



American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc.
Safety and Excellence in the Surgical Care of Children

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2026 APSNA Board of Directors Candidate Handbook

The American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) is a national specialty nursing organization of registered nurses committed to excellence in pediatric surgical nursing care. We are pleased that you are considering serving on the APSNA board.

This candidate handbook has been designed to inform you of the responsibilities of the APSNA Board of Directors (BOD) and to assist the Nominating Committee in selecting the most qualified candidates for these positions. Running for national office is a serious responsibility, requiring much time, effort and energy. It demands increased involvement in and dedication to pediatric surgical nursing.

We strongly encourage you to speak with current or past APSNA Board and Nominations Committee members to discuss your interest in a particular position. We also encourage you to discuss your candidacy with your employer to ensure support for the position you are seeking.

We invite you to review the information below and contact our Nominations Chair at info@apsna.org with any additional questions.

APSNA's Mission, Vision and Values

Mission Statement

We are the voice that shapes pediatric surgical nursing through advocacy, collaboration, mentorship and leadership. Based on a foundation of research, education and innovation, we will transform care delivery for pediatric surgical patients.

Vision

The American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) will be the leading authority for the nursing care of pediatric surgical patients.

Core Values

Diversity and Inclusion - Act according to a strong code of ethics demonstrating acceptance, cooperation, flexibility, compromise and mutual respect.

Excellence - Establish and sustain professional competencies that promote pediatric surgical nursing to key stakeholders.

Integrity - Model and uphold transparency, accountability and honesty through actions, communication, and caring behaviors.

Innovation - Encourage inquiry and creativity to promote proactive, interactive, professional deliberations.

Scientific Inquiry - Commit to lifelong learning by actively contributing to an evolving body of scientific surgical nursing knowledge through research, publication, and dissemination.

Volunteerism - Provide members with the ability to freely interact, discuss trends, and share knowledge.

APSNA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Statement

The American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) respects, values, and celebrates the unique attributes, characteristics, and perspectives that make each person who they are. We believe that our strength lies in our diversity among the broad range of people and areas we represent. APSNA recognizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) as drivers of organizational excellence and is committed to fostering diversity of participation, thought, and action. It is our aim that our members, partners, and key stakeholders reflect and embrace these core values.

Candidacy for APSNA's BOD: The following are criteria for those seeking a position on APSNA's BOD:

1. The nominee is an active member of APSNA for at least (2) years prior to assuming office, though such prior membership is not a requirement.
2. The nominee is actively engaged in and/or has special knowledge related to pediatric surgical nursing.
3. Participation in pediatric nursing-related activities on a national, regional, and/or local level is desirable.
4. Experience as a national officer of a professional organization, committee member for APSNA and/or other professional organization(s) is desirable.

5. The nominee demonstrates effective collaboration in team settings; builds constructive working relationships characterized by a high level of acceptance, cooperation, flexibility, compromise, and mutual respect.
6. The nominee must be nominated or may nominate themselves using the online Candidate Nomination Form that includes the following:
 - a) APSNA Board Candidate Personal Profile/Application – see Appendix A for details
 - b) Curriculum Vitae
 - c) One letter of recommendation submitted online.
 - d) Candidate photo for the website (professional photo preferred).
 - e) Complete the policy verification form found here – Appendix B.
 - f) Complete the declaration of interest form found on the policy here.
 - g) Institutional Support Form – Appendix C (*Please verify in your application that this form was presented or waive its use*).
 - h) The nominee is willing to commit the necessary time and resources to serve effectively in the position for which is nominated. This includes an average of 20 or more personal hours per month of administrative time working on APSNA-related projects. This time commitment is conservative and with certain BOD positions can be as high as 20-25 hours per week, especially at specific times of the year such as preparing for conference.
 - i) Nominees will be contacted by the Nominations Chair to review the submission packet and clarify information as needed.
7. A candidate may not run for more than one position per election year. Candidates nominated for more than one position will be contacted by the Nominations Chair and asked to select the position which would most like to pursue.
8. The nominee will be contacted in the case of potential conflict of interest to identify a resolution, if needed, in consultation with the BOD.

