



New Chapter Formation Manual

NEW CHAPTER FORMATION

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in serving the premier association for government accountability professionals. The tremendous strides we have taken as an organization are a direct result of the service and commitment of our volunteer leaders and we are grateful for their time, energy, insights, skills and knowledge.

For those of you who have had this experience of creating a new chapter know that it is a rewarding endeavor, but that it requires a dedicated group of members who are willing to put their volunteer time and energy together to make it happen. These are selfless dedicated individuals who are driven to serve others. But, there is no greater gift to the profession - and those in it - than to extend the services and benefits of AGA.

AGA chapter and national leaders are innovative, energetic professionals who are ready to be catalysts for change and willing to take risks. Furthermore, our leaders are creating our future, defining how we serve financial professionals, and ensuring our success as the premier educational association for government accountability.

Your leadership in AGA might just be the most important contribution you will make to the profession and to your own career.

AGA leaders take advantage of the exceptional opportunity to:

- Contribute to the growth and success of the premier association for government accountability professionals
- Develop solutions to meet present and future challenges
- Expand their leadership skills
- Gain insight into the financial management and association management arenas
- Network with a dynamic group of financial management professionals
- Stay apprised of hot topics in financial management

We are exceptionally proud of our leadership team and look forward to working with you as we serve government accountability professionals around the world.

AGA Mission

AGA serves government accountability professionals by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability.

AGA is the only professional association that boasts a membership across all levels of government – local, state and federal. Plus, AGA also has members who work for tribal governments, academic institutions and private sector organizations.

The Association consists of a network of chapters located throughout the United States, its territories and abroad. The formation of new chapters is an important mission for AGA.

Chapter development unites the government financial management community into a common purpose and enables the profession to advance its goals in a meaningful, and powerful, direction.

This manual is a working document, incorporating the experience and insights of those who have successfully organized new chapters. In forming new chapters, it is important that the initial groundwork be carefully laid, that the organizers be totally familiar with the environment they have to work with today, and that the potential for future growth be strong.

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Getting Started

Membership

A minimum of 20 individuals who qualify for Government and/or Private Sector membership status are required as the charter members for a proposed chapter.

Government class of membership is available to individuals currently working in government, academia and not-for-profit organizations. This class is also available to individuals with similar experience outside the government who are engaged in educational activities having the same objectives as the Association, or who have made a contribution toward the improvement of government financial management.

Private Sector class of membership is available to individuals working for commercial activities/ventures that are actively engaged in and support AGA's purpose and objectives.

Completed membership applications along with payment for each prospective member must accompany the Petition to Form a New Chapter document (here on out referred to as Petition). Individuals who are already AGA members just need to sign the Petition.

In addition, the Association must assure that there are sufficient numbers of potential Full and Private members to create a new chapter of adequate strength to continually operate successfully.

Geographic Scope

The geographic area of any chapter should be sufficiently large enough to include those organizations in which government financial management activities are carried on in the community, but small enough to allow members to attend meetings regularly. In appropriate circumstances, a chapter's area may cross county, city or state lines.

Formation Assistance

AGA chapters are organized into fourteen geographic regions. Each region has a team of National Leaders to manage it. The regional team consists of the Regional Vice President (RVP), RVP-Elect, and the Immediate Past RVP. This team is responsible for assisting chapters in numerous areas, including education, certification, membership, chapter development and assistance, accountability, community service and young professionals. Contact information for these individuals can be obtained from the AGA National Office.

Prior to and/or during the petition stages, the RVP or RVP-Elect will visit the prospective chapter to offer guidance, suggestions and other helpful assistance.

AGA employs about 20 people at its Alexandria, Virginia office, referred to as the AGA National Office. This staff is actively engaged in providing a variety of programs, resources, and support services for all members and chapters. Specifically, the Membership Staff assist with forming new chapters.

The closest active AGA chapter can also provide tremendous assistance to individuals forming a new chapter. New chapter organizers will be invited to attend regularly scheduled meetings and be given appropriate resource people within that chapter as contacts. Contact information for these individuals can also be obtained from the Membership Staff at the AGA National Office.

