

Texas Emergency Nurses Association

Guidelines for Planning and Hosting Quarterly State Council and Board Meetings

**Provided by
The Meeting Planning Committee**

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Meeting Dates
3. Planning Schedule
4. Financial Considerations
5. Choosing a Site
6. Negotiating a Contract with the “Host Hotel”
7. Room Requirements / Room Set-Ups /
Diagrams
8. Food Requirements

1. Introduction

Congratulations on your decision to host one of our Quarterly State Council Meetings,

Whether this is the first time your chapter has hosted, or you have experience hosting meetings, the Meeting Planning Committee is available to support you.

Our quarterly meetings present with unique challenges. The challenges are related to the time of the year, location and conflicting activities/functions.

The first quarter meeting in January is our leadership meeting. Sometimes national ENA schedules a leadership meeting in January. When this occurs the first quarter meeting will be moved to February. This meeting is our largest, most highly attended meeting. Most attendees arrive on Thursday.

The second quarter meeting takes place in April near spring break. Hotel rooms may be hard to find so reserve early.

The third quarter meeting takes place in July during summer vacations. This may result in increased room costs and increased travel expense for the attendees.

The Fourth Quarter meeting takes place in October near the time of the ENA General Assembly and Scientific Assembly.

The Injury Prevention and Professional Education Committees often sponsor educational opportunities immediately before the meeting. Stay in contact with both to make appropriate room reservations.

It is recommended the host chapter designate a team to assist with the planning. Members of the meeting planning committee are available to assist the host chapter with arrangements.

2. Meeting Dates

Quarterly meeting dates and host chapters are selected at least 12 months in advance and posted on our website.

Once your chapter has offered and been selected to host a quarterly meeting keep committee chair informed of your progress.

3. Planning Schedule

- 1) A member of your chapter must select a person to attend the quarterly meeting planning committee.
- 2) Assemble a local meeting planning committee. Designate the contact person for your chapter's meeting and send that information to the chair of the state meeting planning committee.
- 3) Contact the meeting planning chair for help with planning and possible resources.
- 4) Contact your local Visitor's Bureau, or City Visitor Center.
 - a. These groups may assist you in finding possible locations for your meeting. They may have suggestions for places that you have not previously considered. Best of all, this is a free service. They can supply you with tourist information and discount coupons to your area. Let them know when the meeting is taking place and they will help you contact the people that you need to talk to.
 - b. Please don't wait until the last minute to start making contacts. If you plan far enough in advance you can sometimes lock in prices before any unexpected price increase.
- 5) Arrange for a block of rooms at a local hotel. This is not mandatory but recommended. Review expectations of reserving block of rooms. If you are planning the event at the host hotel, they may ask you to guarantee a minimum number of rooms, and/or minimum spending for catering services. Request a block of approximately **30 rooms**. Allow for hotel accommodations the night before a meeting and the Saturday night afterwards.
 - a. Most hotels and other venues have a cancellation policy in the contract. Familiarize yourself with the deadlines. There is a deadline to reserve blocked rooms at a hotel. If the rooms blocked are not reserved by the deadline, the hotels may release the block, and special pricing may not be honored. Our group has 501C3. Mention that for tax exemption.
 - b. Most hotels will block rooms at a "reduced rate" until about 14 days before the event. At that point, they will either call you or release the rooms.
 - c. Communicate with hotel personnel early to obtain best prices

- d. Contracts vary from hotel to hotel. Review carefully with special attention to minimum catering charges and minimum rooms.

Three Months before the meeting:

Make sure that your meeting dates and hotel arrangements are posted on the TXENA website. It is helpful if that information is available at the state meeting prior to your event.

Two Months before the meeting:

Make sure the meeting information is available to the membership. Confirm with the host facility that the rooms are available, and have a preliminary menu planned. Best prices for airfare are at least 21 days in advance of the meeting.

One Month before the meeting:

Visit the meeting site, review the menu and room set up. Food arrangements are final, with the opportunity to change number of persons in accordance with the venue policy. Most venues will allow you to increase/decrease numbers up to three days before the event. Review all arrangements with the venue to make sure that there don't have to be final changes. Check with the host hotel as to room availability.

Two weeks before the meeting:

Review the number of expected people for the meeting and adjust as needed for the venue/catering. Most catering people plan for about a 3% increase in the number of people that you guaranteed.

Be prepared for "panic" calls, or e-mails from people that have not made their hotel reservations by the hotel deadline. Most hotels will work with you if they have available rooms. You should probably have a list of "back up hotels" just in case.

One week before the meeting:

Review the arrangements for the venue and host hotel. Give the final expected numbers for catering. This final number is what you are going to be billed. Plan accordingly to prevent catering costs for people that don't show up. If the number of people increases, that is usually not a problem, if you have about 3 days' notice. Most catering services plan on about a 3% overage, so there is a small margin for error. Check your contract,

make sure that they will can feed all that show up, and that there is no extra service charge.

Familiarize yourself with host facility requirements.

- Most Hotels will not allow you to bring in “food or beverage” from an outside source, and if they do allow it, there may be a “Surcharge” added to the bill.