General Information – from Bylaws

The authorized number of directors shall be eight (8).

The BOD shall conduct the business of the Corporation in the best interest of the Corporation, its members, and the community it serves.

1. Responsibilities:

- a) To follow the Duties of Care, Loyalty, and Obedience.
- b) To perform all duties entrusted to Directors of a Corporation
- c) To develop and to abide by the Bylaws and Policies of the Corporation
- d) To debate and determine Corporation policy regarding the management of the Corporation
- e) To supervise and direct the business and financial affairs of the Corporation
- f) To develop, monitor and evaluate programs, which implement Corporation policy
- g) To identify relevant professional issues for presentation to and action by the appropriate board committees and membership
- h) To develop pertinent policies related to the function of the APSNA Board

- 2. Each board member shall exercise the duties and responsibilities as defined in the official position descriptions of the Corporation Officer.
- 3. The elected Officer shall not hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms except for the President who is limited to one term.
- 4. Each Officer and Committee Director shall serve until a successor assumes office, or until removed by resignation, death, or action by the BOD. All actions performed by members of the BOD will be in the best interest of the Corporation, its members, and the community it services, the pediatric surgical patient.

Meetings

1. All Board Members (incoming and current) are expected to attend all Board Meetings throughout their terms
2. APSNA support is outlined in the Remuneration Equity/Conflict of Interest Policy
3. Required meetings include:
 - a) Pre-Conference Meeting
 - b) Annual Business meeting
 - c) Post-Conference Board Meeting
 - d) Fall Board Meeting
 - e) Board Conference calls (every month or as designated by current President)
 - f) Executive Committee (EC) calls (every month or as designated by current President. The EC includes the President, Treasurer, Immediate Past President/President Elect)
 - g) Finance Committee meetings attended by the President, Immediate Past President/President Elect, Treasurer, Immediate Past Treasurer, Directors of Development and Program
 - h) Investment Committee meetings attended by Treasurer and Immediate Past Treasurer
 - i) ECAG meetings as designated by the Director of Education (DOE). The ECAG includes DOE, Secretary, Director of Program, Director of Practice and Quality and Immediate Past President/President Elect
4. Additional Expectations of the President, Immediate Past President/President Elect, and Treasurer during their term in office are as follows. Meeting attendance is supported by APSNA.
5. The President shall attend the following:
 - a) Annual Meeting Nursing Alliance Leadership Academy (NALA)
 - b) Annual Meeting of our partnership organizations via invitation
 - c) American Nurses Association Organizational Affiliate (ANA OA) meetings in June and in October/November.
 - d) Annual Nursing Organizations Alliance (NOA) meeting first year of presidential term in the Fall.

6. The President Elect shall attend the following:
 - a) NALA (opposite year of Treasurer)
 - b) NOA
 - c) The ANA OA meeting as an alternate to the President
7. The Treasurer shall attend the following in the first year of their term only:
 - a) NALA

Mentorship and Succession Planning

1. It is our intent to provide as much support and education for incoming BOD Members as possible. To that end we have created a mentoring process, which is aimed at preparing incoming Board Members for their terms and providing guidance after assuming office.
2. Coaching and mentoring are very effective development methods employed to assist individuals to reflect, identify and achieve their goals and are essential to fostering learning relationships that translate into non-profit volunteer leadership experiences. These learning relationships assist individuals to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to the American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) in a meaningful way. Coaching and mentoring are powerful tools that can support the professional growth of volunteers in a way that is both timely and specific.
3. APSNA acknowledges its intention to establish and follow best practices in board governance to fulfill its fiduciary obligation to the membership. An essential part of sound governance is the practice of supporting succession planning that aims at ensuring effective processes to provide continuity of association leadership. Mentoring forms, a critical component of this process. APSNA utilizes mentoring to develop new leaders within the organization. Mentoring makes use of the organization's wealth of internal capability, benefits all parties involved, and support organizational leaders to reach their full potential.