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Initial Organization

Sponsors

Frequently new chapters are formed by members who move to an area where there is not an active AGA chapter. In this case, the member sponsors all individual applications of prospective members. Occasionally, a neighboring chapter will undertake the formation of a new chapter as an every-member project. The resources provided by the sponsoring chapter are numerous, including: membership recruitment through professional contacts, marketing expertise, program planning, and assistance in preparing the Petition.

However, if there is no member or chapter available to sponsor the chapter, the RVP will act as the sponsor.

Financial Resources

The AGA can help defray some of the expenses associated with chapter formation, such as refreshment costs at the chapter formation meeting. In addition, nearby chapters often are willing to provide some financial assistance to ensure that a new chapter is successfully launched.

Organizational Meeting

When enough excitement has been generated for the new chapter, the next step is to hold a chapter organizational meeting. A breakfast or lunch meeting works well. Receptions are also a good choice. Dinner or evening meetings are more difficult to arrange and are not, therefore, recommended. If the geographic area is too large to conveniently accommodate the schedules of the prospective members, small group gatherings may have to be arranged. However, remember that you will want to make it convenient for new members to regularly attend meetings and you may discover that your initial geographic area is, indeed, too large.

Invitation List

From the names acquired through a survey of potential members in the community and personal contacts, compile a list of those you would like to invite to the organizational meeting. Additional sources of potential members include:

- The Government Audit and Accounting Committee of the state CPA society;
- AGA members located near the new chapter formation area. The AGA National Office staff can run queries on the database and provide this information. This list can include current members, non-members who hold the CGFM designation and other non-member prospects in the AGA database.
- Newspaper announcements in area newspapers. Most newspapers have regular business sections or pages and will accept editorial announcements of plans to initiate professional organizations. Ideally, these announcements should appear each of the two weeks prior to the organizational meeting.

Invitations may be mailed, emailed or extended directly through telephone calls. If the invitation is mailed, it should take the form of a personal letter and, preferably, should be followed up by a telephone call.

Speakers

In addition to the individuals that are forming the chapter, the RVP and the AGA National Office Membership Staff can be called upon to speak at the chapter organizational meeting.

Agenda

Reproduce the agenda for distribution to all who attend. Then follow it, taking care to begin and end the meeting on time. Those who wish to linger after the meeting has been adjourned may do so without inconveniencing others.

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Some helpful pointers:

- Emphasize all phases of AGA membership—the fellow-ship, business contacts and leadership development that naturally evolve from participating in a national organization.
- Stress the variety of opportunities for participation—the contribution each member can make in areas of individual interest, maximizing their time and talents for the benefit of the chapter as a whole.
- Clearly indicate that the chapter will determine its own destiny. Urge new members to assume a leadership role in all phases of its organization. Underscore the resources available at the regional and national level.

Suggested Agenda:

- A. Introductions
- B. Introducing AGA
 - a. A brief overview of the Association; its inception and growth, purpose, accomplishments
 - b. Services and benefits of membership
- C. Involvement
 - a. Educational opportunities
 - b. Professional networking avenues
 - c. Leadership development
 - i. Chapter committee structure
 - ii. Regional and national committee structure
 - d. Community Service
- D. New Chapter Process
- E. Q&A
- F. Signing of Petition

Completion and Submission of Petition to Form a New Chapter

The chapter organizational meeting is the best time to have individuals sign the Petition. As soon as 20 members and/or prospective members have signed it, the completed Petition can be sent to the AGA National Office. These individuals should represent a cross section of the governmental agencies, private sector firms and academic institutions in the new chapter area. Additional members can be added, as charter members, up to the time of the official charter presentation.

Chapter Name

The name of every chapter will be, “The Association of Government Accountants of ____.” The words appearing in the blank should indicate the location of the chapter, ordinarily the name of a geographical area. The name of the state in which the city/area is located may also be included, but is not required. To avoid possible duplication or potential confusion, the National Executive Committee has final approval of all new chapter names.

The Charter

A charter issued by the National Executive Committee establishes AGA chapters. Upon evaluation of the information provided in the Petition, the National Executive Committee grants a charter to the new chapter when:

- It believes the new chapter will further the purposes and objectives of the Association;
- There is evidence to indicate the continued professional success of a proposed chapter; and
- It is assured that the initial applicants for the proposed chapter take into consideration the current and potential for membership development in federal, state and local employees in the community as well as those who contribute to or work with government through academia and/or the private sector.

