

Frequently Asked Questions

General – Policy

Q: Is the National PTA Standards of Affiliation (SOA) Policy included in the National PTA Bylaws?

A: The National PTA Bylaws describe the connection between the parent association and its state constituent associations and establish the National PTA Standards of Affiliation (SOA) as the definitive policy for this relationship.

Q: Why was the National PTA SOA Policy adopted?

A: National PTA charters state constituent associations to further the work and achieve the mission of National PTA. This policy sets the benchmarks for a successful state constituent association; protects the National PTA name, identity, and brand; and ensures that all will be treated fairly and equally. The intent of the SOA is to ensure state constituent associations align all communications and actions with National PTA's vision, mission, values, and policies and to comply with applicable federal laws. In addition, state constituent associations must support the current National PTA legislative and advocacy priorities and only take public positions which are consistent with adopted National PTA positions and resolutions. National PTA recognizes its responsibility to preserve the reputation and trust of the PTA brand through support of its constituent associations from local to state.

Q: Who develops proposed amendments to the SOA Policy for approval by the National PTA Board of Directors?

A: The National PTA Field Service Committee, according to the National PTA Bylaws, develops and evaluates strategies for the effective service delivery to all constituent associations. The National PTA Field Service Committee makes proposed amendment to the National PTA Board as needed.

Q: Who should be informed about the SOA Policy?

A: The entire state PTA board of directors should be informed, since maintaining compliance with the SOA Policy is a state PTA board responsibility.

Q: Who is responsible for maintaining compliance with the SOA Policy?

A: The entire state PTA board of directors is responsible for maintaining compliance with the SOA Policy. Individual tasks may be delegated to volunteers or staff members, but the responsibility of compliance remains with the state PTA board members. Reviewing the status of the requirements at each state PTA board meeting is a governance best practice.

Q: Where do I submit the documents/information required by the SOA Policy?

A: Required submissions should be emailed to soa@pta.org unless otherwise noted in Resource A – Standards of Affiliation Requirements.

Q: Where can I find SOA Policy resources online?

A: You can find SOA Policy resources online [here](#).

Q: When was the SOA Policy last amended?

A: The policy was last amended in June 2023, and the changes went into effect October 1, 2023.

Q: What if I have specific questions regarding the SOA Policy?

A: If you have specific questions regarding the SOA Policy, contact soa@pta.org.

Q: How can I provide feedback regarding the SOA Policy?

A: To provide feedback on the SOA Policy, contact info.fieldservice@pta.org or the National PTA President.

Resource A – Standards of Affiliation Requirements

Q: Do we complete and submit Resource A – Standards of Affiliation Requirements?

A: No, this chart was developed to help state PTA leaders track submissions to soa@pta.org and inform their boards of the current compliance status.

Q: What are the specific amendments to Resource A that go into effect October 1, 2023?

A: Wording was added or revised to:

- Standard 1. Clarified the deadline for when the state constituent association files a 990 extension with the IRS.
- Standard 2. Clarified the deadline for when a state constituent association files a 990 extension with the IRS.
- Standard 4. Clarified that state laws shall apply, where applicable.
- Standard 6. Clarified new submission deadline.
- Standard 9. Added social media as one of the required indicators.
- Standard 12. New Standard: The state constituent association shall prioritize diversity, inclusion, and outreach and assign these responsibilities to a member of the governing board.
- Standard 13 (previously #12). Clarified the indicators and the deadlines.

Resource B – Non-Compliance Procedures

Q: With which Standards are state PTAs most often found out of compliance?

A: State PTAs are most often out of compliance with Standards 1 (990), 2 (financial reporting), 6 (MOU), 11 (dues reporting), and 13 (list of local PTAs and officers).

Q: What are the specific amendments to Resource B that go into effect October 1, 2023?

A: Wording was added or revised to:

- Changed, in multiple locations, the necessity of sending notification U. S. mail.
- Added into the Failure to Comply with Notice of Non-Compliance section that National PTA may choose to appoint acting officers or facilitators to govern or operate the state constituent association when no leadership has existed for a period exceeding two months. These officers or facilitators shall serve until an election can be conducted successfully or until another action takes place.
- Added into the Oversight Phase a new item regarding holding elections according to the existing governance documents.
- Clarified two areas regarding Revocation, inability to sustain leadership and what happens immediately when an entity receives a Notice of Revocation.

