

Human Resource Policy Manual (HRPM)
Volume 12: Work Life and Benefits
WLB-12.6

Employee Associations

This Chapter applies to: (1) Non-bargaining unit employees/positions, and (2) bargaining unit employees/positions except where the applicable collective bargaining agreement contains conflicting provisions or the subject has not been negotiated.

Chapter established on: 7/12/2000

This version effective: 11/27/2017

Background information: This policy chapter replaces WLB-12.6, Employee Associations, dated November 1, 2016. Revisions were made to:

- Update the Roles and Responsibilities section to add the Office of Civil Rights.
- Reinsert the authority for managers to approve additional time for national officers/acting national officers to attend meetings or events that support diversity and inclusion goals in paragraph 13. The statement was inadvertently removed from the previous version of the policy.
- Clarify that the approving officials may approve up to 24 hours of excused absence for the national conference approved as training when the conference is determined not directly related to the employee's current position but may enhance the professional development or skills of the employee in his or her current position. The 24 hours of excused leave in this situation includes any travel time as appropriate. If the entire 24 hours is needed to participate in the conference, employees have the option to travel during the non-duty time; excused absence for travel is not approved in this instance.

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1. Purpose
 2. Scope
 3. Definitions
 4. Roles and Responsibilities
 5. Requirements for Recognition of Employee Associations
 6. Recognized Employee Associations
 7. New Employee Associations
 8. Non-Recognized Employee Organizations
 9. Withdrawal of Authorization
 10. Conflict of Interest
 11. General Conduct Limitations
 12. Use of Agency Resources
 13. Guidance for Participation
 - a. Employee Association National Officers and Acting National Officers
 - b. Employee Attendance at Employee Association National Conferences Approved as Training

1. Purpose. This chapter describes the requirements for recognizing employee associations, provides policy for attending national and regional board meetings, and offers guidelines for using FAA resources for employee association purposes.

The FAA acknowledges that employee associations assist in fostering a climate of diversity and inclusion that contributes to employee welfare and morale. Employee associations also serve as a vehicle for employee input regarding FAA's Equal Employment Opportunity Program and human resource management issues in support of FAA's mission. The FAA may support employee associations by granting access to various resources as stated in

paragraph 12 of this policy chapter. However, responsibility for the organization and management of employee associations remains with the employee associations themselves.

The FAA may, at its own discretion, consult and communicate with recognized employee associations on the improvement of agency operations, human resource management, and employee effectiveness; and the establishment of policies that best serve the public interest in the accomplishment of the agency's mission. This consultation and communication must not take on the character of negotiations or consultations regarding conditions of employment of bargaining unit employees, which is reserved exclusively for labor organizations as provided by law.

2. Scope. This policy chapter covers all FAA employees who are, or wish to be enrolled as members of a recognized employee association.

3. Definitions.

a. Recognized Employee Associations: This includes associations formally organized to promote the welfare and morale of FAA employees that have met (and continue to meet) all requirements set forth in this policy chapter, and have been officially approved and recognized by the Administrator.

b. Approving Officials: A designated management official within the employee's supervisory chain or the Head of the Line of business (LOB) and Staff Office (SO).

4. Roles and Responsibilities.

a. Administrator:

- Approves or denies an organization's status as a recognized employee association within the FAA.
- Authorizes the withdrawal of an organization's status as a recognized employee association within the FAA if the organization does not continue to meet the requirements set forth in this policy chapter.

b. Office of Civil Rights (ACR):

- Maintains current copies of the constitution and bylaws on file as provided by the employee organizations.
- Obtains the required lists of national officers from employee associations within 30 days of elections.

c. Office of Human Resource Management (AHR):

- Publishes recognized employee association listings and revisions as appropriate.

d. LOB/SO Manager (Approving Official):

- Approves (in advance) duty time and/or excused absence in accordance with this policy for:
 - An employee to attend an employee association national conference approved as training
 - A national officer or acting national officer to attend executive board meetings and committee meetings and the annual employee association conference or meetings/events that support diversity and inclusion goals.
- Allocates travel and/or training funds from their respective organization's budget.

e. FAA Employee Association:

- Supports and upholds the goals, objectives, and mission of the association, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), genetic information, age (40 and over), disability, sexual orientation or reprisal for participating in protected Equal Employment Opportunity activity.