Be honest with your host hotel and keep them informed of any changes in attendance. They are accustomed to numbers changing at the last minute.

4. Financial Considerations

As a “Host Chapter” you assume planning responsibilities. Financial support will be provided by the State. Refer to annual budget for amount of support. (The 2019 approved budget is \$2000.00). **State Treasurer must review any contracts prior to making final arrangements.** The Meeting Planning Committee Chair will assist as needed.

5. Choosing a Site

Choosing a site is the most important part of planning a meeting. The site should be easy to reach, and the room rates should be reasonable. Consider that some attendees people rely on “flying” to these meetings. Questions to consider:

- Do they have the space available required for all the meetings?
- Are final costs within our allowed budget?
- Are room rates reasonable?
- What services can they offer? i.e. free breakfast

Below are the pros/cons of the different venues available for meetings:

Hotels

Pros

- ↳ Offer reduced room rate
- ↳ Everything is in one location; travel not necessary
- ↳ Shuttle service is available (some hotels only)
- ↳ With a “guaranteed” catering fee, room rental is included.

Cons

- ↳ Catering costs are high

- 👉 Service charges are high
- 👉 Extra “service charges” for audio/visual requirements

Hospitals

Pros

- 👉 No room charges.
- 👉 May bring in food by Vendors
- 👉 No a/v costs

Cons

- 👉 Room availability at area hospitals
- 👉 Transporting people to and from the host hotel(s) to and to and from the site
- 👉 Room capacity and availability of needed A/V services may be limited
- 👉 Additional travel time needed for people to attend meetings
- 👉 You may find it difficult to find a hotel that will allow you to arrange for a “block” of rooms at a reduced rate, if you are not going to use their meeting rooms or catering services.

We have attended meetings in both formats.

The most important thing to consider is that the meeting is easily accessible to all attendees. Use your budget dollars wisely. If you choose a hotel, read your contract carefully. Most hotels or convention facilities have catering services and will not allow you to bring in food. If you are allowed an outside catering service to enter the hotel or convention facility, there may be a “service charge” added.

One other “special consideration” is alcoholic beverages. Some hotels and convention facilities are strict regarding alcohol beverages. Read your contract carefully and ask questions before you agree to add use of a hospitality room and bring in your own beverages. Review with the hotel or convention facility and see what their rules and regulations are.

6. Negotiating a Contract with the “Host Hotel”

Obtain more than one bid before signing the contract and do not be afraid to negotiate. Be prepared to talk to these people. The more “facts and figures” that you have the easier to negotiate. Use the bid process with the Convention Bureau or the Tourist Bureau. When we have used this process, we have selected three host facilities, The Convention Bureau contacts them with the dates and specifics that we have, and we

receive a “meeting prospective,” from each of the facilities. These include the proposed room rates for overnight stays, an estimate of the costs for room rental for the meeting, catering price list and menus, facility capabilities, minimum required purchases for catering that are usually tied to the amount of meeting space, and an initial contract.

Note: Review additional charges for extension cords. TEXAS ENA owns cords. Some facilities charge for each electrical cord that they provide, and most will not allow you to bring in extension cords from the outside. There should be:

- 1) *Two (2) wireless microphones available and*
- 2) *A projector and screen (or a blank wall) for State Council Meetings.*

Read the proposed contract carefully

- Review at the cancellation policy. ***Treasurer and/or board officer shall review and approve the contract.***

7. Room Requirements / Setups / Diagrams (see appendix A &B)

State Board Meeting Friday Morning 0800 am – 1100 am

The Board of Directors meeting requires a space that allows for at least 35 persons. Preferred setup is conference style. (Appendix B). Extension cords may be necessary

State Council Meeting Saturday 8 am – 4 pm (allow for 30 minutes set up time)

Preferred room set up for a State Council meeting is a U shaped. (Appendix A). The head table must seat at least 8 persons with space for lap tops and printers. Provide electrical outlets for these devices. Arrange at least 16 chairs on each side of the room for the Chapter Delegates. We have a possibility of 32 Chapter Delegates for each meeting. We should also plan to seat the Committee chairs at designated seats. We have 17 committees however some of the chapter delegates serve as committee chairs and may not require a seat.

Chapter Delegates will be seated alphabetically, by chapter name. Eight chapters are seated on each side of the room; two delegate chairs for each chapter. The host chapter delegates will be seated in the first two chairs to the left of the President.

Committee chairs will be seated alphabetically, by committee name, after the Chapter Delegates at designated tables.

Designate seating space for past presidents; usually inside the U shape directly in front of the board.

Visitor seating can be arranged between the U-shaped tables, preferably at tables, or at the back of the room.

Meeting Rooms:

It is preferable that we have separate rooms for most committee meetings.

The committee meetings begin at 12:00pm

Friday: 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM; a total of 3 meeting rooms are needed; 3 rooms to seat at least 12 people and 1 room to sit 75 in classroom setting. This may change each year so discuss any special considerations with TXENA President or the TXENA website.

