Texas State Council

OPERATIONAL POLICY/ PROCEDURE

Title: Government Affairs Committee	**Number:**
Cross Reference:	
Approved by: Texas Emergency Nurses Association BOD	**Origination Date:** 07/12/2022
Revised by: Government Affairs Committee	**Approval Date: 2025**
	Revision Date: 09/18/2022

I. PURPOSE:

The Government Affairs committee is responsible for developing and maintaining communication among the State Council and chapter members to share information and obtain support on issues and policies which require legislation at the local, state, and national levels of government. The Government Affairs committee may also coordinate efforts to increase voter registration and participation among emergency nurses.

II. BACKGROUND/DEFINITIONS:

Emergency nurses practicing worldwide have the appropriate evidence-based resources needed to provide the best care possible. Using this expertise, emergency nurses advocate for emergency departments and nurses to have the necessary resources and supplies for the highest quality, safe practice, and safe care.

As an organization, it's important to establish relationships with state and federal legislators to maximize your effectiveness as an advocate. State lawmakers and agency officials have jurisdiction over many laws and regulations regarding issues important to emergency nurses like workplace violence, emergency nursing scope of practice, access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services, and emergency department staffing standards. Each year, legislative priorities should be set by the Government Affairs Committee and Texas Emergency Nurses Association (TxENA) Board of Directors. All government affairs activities should be performed in a coordinated manner, in line with the priorities identified.

1. **Membership:** Current active ENA member

2. **Qualifications of Chairperson/Vice-Chair:**
   a. Have attended at least two (2) Texas State Council General Assembly meetings in the previous year.
   b. Demonstrated excellence in nursing professional practice.
   c. Demonstrated interest in government affairs and legislative advocacy

   Terms of Office: 4 years. All terms of office will be defined as a calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
   a. Year 1 – Vice-Chair
   b. Year 2 – Vice-Chair (Legislative Year)
   c. Year 3 – Chair with Vice-Chair
   d. Year 4 – Chair with Vice-Chair (Legislative Year)

3. Composition: The Government Affairs Committee shall consist of the following who shall be appointed by the Texas State Council President and approved by the Texas State Council Board of Directors (BOD)

a. Chair

b. Vice Chair

c. Committee members

d. State Council BOD Liaison

4. Vacancies

a. Chair – Filled by the current Vice-Chair

b. Vice-Chair – Appointed by the Texas State Council President and approved by the Texas State Council BOD.

III. PROTOCOL/PROCEDURE:

1. **Chairperson**
   a) The chairperson shall serve a two-year term
   b) Coordinate meeting agendas and legislative summaries for meetings
   c) Coordinate lobbying efforts for TxENA in conjunction with Legislative Liaison ○ Attend Nursing Legislative Alliance Coalition (NLAC) and Government Affairs Workshops, as available (This may be delegated to another TxENA Member)
   d) Attend Emergency Nurses Association and Texas Nurses Association Day on the Hill, as available
   e) Encourage ENA members to sign up for the EN411 Legislative Network and become engaged in public policy discussions
   f) Develop, submit for approval, and monitor and annual committee budget
   g) Submit a written and oral report of committee progress at TxENA General Assembly meetings
   h) Call committee meetings as needed to complete identified tasks and activities
   i) Participate in Government Affairs Chairs' quarterly conference calls with ENA Staff

2. **Chair-Elect**
   a) The chair-elect shall serve a two-year term, immediately prior to serving as chair
   b) Operates in a supportive capacity to the chair (i.e., lead meetings in absence, take minutes, attend NLAC meetings and other workshops as needed)

3. **Legislative Liaison**
   a) Identify pending legislation potentially affecting emergency nursing, emergency health care, and emergency medical services at the state level
   b) Coordinate lobbying efforts for TxENA in conjunction with Chairperson
   c) Prepare legislative summaries for quarterly meetings
   d) Contract management will be addressed on an annual basis by the TxENA Board of Directors

4. **Members**
    a) Disseminate government affairs information to local chapters
    b) Engage in meetings and advocacy work as needed