- Makes available for inspection, copies of minutes of business meetings or open meetings of the governing body.
- Submits a list of national officers to ACR.
- Submits a written request to the Administrator if they want to be recognized as an employee association within the FAA.
- Adheres to FAA Order 3750.7A (series), Ethical Conduct and Financial Disclosure.
- Adheres to the requirements set forth in this policy chapter in order to maintain its standing as a recognized employee association within the FAA.

f. Employee:

- Requests approval (in advance) to attend executive board meetings and committee meetings and the annual employee association conference if the employee is a national officer.
- Requests approval (in advance) to attend employee association national conference approved as training, and obtains travel authorization, if applicable, by the employee's approving official.
- Requests excused absence (in advance) to attend an employee association national conference approved as training by the employee's approving official.
- Adheres to the standards of conduct and ethical rules for behavior for employees.

5. Requirements for Recognition of Employee Associations. Employee associations seeking FAA recognition must meet and continually comply with the conditions as outlined below:

- a.** Membership and participation in the employee associations must be open to all FAA employees who support and uphold the goals, objectives and mission of the association, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), genetic information, age (40 and over), sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation; or disability.
- b.** The employee association must be formally organized for the benefit of the agency or to provide service to employees of the FAA.
- c.** The employee association must be democratically organized and operated. All FAA employees working in the geographical area in which the association is intended to serve and who meet the definition of membership in the employee association's constitution and bylaws must be eligible for membership and assessed dues on an equal basis with other members in similar categories of membership. **Note:** Honorary members may not be subject to payment of dues.
- d.** The employee association must have a constitution and bylaws (or their equivalents). The bylaws should explicitly define functions and authorities of the governing body, and the officers and duties and responsibilities for management of the employee association's affairs. The constitution and bylaws must be recognized by the Administrator. Current copies of constitution and bylaws will be kept on file by Office of Civil Rights (ACR). Within 30 days of elections, employee associations are required to submit a list of national officers to ACR.
- e.** All activities sponsored by the employee association must be free of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), genetic information, age (40 and over), sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation; or disability.
- f.** Upon request by any of its members, the employee association must make available for inspection, copies of minutes of business meetings or open meetings of the governing body.

6. Recognized Employee Associations. The following employee associations have met the requirements of this policy and have been officially recognized by the Administrator:

- FAA Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Employees (GLOBE);
- National Asian and Pacific American Association (NAPA);

- National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE);
- Native American/ Alaska Native (NAAN) Coalition for Federal Aviation Employees;
- National Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees with Disabilities (NCFAED);
- National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NHCFAE);
- Professional Women Controllers (PWC);
- Technical Women's Organization (TWO).

7. New Employee Associations. Whenever a group of FAA employees wants to be recognized as an employee association, they must submit a written request to the Administrator. Requests must include a copy of the charter, bylaws, statement of purpose, and constitution or equivalent of the association; and a list of names, positions, and telephone numbers of the current association officials (e.g., board of directors, officers, executive committees, program managers, and/or supervisory committee).

The Administrator has the sole discretion to determine if it is in the best interest of the FAA to recognize the association and whether the association complies with the criteria set forth in this policy. All new employee associations must be recognized in writing by Administrator. As new employee associations are recognized or authorizations are withdrawn, AHR will publish a revised listing of recognized associations.

8. Non-Recognized Employee Organizations. Employee organizations that are not granted recognition will not receive the privileges provided under this policy to include, but not limited to, use of the agency's name, initials, or resources in connection with their activities.