LEADERSHIP MEETING

The first quarter meeting is a leadership meeting and begins Thursday afternoon the room requirements for that meeting are as follows:

- Three separate meeting rooms between the hours of 12pm and 5pm. Each require a/v equipment and classroom seating accommodating 15 in each room.
- One room should seat 45.

8. Food Requirements

If you book the meeting in a hotel that has a complimentary breakfast, that helps cut costs. Lunch is required Friday for the Board meeting (50 meals) and Saturday for Council meeting (75). Friday night dinner/social event is a wonderful opportunity to network and is much appreciated but not mandatory. It is acceptable to make the event “Dutch treat”. As for breaks, it is nice to have water, coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks but once again, not mandatory.

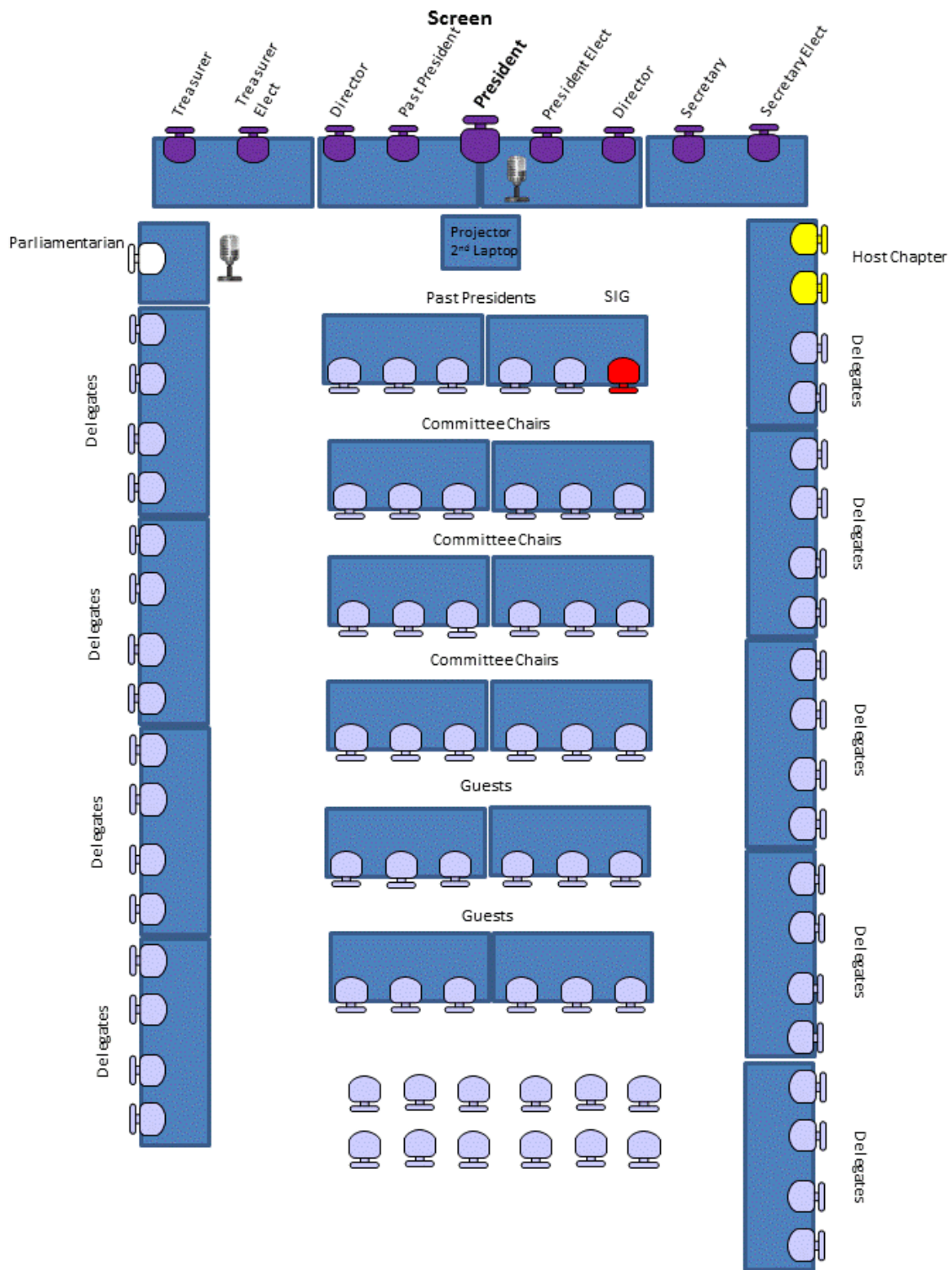
How can the Meeting Planning Committee can help?

Sometimes it is good to have another person, or person review the proposal and give some suggestions. Committee members may be able to give some advice on how to decrease some of the costs and obtain the best value for the money being spent.

Meeting Planning committee members will be available to help with the set up and “seat and greet” at meetings. It would be a clever idea for each “host chapter” to assign one person to help “meet and greet” the attendees and help with registration.

The Meeting Planning committee will supply the name tags and “place cards” for the tables. Thank you.

Appendix A (Council Meeting Room Setup)



Appendix B (Board Meeting Room Setup)