4. Timeline and expectations for BOD Mentorship (Mentoring and Succession Plan Policy):

- a) The outgoing board member is required to contact all eligible candidates for their position prior to elections to provide an opportunity for questions and to share information about their role.
- b) The mentoring experience begins during the outgoing year, when the incoming board member is elected and formally ends at the end of the incoming board member's first year on the board.
- c) There is a formal overlap period of May through July each year where the outgoing board member retains their APSNA email address and overlaps with the incoming board member to provide a smooth transition for the new board member. Extension of the email address retention will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- d) The outgoing board member then contacts the incoming board member again immediately after the elections to develop a transition plan that may include some actual responsibilities that are mutually agreed upon.
- e) The mentoring experience includes a collaborative decision on how often to meet and the best mode of communication. This includes but is not limited to scheduling regular meetings, (feedback loop regarding the job description timelines), communication, and outcomes (a sense of progress and development). The mentor and mentee will set up a formal process at the time of the pre-conference board meeting and establish the best way to communicate and response time.
- f) Each incoming BOD Member is expected to begin orientation after the election prior to assuming office. This may include but is not limited to:
 - i. Participation on the BOD emailing list.
 - ii. Participation as a committee member to their respective BOD position.
 - iii. Participation in any web related or other training sessions specific to their BOD responsibilities.
 - iv. Participation in BOD Teleconference calls. Incoming Board members to attend April BOD meeting.

5. Availability for conference calls, as needed, with the outgoing board member.

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 - d) Participation in BOD Teleconference calls.
 - e) Availability for conference calls, as needed, with the outgoing board member.

Solicitation of Candidates for National Office

Candidates for nomination to the BOD will be solicited from the APSNA active membership.

Elections take place annually, usually in January. The word “year” is defined as the length of the elected term referring to the period between each consecutive annual membership meeting of the Corporation. See table under Election Cycle.

For more information regarding the Nominations Committee, Nomination and Elections Timelines, Eligibility and Candidacy please refer to the Nominations Policy.

Election Cycle

1. The term of office begins in May of the year marked with an “X” with elections for that position having been held the previous October. All Officers shall assume the responsibilities of office at the end of the annual business meeting.
2. The terms of office are as follows:

SEAT	TERM
President	Two (2) year
President – Elect	One (1) year alternating
Immediate Past President	One (1) year alternating
Secretary	Two (2) year
Treasurer	Two (2) year
Committee Directors	Two (2) year

- All BOD members are expected to remain active during the year following completion of their term of office, known as the mentor year.
- Candidates seeking a position on the BOD are expected, upon election, to begin working with the board member currently in that position to gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the position.
- Please see each individual position description, found with the current BOD. These positions descriptions are updated annually and provide the most current description of each BOD position.

APSNA OFFICE	2025	2026	2027	2028
President Elect (<i>every other year</i>)		X		X
Secretary (<i>2-year even</i>)		X		X
Treasurer (<i>2-year odd</i>)	X		X	
Director of Practice & Quality (<i>2-year even</i>)		X		X
Director of Program (<i>2-year even</i>)		X		X
Director of Education (<i>2-year odd</i>)	X		X	
Director of Development (<i>2-year odd</i>)	X		X	

APSNA DOs and DON'Ts of CAMPAIGNING

1. Candidacy is confidential until all the candidates are posted on the website prior to the election. No member of the BOD or the Nominations Committee will discuss candidacy or possible candidacy status of prospective board members except for the purposes of candidate selection and review. APSNA traditionally has taken a position of no formal campaigning of any kind.
2. To promote fairness and equality among the candidates, the APSNA Leadership in collaboration with the Nominations Committee has provided some guidelines for supporting your candidacy, as addressed below:

DO *(without formal campaigning)*

- a) Attend APSNA events to increase your visibility without announcement of formal candidacy.
- b) Discuss your experience, abilities, skills and talents.
- c) Discuss your ideas and goals for APSNA.
- d) Network with other APSNA members regarding professional perioperative issues on organizational Forums.
- e) Submit professional manuscripts for the JPSN or other peer-reviewed journals.
- f) Present educational programs at APSNA, other professional meetings or at the local level.
- g) If invited, attend meetings at the annual meeting or other committee meetings.
- h) Attend other professional nursing Corporation events and meetings.
- i) Continue to serve on appointed committees (if applicable).
- j) Vote for yourself.