9. Withdrawal of Authorization.

- a. As a condition of continued recognition, the Administrator may, at any time, require appropriate evidence of compliance with the requirements as stated in this policy from the employee associations.
- b. Whenever the Administrator determines that an association is not complying with the requirements of this policy, or for any other reason determines withdrawal of recognition is in the best interest of FAA, recognition will be withdrawn and the employee organization will no longer receive any privilege provided under this policy. Before recognition is withdrawn, the Administrator will provide a written notice to the employee association, indicating non-compliance.

10. Conflict of Interest. As FAA employees, members of the employee associations must adhere to FAA Order 3750.7A (series), Ethical Conduct and Financial Disclosure. Conflict of interest rules specifically **prohibit**:

- a. Employees serving on outside boards of directors in their official capacity;
- b. Direct or indirect solicitation or acceptance of any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, or other item having monetary value from a prohibited source or given because of the employee's official position;
- c. Contributions from prohibited sources toward corporate membership or organization expenses (including conference expenses); and
- d. An employee, or his/her spouse or minor child of the employee, from holding stock or having any other securities interest in an airline or aircraft manufacturing company, or in a supplier of components or parts to an airline or aircraft manufacturing company.

For further guidance concerning FAA rules on ethical behavior, refer to [FAA Order 3750.7A](#) or consult the Agency's Ethics Official.

11. General Conduct Limitations.

- a. The activities, programs, products, or services of any FAA recognized employee association must not be represented, directly or indirectly, as being official functions or activities of the FAA or any official thereof.

b. Employee associations may not engage in any activities which adversely reflect on the Department of Transportation (DOT) or the FAA.

c. Except as provided below, FAA-appropriated funds may not be used for services or activities of employee associations.

12. Use of Agency Resources. All officially recognized employee associations which meet the requirements and general limitations of this document may be granted use of agency resources listed below. Pursuant to this policy, a recognized employee association may have any or all of the privileges withdrawn at any time. Recognized FAA employee associations may be granted the authority to use or distribute the following:

a. The name or initials of the agency, but not the use of the FAA seal, in the employee association's name, provided that it is made clear that the association is not an official organization of the agency.

b. Available space at FAA facilities provided it does not interfere with the normal operations or functions of FAA mission. Space that may be available consists of conference rooms, unoccupied offices, cafeterias, and similar government-owned or leased space. All building use regulations and requirements apply, including, for example, General Services Administration building use requirements, safety, and security regulations, 41 Code of Federal Regulations Part 101-20 and applicable DOT and FAA facilities use requirements.

c. Designated bulletin boards, provided that the literature posted receives prior authorization by a higher level approving official.

d. FAA's internal mail distribution facilities provided it does not interfere with the conduct of official business.

e. FAA's electronic mail provided it does not interfere with the normal operations or functions of FAA mission. Refer to [FAA Order 1370.81A, Electronic Mail](#) for requirements.

f. Approved promotional materials and literature on Federal premises during non-working time in non-working areas provided material does not impact the efficiency of government business. Federal safety and security regulations apply.

g. Official FAA employee association newsletters, or the FAA Web, on a space-available basis, for conveying information to meet reasonable needs of employees, such as:

- Educational announcements or developmental activities sponsored by employee associations;
- Announcements of artistic or cultural activities; and
- Announcements promoting equal opportunity or announcing meetings, entertainment, and social affairs.

13. Guidance for Participation.

a. Employee Association National Officers or Acting National Officers: No more than 16 national officers and/or acting national officers may participate for each of the governing bodies of the associated FAA recognized employee associations. If there is no national officer located in a region, Aeronautical Center, or Technical Center, the employee association may appoint a member within the region or center to attend national and regional board meetings. Any such designated representative will be counted as part of the 16 national officer limit. Participation is subject to operational workload, budgetary considerations, and advanced approval by the appropriate approving official, such as the employee's supervisor. Any approved travel and per diem costs will be paid by the line of business/staff office in which the officers are employed, subject to availability of funds.

