

National Association of Black Journalists Regional Conference Policies and Procedures

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article I, of the Operating Procedures for the NABJ Board of Directors, annual meetings in the regions shall be known as Regional Conferences and shall be executed under the supervision of the regional director. The regional director shall preside at the regional conference and the deputy regional director shall preside in the absence of or at the request of the regional director.

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article II, Section 1, of the Operating Procedures for the NABJ Board of Directors, Regional Directors shall submit budgets for regional conferences to the NABJ national office, no later than 45 days after the Board votes to approve the conference planning. Budgets must be accompanied by written estimates from vendors for the cost of goods and services associated with the regional conference.

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article II, Section 2, of the Operating Procedures for NABJ Board of Directors, contracts for meeting space, food, and beverage, the NABJ Executive Director must sign any contracts for audio-visual and /or computer equipment, travel, lodging, speaker's fees and other expenses associated with the regional conference. Contracts signed by other persons will not be honored. In the event of emergency expenses that require out-of-pocket expenditures, a receipt must be submitted to the NABJ national office for reimbursement. Emergency expenditures shall not exceed \$200.00.

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article II, Section 3, of the Operating Procedures for the NABJ Board of Directors, all monies raised or collected for regional conferences, including registration fees, shall be made payable to the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and forwarded to the national office.

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article II, Section 4, of the Operating Procedures for the NABJ Board of Directors, at the conclusion of the regional conference, the host chapter of a regional conference may receive up to 50 percent of the profits of the conference, with not less than 50 percent of the profits returned to the regional account. If more than one chapter was involved in planning and executing the conference, up to 50 percent of the profits may be divided among the participating chapters at the discretion of the regional director, with not less than 50 percent returned to the region' account. In the event of a joint regional conference, the host chapter may receive up to 50 percent of the profit, with not less than 50 percent of the profit equally divided between the two regional accounts.

The regional director shall prepare a written report detailing the division of labor, volunteer efforts and/or other contributions of the host and participating chapters to the regional conference. The report shall be submitted to the national office and distributed to the host and participating chapters within 15 days after the regional conference. In the

event of disputes over sharing of profits, the host and/or participating chapters may appeal in writing to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall review the dispute and make a determination. Chapters may appeal the decision of the executive committee to the full Board of Directors.

Obtaining Board Approval

The NABJ Board of Directors has established a moratorium on regional conferences. Authorization to proceed with regional conferences must be obtained on a case-by-case basis. In order to proceed with planning a regional conference, therefore, the regional director, must formally request the Board's approval.

Establishing a Conference Planning Committee

After Board approval has been granted, the regional director should seek an agreement with the local chapter that will host the regional conference. A conference planning committee should be established and a schedule of committee meetings should be set up. The NABJ staff liaison should be included in the committee whenever possible and apprised of actions resulting from committee meetings. The conference planning committee should immediately:

- Determine tentative conference dates with alternate dates to achieve optimal attendance.
- Identify suitable hotel properties or conference centers in the region to host conference. The national office will negotiate all contracts with hotel properties.
- Identify potential sponsors and seek sponsorship for the conference.
- Identify additional local resources, i.e. convention and visitors bureau, Chamber of Commerce and Media organizations.
- Determine specific events for host chapter to generate additional revenue.

Establishing a Regional Advisory Committee

The regional director should also establish an advisory committee comprised of other NABJ members from chapters in the region. These members would meet with the conference planning committee chair and co-chair and provide input regarding the conference program to ensure diversity and representation from throughout the region.

Conference Finances

In order to plan a successful conference, an itemized budget must be developed. The budget should include estimated expenses and projected revenue. Expenses and revenue should be broken down and itemized to reflect separate categories, i.e., revenue could be generated via registrations from attendees as well as exhibitors, or sponsorships. Sponsorships could come as cash donations, in-kind services or goods. When in-kind services or goods are donated, a cash value must be assessed.

The conference budget should be submitted to the NABJ national office within four weeks after Board approval to hold the conference. Expenditures cannot be made without the revenue to support them. If the conference hotel requires a deposit and the current

balance for the regional budget cannot support the deposit, it will be made from NABJ's operational funds. The deposit must be repaid from the regional budget after conference revenue is received.

Registration

Registration payments must be processed through the NABJ national office. All checks and/or money orders are to be made payable to NABJ-Region __. The final registration deadline must be set no later than 30 days prior to the conference date. This will allow adequate processing time between the deadline and the conference.

Sponsorships

Regional conferences must be self-supporting, fund raising efforts are to be conducted by the regional director and/or host chapter and when possible the national office may assist in these efforts.

Sponsor donations must be processed through the NABJ national office. When a prospective sponsor indicates they will contribute to the regional conference, the commitment letter from the sponsor should be forwarded to the staff liaison. An invoice and sponsorship acknowledgement letter will be generated from the national office and sent directly to the sponsor (s). Sponsors will be instructed to make their checks payable to the respective region (NABJ Region __) and send checks to the national office. At conclusion of the conference, thank-you letters will be sent to each sponsor with NABJ's tax ID number for the sponsor's record.

Host Chapter Fund raising

Proceeds of fund-raising efforts through host chapter sales, i.e. T-shirts or other items, need not be processed through the NABJ national office. Payments should be made separately from the conference registration fees and managed by the chapter. The purchase of such items cannot be made from regional funds. The chapter must bear the total expense in order to retain the profit.

Expenditures

All contracts for conference goods and services must be submitted to the NABJ national office for the Executive Director's signature. The regional director, in consultation with the NABJ national office, bears the ultimate responsibility for due diligence and contract negotiation. Contracts for ancillary services, such as audio-visual equipment, charter bus service, exhibit hall set-up, plaques and awards, printing etc., must be reviewed in advance and signed by the NABJ Executive Director.

The hotel contract will be negotiated by national office and should be finalized as far as in advance of the conference date as possible, but no later than six months before the conference date. All other contracts should be finalized six (6) weeks prior to the conference date. Final banquet event orders (BEO's) for all functions must be approved and signed by the Executive Director, one month prior to the conference date.

Customarily, NABJ does not pay honoraria to conference speakers. In an effort to minimize conference expenses, the NABJ Board discourages payment of speaker's travel expenses. It is recommended that local NABJ members be invited as program participants to minimize these expenses. In addition, NABJ does not assume printing or photocopying costs for speaker handouts. Should a program participant request an honorarium or reimbursement of travel expenses, advance authorization must be obtained from the Executive Director. If authorization is granted, it will be clearly stated in the speaker confirmation letters.

Reimbursement Requests

Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses may be requested by completion of the NABJ reimbursement form. The completed reimbursement form and original receipt (s) must be submitted to the NABJ national office. Processing takes approximately three to four (3-4) weeks.

Final Disbursement

The final revenue disbursement (50/50 split) to the host chapter will be made after all conference revenue and expenses have been received and reconciled. Late vendor invoices and unresolved registration payments (i.e. returned checked or declined credit card payments) are the primary causes for reconciliation delays.

On-site Supervision

The NABJ staff liaison will meet with the regional director and hotel staff for a pre-conference meeting. Any changes to the conference program or food functions will be noted during this meeting. The regional director, host chapter and participating chapters must ensure adequate staffing for successful execution of the conference. The NABJ staff liaison will provide logistical support when necessary and serves as the primary interface with the hotel staff to confirm accuracy of banquet event orders (BEO's) and overall service for the conference. At the conclusion of the conference, the NABJ staff liaison will hold a post-conference meeting with the hotel.