Resource C – Memorandum of Understanding

Q: What is the purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

A: The purpose of the MOU is to set forth the agreement between National PTA and the state PTAs.

Q: Why are state PTAs required to sign a new MOU?

A: The SOA Policy requirements specify that a new MOU must be signed when the policy is updated.

Q: What are the specific amendments to Resource C that go into effect October 1, 2023?

A: Wording was added or revised to connect National PTA assigned official representation at a state annual meeting/convention to the National PTA budget. To mirror the amendment in Resource A, added a new item regarding prioritizing membership diversity, inclusion and outreach and assign these responsibilities to a member of the governing board.

Standards

Standard 1

Q: Our state PTA filed for an extension with the IRS for our Form 990. Do we need to do anything to remain within compliance?

A: Situations sometimes occur that require a state PTA to request an extension of the 990 filing deadline from the IRS. Receiving that extension does not automatically extend your state PTA's SOA Policy deadline. To extend the SOA deadline, submit a copy of the IRS Form 8868 or a letter from the tax preparer noting extension requested to soa@pta.org prior to the deadline defined in the SOA Policy (five months after the state PTA's fiscal year end). Once the Form 990 is filed, then submit the cover page or the IRS acceptance of filing, as usual, to soa@pta.org.

Standard 2

Q: Our state PTA has filed an extension with the IRS for our Form 990. Do we automatically get an extension for our annual financial reporting?

A: Yes, as long as the state PTA submits a copy of the IRS Form 8868 or a letter from the tax preparer noting extension requested to soa@pta.org prior to the deadline defined in the SOA Policy (five months after the state PTA's fiscal year end).

Standard 3

Q: What is important about the Articles of Incorporation?

A: The Articles of Incorporation should clearly reflect the state PTA's affiliation with National PTA through the use of the PTA name (required) and, if included, the exact wording of any PTA language, such as the purposes and principles. The state PTA board should review this document periodically, especially when National PTA amends wording that may affect the state PTA's document, as when the PTA Purposes were amended in 2016. Every state PTA has a copy of their Articles of Incorporation on file with National PTA. No submission is necessary unless this document is

amended. As a governing document, the Articles of Incorporation, supersede the bylaws and should not conflict in any way.

Standard 4

Q: Why must our state PTA update the National PTA database each time a board member changes?

A: Since the state PTA board is ultimately responsible for the state PTA, as well as staying in compliance, National PTA needs the current board members' information. National PTA provides resources intended for the full state PTA board and, at times, communicates with the full board. National PTA requires all state PTAs to enter their entire board of directors—not just the officers—in the National PTA database and maintain correct names and contact information. The Standards of Affiliation Policy requires state PTAs to update the information in the database within 30 days of any change on your state PTA board.

Standard 5

Q: The SOA Policy requires that our amended bylaws are submitted within 30 days of any amendment or revision. What if we cannot submit them because our minutes for the annual meeting are not approved within that timeframe?

A: Your state PTA is responsible for submitting your state PTA bylaws if they are amended or revised within 30 days of the change. Your state PTA may typically wait until the annual meeting minutes are approved to finalize the amended bylaws and this may happen more than 30 days after your convention. In order to maintain compliance, submit the draft marked as “draft” within the 30 days and send the final document when approved.

Q: Do state PTAs have to submit their standing rules?

A: No. However, state PTAs will need to submit their standing rules and/or operating procedures/policies when these governance documents are requested by National PTA.

Standard 6

Q: Do we need to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the beginning of each president's term?

A: No. The signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is simply a record that the state PTA board is aware of the content of the SOA Policy and any changes that may have been made. However, it is a good idea for your board members to review what your state PTA officers have signed. National PTA only requests submission of the MOU after the SOA Policy is changed. You will be notified if a new MOU is required when the policy is amended.

Standard 7

Q: Why is there a Standard related to PTA Trademarks and brand?

