA in reviewing and scoring applications for new committee members during the semi-annual recruitment periods.

*4. Annual Charge Review with NWA Board:* Collaborate with the Chair and Staff Liaison(s) to attend an NWA Board Meeting once a year where you will discuss the committee's charge, review its objectives, make updates to the charge as needed, and provide updates on accomplishments/work completed.

## Committee/Task Force Member

This role is filled by NWA member and non-member volunteers - depending on what is outlined in the group's Charge. Committee and task force members have three year terms and can serve for two consecutive terms; unless the Charge of the group says something else.

Committee and Task Force members are appointed by the Committee/Task Force Chair after consulting with NWA staff.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

*1. Attend and Actively Participate in Meetings:* Participate in every scheduled meeting. Communicates with the Chair of the group if unable to attend. Committee and task force members should try to attend a minimum of 80% of the meetings/year and do their best to communicate with the Chair when will be absent.

## Staff Liaison

The Staff Liaison position is filled by NWA Staff members and are generally based on staff role in the association. Two co-staff liaisons may be sit on a committee/Task force and the work may be shared.

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attend all committee/task force meetings (ensure at least one co-liaison does).
2. Assist the Chair with the NWA online community group to include supporting their training on the use of the community for saving resources, adding meeting dates as events, and using the community for communication with the committee and/or larger NWA membership.
3. Own and manage calendar invites for the group
4. Keep documents and minutes updated on NWA's shared drive.
5. Notify the Staff Committee and Task Force Program Coordinator of any resignations before term ends and support Chair and Staff Committee and Task Force Program Coordinator on monitoring term end dates and renewed terms.
6. Join quarterly touchpoints with all Chairs, Section Liaisons, and other Staff Liaisons, monthly touchpoints with the Chair and Section liaison, and attend internal Staff Liaison meetings.

7. Join Annual Charge Review with NWA Board: Collaborate with the Chair and Section Liaison to attend an NWA Board Meeting once a year where you will discuss the committee's charge, review its objectives, make updates to the charge as needed, and provide updates on accomplishments/work completed.
8. Support Recruitment: Assist NWA in reviewing and scoring applications for new committee members during the semi-annual recruitment periods.
9. Support the Staff Committee and Task Force Program Coordinator as needed.

## Staff Committee and Task Force Program Coordinator (Senior Associate of Membership and Events)

TERM: N/A

ELIGIBILITY: Appointed via NWA Leadership, based on staff role in the association.

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Under the direction of the Director of Member Services, coordinates the logistical needs of committee and task force program.
2. Supports and acts as a resource for staff liaisons, Chairs, and Section Liaisons in carrying out the logistical work of committees and task forces.
3. Coordinates the committee and task force recruitment process twice a year.
  - a. Works with the Comms team to share information about recruitment with the membership.
  - b. Collects information on which committees have vacancies
  - c. Updates and collects applications.
  - d. Shares rubrics and applications for review by staff and Chairs
  - e. Collects final scores and shares with Chairs for final appointment decisions
  - f. Sends correspondence related to appointments to new committee/tf members.
  - g. Supports onboarding of new committee/task force members twice per year, as needed.
4. Maintains internal and public facing committee and task force rosters.
5. Confirms term end dates and reminds Chairs/Staff Liaisons regarding upcoming term end dates

## Interim Chair

TERM: The Interim Chair role is designed to last no longer than 12 months. If a current committee member shifts into this position, they may stay in the role for up to 12 months, or until a Chair is appointed – whichever comes first. Interim Chairs may shift into the full Chair Role with the approval of the Chair of the NWA Board. If an Interim Chair becomes a Chair, their term start date will revert to the start date in their role as Interim Chair.

1. Interims Chairs will shift out of their current committee role which will become vacant.
2. Interim Chairs may return to an At-Large role at any time before the end of their original term.

3. If someone remains in the Interim Chair role beyond their original term date end, they may stay on until a new Chair is appointed OR they can transition to the permanent Chair role (with agreement by the Chair of the Board).
4. The interim Chair role may last up to 12 months.
5. Special exceptions are always possible with communication/confirmation from the Board Chair.