The NEC generally meets each quarter—usually February, July, September and December. The charter will be issued when the NEC approves the proposed chapter’s Petition.

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Charter Presentation

When the necessary organizational arrangements have been completed, an AGA National officer or a representative of the AGA National Office will present the new charter to the chapter at an installation meeting at a place and on a date chosen by the chapter. This presentation offers an excellent opportunity for press coverage and for appropriate greetings by civic officials and officers of other professional societies.

Nuts and Bolts of Chapter Activation

Address

A chapter post office box or similar central address is the most desirable way to establish a permanent mailing address.

Bylaws

Formal acceptance of a set of chapter bylaws is a requirement of the Association for formal recognition of the chapter. A motion adopted by the chapter membership prior to initiating chapter activities can approve bylaws. Functional policies and procedures not covered in the bylaws are left to the discretion of the chapter, except that they shall not conflict nor be inconsistent with the adopted bylaws.

Chapter Incorporation

Although each chapter becomes part of the Association as a whole, each chapter adopts local bylaws consistent with the National Bylaws and is encouraged to incorporate in its respective state. Incorporating is a relatively simple procedure that involves filing articles of incorporation or a certificate of incorporation with the secretary of state of your jurisdiction along with the applicable fee.

In addition to articles of incorporation, some states may require bylaws or other documents. Both the articles of incorporation and bylaws must comply with the most recent documents of the Association. Your state also may require annual submissions of additional paperwork, such as annual reports, minutes from your annual meetings, or payment of an annual fee in order to retain the incorporation status.

501(C)(3) Status

To be tax-exempt as an organization described in Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), an organization must be organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes set forth in IRC Section 501(c)(3) and none of the earnings of the organization may inure to any private shareholder or individual. In addition, it may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and it may not participate at all in campaign activity for or against political candidates.

As an exempt organization you may still need to file with the Internal Revenue Service. The chapter should be aware of the requirements for filing Form 990 or Form 990EZ, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Organizations are required to file an annual information return as follows:

- All chapters with gross receipts under \$50,000 file form [990-N \(e-Postcard\)](#)
- All chapters with gross receipts between \$50,001 and \$200,000 and assets less than \$500,000 file form [990-EZ](#)
- Chapters with gross revenues in excess of \$50,001 and assets over \$500,000 or gross receipts over \$200,000 for the fiscal year must file an informational return titled, [990—Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax](#).

Employer Identification Number

Your chapter must obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) by filing IRS Form SS-4. Your EIN is the chapter's federal identification number that is used on most documentation. The chapter's EIN is not the same as that of AGA National. Neither the EIN nor any other number is a "tax-exempt" number for federal income tax purposes. Your

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chapter is still responsible for the filing of all reports with governmental authorities, including the fees or taxes associated with these reports. AGA National does not include the income or expenses of its chapters on its annual information report, which is filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

Bank Account

The chapter treasurer should open a chapter bank account for monies received and disbursed on chapter business. Annual chapter dues are billed and collected by the AGA National Office, which remits local dues to the chapters on a regular basis. Ensure that the National Office has current chapter ACH information for electronic deposits.

Officers and Committee Chairs

As soon as practical after its charter has been granted, the chapter should elect officers, in accordance with the provisions of its chapter bylaws.

Ratification of Acts of Temporary Officers

One of the first responsibilities of the permanent officers should be the ratification of all actions, which have been taken by the temporary officers in the formation of the newly chartered chapter. After this action, the chapter's executive committee will be in a position to function as a part of the Association.

Policy Book

Those day-to-day policies of the chapter, which are subject to periodic review and change, should be incorporated into a loose-leaf chapter policy book. Generally, policies will divide themselves into several categories, such as meetings, dues, committees and election procedures. As these policies are adopted by the chapter's executive committee or the general membership, they should be indexed and placed within the proper category in the chapter's policy book. This book will soon become a valuable guide in providing continuity to the functions of the chapter.