DON'T

- a) Distribute (or encourage others to distribute) any written material or electronic media identifying or promoting yourself as a candidate for national office, including written letters, cards, e-mails, Forum communications, photos, text messages, social networking, or advertisements.

- b) Distribute business cards that identify you as a candidate (personal and professional business cards are acceptable).
- c) Identify yourself as a candidate on APSNA Forums.
- d) Identify yourself as a candidate when presenting professional or educational programs.
- e) Identify yourself as a candidate when submitting manuscripts to the JPSN.
- f) Identify yourself as a candidate when speaking at the Annual Conference.

Appendix A

APSNA BOARD CANDIDATE Personal Profile/Application

All submissions [must be completed using this link](#) to address the following criteria.

Questions are to be sent to info@apsna.org.

Please include the following:

1. Applicant Name & Credentials/Professional licensure
2. Office/Board position you seek
3. Place of current employment/job title
4. Major areas of responsibility
5. Educational background/degrees held/special certifications
6. Summary of your goals for the position (Please review Category A – Evaluation Tool Criteria)
7. Past or present leadership experiences and responsibilities that contribute to your qualifications for the office sought: (If you do not have leadership experience, please include whether you have interest in being mentored in a leadership role.)
Please provide a summary of your:
 - a) Leadership skills
 - b) Organizational skills
 - c) Communication skills
 - d) Computer skills
 - e) Ability to work with others
 - f) Commitment to the profession of nursing and the growth and development of the specialty of pediatric surgical nursing.
8. How many years have you been an APSNA member?
9. List your previous or current involvement on APSNA committees or board of director positions. (If you have not had previous experience on an APSNA committee or board position, please include whether you have interest in being mentored in such

a position.)

10. Submit recent curriculum vitae with your application

11. Submit professional headshot.

12. Please request a letter of recommendation submitted online (requested to be written by a non-APSNA member nurse or colleague). This letter should address your qualifications for holding a board of directors' position by speaking to your professional accomplishments and leadership potential. Specifically:

- a) contributions to APSNA or demonstration of leadership abilities,
- b) vision, creativity, innovation, and professional communication,
- c) self-direction/ability to meet deadlines,
- d) quality of work,
- e) accountability and
- f) professional integrity.

[This letter may be found here online.](#)

Appendix B - Policies

[Attendance Policy](#)

[BOD Conflict of Interest](#)

[Bullying and Incivility Policy](#)

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy](#)

[Governance Policy](#)

[Information Technology \(IT\) Resources and Communication Systems Policy](#)

[Nominations Policy](#)

[Nondiscrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

[Statement of Values and Ethical Standards - Board of Directors and Volunteers](#)

Appendix C

Institutional Support Form

Dear _____,

The American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) is a national non-profit organization, committed to the promotion of excellence in pediatric surgical nursing practice through educational offerings, nursing research, professional collaboration, and peer support. APSNA is currently engaging active members for open, volunteer Board of Director (BOD) Positions for the upcoming term.

APSNA faces many challenges in pediatric surgical nursing and our association's vision, mission and values guide healthcare and us. These three areas articulate the importance APSNA places on the qualities that our leaders bring to our association and to our specialty.

Running for national office is a serious responsibility requiring much time, energy, and effort. Our elected leaders are committed to advancing pediatric surgical care through the development and support of nurses to promote excellence in patient care.

_____ has the leadership qualities representative of BOD Members, and the strengths needed to ensure strategic direction. _____ is considering the position of _____.

This is a volunteer, non-paid BOD position.

