

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENTS PROCESS -- FAQ

What is the presidential appointments process?

Each year, the ABA President-Elect makes approximately 600 appointments to standing and special committees, commissions and other entities and initiatives.

What is the role of the Appointments Committee?

The Appointments Committee evaluates the candidates submitted for consideration. Each member of the Appointments Committee has been assigned to vet certain committees. Staff liaisons and chairs of presidential appointment entities should expect a phone call from a member of the Appointments Committee in early March. The Appointments Committee member will ask staff and chairs for feedback on the people who applied. He or she will also ask if current members are active and productive. If the committee lacks diversity or if diverse candidates did not apply, the Appointments Committee member will ask you to recommend diverse candidates.

The Appointments Committee members do not actually make the appointments; rather, they relay information to the President-Elect, who makes the ultimate decision.

What is the best way to relay confidential information about an existing or prospective committee member?

If an existing member of your committee has been inactive or is otherwise disruptive to the committee's work, and you are uncomfortable relaying this to the Appointments Committee member, then the best way to share your concerns is to contact Janet Jackson, Katy Englehart, Beverly Curd or the President-Elect's special assistant and discuss the situation frankly. The Office of the President staff will use discretion in communicating the information to the President-Elect.

Can I add members to my committee to make it larger?

Not without having a new jurisdictional statement approved by the Board of Governors. Please be familiar with, and comply with, your committee's jurisdictional statement.

Who submits candidates for consideration and how are names submitted?

Candidates can self-nominate, or they can be nominated by the chair, another ABA member, or entity staff. Names are submitted through the on-line application form. **The Office of the President does not enter applicants into the database.** If a person is being recommended for more than one committee, a separate form must be completed for each committee. When nominating someone for more than one committee, each form should be customized to highlight experience relevant to the particular committee. Candidates who self-nominate for more than one committee are asked to rank their preferences, i.e., first, second or third choice.

What is the application deadline?

The application deadline is March 1 of each year. All applications must be submitted by

that date.

Do applicants need to be ABA members in order to serve on an ABA entity?

Yes, in most cases. On the application form, if an applicant indicates that he/she is not an ABA member, a prompt indicates that they need to become a member in order to serve, and a link to the membership application is provided. If an applicant chooses not to become an ABA member until he/she knows if he/she is being appointed, the individual will need to become a member upon accepting the appointment.

The only exception to the ABA membership rule is for service on commissions. Non-members are permitted to serve on commissions, although a majority, including the chair, must be ABA members.

If the President-Elect decides to remove someone from a committee before the individual's term is up because he/she has not been an active, contributing member of the committee, then who is responsible for notifying the individual?

As a first step, the President-Elect usually asks the entity staff liaison to contact the individual to determine if ill health or short-term personal or work obligations prevented them from participating fully. The staff liaison should determine if the member wants to continue and, if so, if the individual will become an active member of the committee in the future. The staff liaison should report back to Beverly Curd on the outcome of the contact, and that information will be relayed to the President-Elect. If the individual resigns, someone else will be appointed to fill the unexpired term. If the individual wants to continue and indicates he/she will become more active in the work of the committee, the President-Elect will likely keep the individual on the committee.

What are the terms on the various standing and special committees, commissions and task forces?

Terms on special committees are one year with the possibility of continuing for two additional years. As such, each year staff liaisons need to complete an application for every member of the committee, i.e., proposed new members as well as existing members who have only served one or two years. Presidents-elect stick tightly to the "three-year-and out" rule on committees so that other talented people have an opportunity to serve.

Terms on standing committees are three years, although the term for chairs is one year with the possibility of renewal for up to three years. Please note that there are some exceptions with regard to term length on certain committees. For example, ALI-ABA has different term lengths, as does the Center for Rule of Law Initiatives. Refer to the Redbook or become familiar with your entity's jurisdictional statement to be certain of the term lengths for your entity.

What are the best ways to get candidates noticed?

One way to get candidates noticed is to select individuals who have the appropriate expertise and experience for service on a particular committee and then to customize each application form to show only the expertise relevant to that particular committee.

Another way is to put forward candidates who would make the Association more inclusive, or provide unusual but useful experience or perspective. If the committee regularly submits policy recommendations to the House of Delegates, consider nominating applicants with HOD experience and highlight that experience in the application.

When do we learn who has been appointed?

Ideally, all appointments are finalized by the end of June, but it often takes longer. The timing varies depending on the presidential officer. Please know that the Office of the President is not trying to keep information from you and frequent calls to us will not make the information available any sooner. The OP staff takes the same pledge of confidentiality as the members of the Appointments Committee, so we cannot share the information until it's final. We do our best to expedite the process, but it is the President-Elect who makes the final decisions. Staff liaisons and chairs learn who has been appointed when they receive copies of the appointment letters for their committee.

How do I learn which appointees have accepted appointments?

If you have a question about whether someone who received an appointment letter for your committee actually accepted the appointment, please contact Beverly Curd at x5133 or Kay Mastronardi at x5104.

What happens to applicants who don't get an appointment?

This year, all applicants who do not receive an appointment will receive a letter notifying them that they were not appointed to a committee. The letter will encourage them to get involved with the ABA by joining a section. If the person completing the application form indicated sections of interest, he/she will be referred back to the relevant sections.

Why isn't my committee listed as one of the committees on the on-line application form?

Some committees are vetted outside of the regular process for various reasons, e.g., some committees have designated seats for certain organization representatives. If you do not see your committee listed and think it should be included, please contact Beverly Curd.

Why isn't my committee listed in the Redbook?

The ABA doesn't have the resources to publish every ABA committee in the Redbook, and there are guidelines about which committees can be included. Standing and special committees and commissions are listed in the Redbook and entities that fall under the Board of Governors are listed. There are a few section committees for which the president makes appointments and it is up to the section to decide if these committees should be included in the Redbook; for Section committees, only the chair, co-chair and vice-chair can be listed (not the full membership).

Who enters presidential appointments into Redbook?

Generally, the Office of the President enters names into Redbook for all committees for which the president-elect makes the appointments. The only exception is for presidentially appointed section committees. For these committees, the section staff enters the names into TIMMS for Redbook.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding current vacancies, policy, technical issues or the Appointments Committee, contact **Beverly Curd**, ext. 5133; curdb@staff.abanet.org.

For questions regarding completed applications, contact **Kay Mastronardi**, ext. 5104; mastronardi@staff.abanet.org.

For confidential matters, contact **Katy Englehart**, ext. 5134; kenglehart@staff.abanet.org; **Janet Jackson**, ext. 5118; jacksonjl@staff.abanet.org; or **Pedro Windsor** at ext. 6179; windsorp@staff.abanet.org