Chapter Program

Each AGA chapter is responsible for conducting chapter meetings, scheduling committee activities and planning chapter programs. Utilize the experience of other chapters and provide an excellent foundation for planning and implementing successful activities by a new chapter. However, the energy, dedication and imagination of the chapter's membership will ultimately determine the degree of a chapter's success.

To form the basis for a strong and healthy chapter, which meets the needs of members for professional growth and development, it is recommended that an annual plan of chapter programs and projects be developed. (Refer to the **Chapter Recognition Program Manual** that is available from the AGA National Office) The AGA National Office should receive timely reports from each chapter and will do everything possible to assist the chapter in its formative years.

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Summary of New Chapter Formation Process

- Contact the National Office.
- Locate interested individuals in your area.
- Set up an organizational meeting.
- Complete and submit the Petition.
- Adopt a set of bylaws.
- Establish Chapter Policy Book.
- Establish chapter bank account and mailing address.
- Arrange an installation meeting to accept the chapter charter.
- Elect the permanent officers.
- Ratify the acts of the temporary officers.
- Incorporate your chapter—optional.
- Review the various manuals the AGA has available to assist your chapter's development and ongoing success.
- Accept your fellow AGA members' best wishes for successfully forming a new chapter!

AGA NEW CHAPTER PETITION

Petition to form the Association of Government Accountants of _____ Chapter.

To the National Executive Committee of the Association of Government Accountants:
The undersigned prospective members of the Association of Government Accountants, whose membership applications are attached, attest that they subscribe to the AGA Bylaws and request that a charter be granted to establish a local chapter of the Association in _____.

Please Sign Name Here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
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24. _____

Please Print Name Here:

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18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____

Charter petitions require a minimum of 20 current and/or prospective members. Completed applications for prospective members must accompany this petition.

AGA NEW CHAPTER PETITION

I. Analysis of Geographical Area New Chapter Will Encompass

(Attach area map)

Scope of territory: ___ City ___ County ___ Multi-county ___ Other (specify):

AGA Region: _____

Name of nearest AGA chapter: _____

Distance from nearest AGA chapter: _____

Name of sponsoring chapter/individual: _____

II. Demographic Information of Proposed Geographical Area

Current population: _____

Projected population in 10 years: _____

Current economic climate: ___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor

III. Federal Government Agencies/Offices

Number of federal government agencies/offices: _____

Number of employees in financial management: _____

The following prospective members represent federal government (please print):

1. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
2. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
3. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
4. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
5. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____

IV. State Government Agencies/Offices

Number of state government agencies/offices: _____

Number of employees in financial management: _____

The following prospective members represent state government (please print):

1. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
2. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
3. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
4. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
5. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____

V. Local Government Agencies/Offices

Number of local government agencies/offices: _____

Number of employees in financial management: _____

The following prospective members represent local government (please print):

1. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
2. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
3. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
4. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
5. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____

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VI. Private Sector Involved in Government Work

Number of private sector firms: _____

Number of employees in financial management: _____

The following prospective members specializing in government finance management (please print):

1. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
2. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
3. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
4. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
5. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____

VII. Academic

Number of colleges or universities offering business administration: _____

Number of faculty members in school of business: _____

The following prospective members represent academia (please print):

1. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
2. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
3. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
4. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____
5. Name _____	Agency _____	Title _____

VIII. Membership Drive

Describe the program planned to contact area government financial managers to make them aware of this petition for a charter and to solicit membership support.

IX. Competition

List existing federal, state and local government organizations in the proposed chapter area and indicate major activities of each.

1. Organization: _____	Activities: _____
2. Organization: _____	Activities: _____
3. Organization: _____	Activities: _____
4. Organization: _____	Activities: _____

X. Organization

Have the current petitioning members formed a temporary chapter? _____ YES _____ NO

If yes, please complete the following:

Temporary Officers

President

Name _____

Agency _____

Title _____

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Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone numbers (Work) _____
(Other) _____

Vice President

Name _____
Agency _____
Title _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone numbers (Work) _____
(Other) _____

XI. Planned Activities

What activities are planned for the first year after your charter is granted?

How can the National Office be of assistance?

Contact

Please send all communications concerning the formation of this chapter to:

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone numbers
(Work) _____
(Home) _____
(FAX) _____

Signature: _____



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