A: Because of the inherent value of the PTA name it is important to have a standard that calls attention to this responsibility of affiliation. There is robust language in the policy that addresses protecting the value and goodwill associated with the PTA Trademark and brand.

Q: What types of actions would be considered harmful to the brand?

A: Actions taken in conflict with the PTA vision, mission, purposes, values, and policies may be considered harmful to the PTA Trademarks or brand. In addition, the failure to take an action that

would uphold those ideals and positions that results in situations detrimental to PTA may also result in the state PTA being notified that it is out of compliance. An example might be that the members have voted to direct the state PTA to take an action, and the state PTA board refuses to follow that directive.

Standard 8

Q: Can our state PTA adopt its own mission statement?

A: This Standard is another example of the need for consistency of message and protection of the brand. While the National PTA mission statement must remain the same for all PTAs, the state PTA may adopt and publicize its own mission statement, as long as it is identified as being that of your state PTA and the National PTA mission statement is also prominent on your website, in communications, etc.

Standard 9

Q: How will the use of the PTA Trademark be monitored?

A: While no specific schedule of review will be implemented, volunteers will review your state PTA's website, communications, social media sites, etc. to verify the correct wording and proper use of logos, taglines, etc. Your state PTA president will be notified if any error is noted.

Standard 10

Q: Why must we submit a membership plan with goals every year?

A: As a membership association, your state PTA must place appropriate emphasis on adopting and achieving membership goals. Reviewing and adopting a plan with goals annually, provides your state PTA with the ability to strategically adjust your efforts to meet the changes within your state's environment and capacity.

Q: Who monitors our membership plan?

A: The National PTA Membership Committee reviews every state PTA membership plan and monitors the progress being made. Your state PTA will hear from a committee member who will provide support and guidance in successfully completing your plan.

Q: If membership is a priority for all board members, why must our state PTA designate a specific board member to be in charge of membership?

A: The SOA Policy requires at least one member of your state PTA board to be focused on membership and designated as "Membership Lead" in the National PTA database.

Standard 11

Q: Does my state PTA have to wait until the 5th of the month to report our dues?

A: No. Your state PTA can report at any time prior to the stated deadline (the 5th business day of the month) for that month. If you have no dues to report, you must still file a report of zero.

Q: Can my state PTA report dues more than once per month?

A: Yes. Any reports submitted prior to the 5th of the month will be counted in your state PTA's total for that month.

Standard 12 (NEW)

Q: Why must we submit a diversity plan with goals every year?

A: One of PTA's values is diversity therefore it is important for State PTAs to have a specific plan with goals that address diversity, inclusion and outreach. Reviewing and adopting a plan with goals

annually, provides your state PTA with the ability to strategically adjust your efforts to meet the changes within your state's environment and capacity.

Q: Why must our state PTA designate a specific board member to be in charge of diversity, inclusion and outreach?

A: One of PTA's values is diversity, so it is important to have at least one member of your state PTA board to be focused on diversity, inclusion and outreach membership and designated as "DIO Lead" in the National PTA database.

Q: Who monitors our diversity plan?

A: The National PTA Diversity, Inclusion & Outreach Committee reviews every state PTA diversity plan and monitors the progress being made. Your state PTA will hear from a committee member who will provide support and guidance in successfully completing your plan.

Standard 13

Q: Why are we required to submit a list of local PTAs and their officers to National PTA?

A: Just as your state PTA strives to show relevance and value to its members, National PTA does the same. Direct communication is key to success at any level of PTA. Since National PTA began collecting this information, subscriptions to our e-newsletters increased by tens of thousands, more than doubling our subscriptions.

Q: Is the local PTA contact information submitted to National PTA shared with sponsors, vendors, or others outside of the association?

A: No. National PTA does not share any contact information outside of the association. You may receive a communication from a sponsor, but all communications flow through National PTA communications.

Standard 14

Q: When is our state PTA board training required?

A: Each state PTA board must schedule training with a National PTA-assigned or -approved trainer within six months of the beginning of the president's term and at least every two years.

Q: Our state PTA president just resigned, and, per our bylaws, the president-elect became president. Do we have to schedule required SOA board training again?

A: If a vacancy in the office of president occurs, training must be held if more than half the term remains and/or a majority of the board members did not attend the last training.