Prospective BOD members are asked to present the following expectations of their position to their respective institutions prior to pursuing a BOD position. These expectations include:

1. Fulfillment of a 2-year term (May-May), in addition to a 3rd with the possibility of reelection to the same or different BOD position thereafter. The President Elect is a 4-year commitment.
2. Attendance at the Annual Scientific Meeting and BOD Meeting held yearly in May*:
 - a) Travel (airfare, ground transportation) to and from the Meeting
 - b) Lodging on-site at Hotel Meeting Location for 4-5 nights

3. Attendance at the Annual Fall Board Meeting*
 - a) Travel (airfare, ground transportation) to and from the Meeting

**Costs to be covered by the individual BOD Member personally or their respective Institution.*

4. Average of 10-20 personal hours per month of administrative time working on APSNA related projects. This time commitment is conservative and with certain BOD positions can be as high as 20-25 hours per week, especially at specific times of the year (i.e. preparing for conference, etc.)
5. Representing their respective institutions and departments as centers of nursing excellence and pediatric surgical care distinction.
6. There are many rewards associated with this type of leadership position. We are providing this information to you and _____, our prospective BOD Member, to be transparent on the financial, personal, professional and time commitments that this volunteer BOD Position requires. We feel it is important that prospective candidates and their institutions have this discussion when considering a BOD position. This will ensure that the expectations of the Institution and the Employee are clear prior to the acceptance of a nomination. We appreciate your consideration of this request and our shared dedication to APSNA and the care we deliver to our Pediatric Surgical patients.

Please feel free to contact me at the number or email below.

Sincerely,

Lori Lynch
APSNA Nominations Committee Chair
Immediate Past President 2025-2026
info@apsna.org

American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA)

c/o VTL Solutions | 217 Oscar Drive, Suite C | Jefferson City, MO 65101
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Appendix D

APSNA Nominations Committee Applicant Evaluation Form

Applicant Name: _____

Position nominated for: _____

Category A: Goals

Rate the applicant's goals for the position they have been nominated for (**choose one**, 0-3 points):

- ☐ **3 Points:** His/her goals are achievable and suggest that the candidate possesses a high level of drive and ambition. Applicant's goals exemplify APSNA's vision, mission, and strategic plan.
- ☐ **2 Points:** Applicant's goals meet basic expectations. His/her goals are consistent with APSNA's vision, mission, and strategic plan.
- ☐ **1 Point:** Applicant's goals are limited or demonstrate limited understanding of APSNA's vision, mission, and strategic plan.
- ☐ **0 Points:** Applicant does not list goals.

Category B: Leadership

Rate the applicant's previous leadership experience/potential (**choose all that apply**, 0-4 points each):

- ☐ **4 Points:** Applicant has held past/present leadership positions at the local community/ state/ or national level pediatric surgery.
- ☐ **3 Points:** Applicant has held past/present leadership positions in volunteer roles at the local community/ state/ or national level. (Examples include but are not limited to: volunteer organizations, fundraising, church communities, etc.)
- ☐ **2 Points:** Applicant has held past/present leadership positions at place of employment.
- ☐ **1 Point:** Applicant has no prior leadership experience but expresses interest in learning to hold such a position
- ☐ **0 Points:** Applicant has no prior leadership experience.

Category C: Involvement in APSNA (2 subcategories)

a) Rate the applicant's participation as an APSNA member (**choose one**, 1-2 points):

☐ 2 Points: Applicant has been an APSNA member for 2 or more years.

☐ 1 Point: Applicant has been an APSNA member for 1-2 years.

b) Rate the applicant's previous/current involvement in APSNA (choose one, 0-2 points):

☐ 2 Points: Applicant has been an active member of an APSNA committee and/or board of director's position for one committee or board position.

☐ 1 Point: Applicant has been an active member of an APSNA committee and/or board of director's position but expresses interest in participating in a mentorship program.

☐ 0 Points: Applicant has never been a member of an APSNA committee and/or board of director's position.

Category D: Letter of Recommendation

(requested to be written by a non-APSNA member nurse colleague)

Rate the letter of recommendation for the applicant (**choose one**, 1-3 points):

☐ 3 Points: Writer can address the applicant's qualifications for holding a board of directors' position with two or more reasons or examples of their success as a professional and/or leader.

☐ 2 Points: Writer can address the applicant's qualifications for holding a board of director's position with one reason or example of their success as a professional and/or leader.

☐ 1 Point: Writer addresses the applicant's qualifications for holding a board of directors' position, however, does not provide reasons or examples.

TOTAL POINTS: _____