ELIGIBILITY: The Interim Chair role is ideally filled by a current member of the committee or task force. Appointed by and at the discretion of the Board Chair.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Same as Chair

## FAQs

### How long are committee and task force terms?

Committee terms are **three years** with the option of renewing for a second consecutive term; or the life of the committee or task force, whichever is less.

### If a Chair's term ends before the Co-Chair's term, what happens?

In the case that a Chair's term ends or they leave the committee, the Co-Chair will step up to assume the Chair role, continuing until the end of their original term, which can last a maximum of six years (two consecutive 3 year terms). After taking on the Chair position, they may then request a new call for a Co-Chair.

### What are the maximum number of seats on a committee?

Each committee/task force has its own membership numbers set by the Board of the Directors at the time of its conception/upon annual review. We recommend that there are no more than 15 people on a committee/tf (excluding staff liaisons and section liaisons).

### What are the minimum number of seats on a committee?

Each committee/task force has its own membership numbers set by the Board of the Directors at the time of its conception/upon annual review. We recommend that there are no fewer than 8 people on a committee/tf (excluding staff liaisons and section liaisons).

### What are the minimum number of committee members required to hold a meeting?

One third – including the Chair (or Interim Chair)

### Which members **MUST** be present to hold a meeting?

The Chair (or Co-Chairs) and at least one NWA Staff Liaison must be present for a committee to meet.

### How often do committees meet?

Committees generally meet monthly for 1-1.5 hours, but may meet more or less frequently, depending on their charge and work plan.

### Can Partners, Non-Members or Individual Members participate on an NWA committee/task force?

Yes. Each committee or task force has specified roles and representation parameters outlined in their charge which may include partners, non-members, and individual members.

Committees and Task Force charges may delineate different levels of authority for various roles; i.e. members vs. partners vs. non-members.

### How should NWA committee Chairs, members or liaisons handle requests for engagement or gifts from external groups?

NWA committee members, chairs, and liaisons are not under any pressure to take gifts or represent NWA at stakeholder events.

### How many meetings do committee/task force members need to attend to remain active?

It is most desirable to have all committee/task force members at all meetings. If a committee/task force member needs to miss more than two meetings in a row, they should discuss with the Chair whether they can continue their term or if another volunteer should be appointed.

### How many meetings does a Section Liaison need to attend to remain active?

It is most desirable to have Section Liaison at all meetings. If a Section Liaison needs to miss more than two meetings in a row, they should discuss with the Section Standing Committee providing oversight if there is another volunteer available to serve in that Section Liaison role. NWA recognizes these positions are filled by volunteers and capacity for engagement may change.

### What level of involvement do NWA Staff have on a committee/task force?

NWA Staff are key liaisons in the committee/task force but do not lead the group. An NWA staff member must be present at all committee/task force meetings.

The primary roles of the staff are as follows:

- a. In partnership with the Chair, ensures the work plan and activities align with NWA's staff and board workplans and organizational capacity.
- b. In partnership with the Chair and other Association Staff, manages the appointment process for new members.
- c. Onboarding and offboarding members.
- d. Monitoring term limits
- e. Maintaining rosters

### How is a Committee or Task Force Created? When?

NWA's Board of Directors decides when a committee or task force is created, paused or sunset. Each committee and task force is given a charge, which is reviewed annually by the Board. If a committee or task force is sunset, the work of the group is absorbed into the work plan of the standing section committee that oversees the group.

The Board may develop a new committee or task force at any time, but generally will consider the creation/sunset of the group during the annual review process.

### What are the communication practices that keep information flowing between the Board, the Staff, and the Committees/Task Forces?

Chairs of committees or task forces engage in at regular touchpoints with the Section Liaison and Staff liaisons. The Section Liaison is responsible for bringing information to and from the Section Standing Committee overseeing the group (including submitting monthly reports using [this form](#)). At least one Section Standing Committee member sits on the Board, so if it is deemed necessary to raise an issue at the Board level, that can easily be delegated to the Board member/s on the Standing Committee.

Once a year, the Chair, Section Liaison, and Staff Liaisons join a Board meeting to discuss their work and review/update charges.

The Section Standing Committee, Chair, Staff, or the Board can call additional meetings of key group members to offer support, receive feedback and updates, and to clarify transition-related decisions.