(1) Duty Time: National officers and/or acting national officers of the governing bodies of the associated FAA recognized employee associations may be approved to use duty time to attend the:

- Annual Employee Association Conference

- Executive Board meetings and committee meetings. **Note:** Attendance is limited to no more than 16 hours of duty time within a business week for each attendee

In addition, managers have the discretion to approve additional time to officers to attend meetings and events that support diversity and inclusion goals.

(2) Excused absence: Employee Associations may choose to conduct an executive board meeting immediately before or after the annual employee association conference. National officers (or acting national officers) may be approved to attend the employee association executive board meeting in conjunction with the annual conference. Employees who are national officers (or acting national officers) may be granted an **additional 16 hours of excused absence** to attend the executive board meeting. These hours are in addition to the hours granted for attending the conference whether the employee is on duty time or excused absence. **Note:** Attendance and excused absence is subject to operational workload and must be approved in advance by the employee's approving official.

b. Employee Attendance at Employee Association National Conferences Approved as Training:

Higher level approving officials may grant attendance and approve funding, in part or full, to FAA-sanctioned employee association training conferences; provided the training is directly related to the individual employee's current position, or it will clearly enhance the professional development or skills of the employee in his or her current position.

The appropriateness and feasibility of an employee attending the conference must be decided on a case-by-case basis by the approving official within the employee's supervisory chain. The approving official decision to allow the employee to attend the conference for the purpose of training is determined by the employee's specific training needs, the cost-effectiveness in addressing the employee's needs, operational demands, organizational priorities, and budgetary considerations. The use of duty time and excused absence to attend must be approved in advance by the employee's approving official.

(1) Duty time: If attendance is determined directly related to the employee's current position and funding is approved, approving officials must allocate funds from their respective organization's travel/training funds. As such, the time spent in training during the employee's work hours is considered duty time, and the policy provided in FAA Travel Policy must be followed. Attendance and associated travel authorization must be approved in advance by the employee's approving official.

(2) Excused absence: If attendance is determined not directly related to the employee's current position but may enhance the professional development or skills of the employee in his or her current position, approving officials may authorize up to 24 hours of excused absence for the conference, inclusive of time to travel if needed, provided the following requirements are met:

- The Office of Human Resource Management, Office of Talent Development has approved the conference/training;
- FAA does not pay for the conference/training registration or other fees, travel, per diem or provide the employee with any travel comp time for travel time outside of the employee's normal duty hours to and from the conference;
- There are no operational workload requirements and funding is available for the excused absence; and
- Advanced approval has been granted by the delegated official.

The following examples illustrate how the manager would apply the "up to 24 hours" excused absence authority when an employee is attending a National Employee Association Conference. The examples assume 8-hour work days.

Example 1: The conference is two and a half days; Tuesday, Wednesday, and a half day on Thursday. An employee may be granted 24 hours for this conference and may choose to travel home on Thursday. The 24 hours of excused absence may include time in travel for the remainder of Thursday. If the

employee chooses to stay Thursday and travel home on Friday (which is normally a work day), the employee must be in an approved leave status.

Example 2: The conference is one day; Tuesday. The employee may be approved for up to 24 hours of excused absence and as such, may travel on Monday to attend the conference on Tuesday and travel home on Wednesday. Any excess time taken for this purpose would be on the employee's time and the employee must be in an approved leave status.

Example 3: The conference is five days; Monday through Friday. The employee is approved to attend the conference and may be granted excused absence for up to 24 hours to attend. As such, the employee may travel on Sunday (his/her own time), be granted excused absence for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and then be in approved leave status for the remainder of the week.

Related Information

Policies

- [FAA Travel Policy](#)
- [Order 1370.81A, Electronic Mail](#)
- [Order 3750.7A, Ethical Conduct and Financial Disclosure](#)

Revision History Log:

Date	Revision
November 1, 2016	Revisions were made to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow an additional 16 hours of excused absence for national officers to attend the executive board meeting which is held in conjunction with the annual employee association conference; • Increase the amount of excused absence from 16 to 24 hours for an employee to attend an employee association conference approved as training; • Clarify guidance on participation as national officers/acting national officers or as an employee attending an employee association conference approved as training; and • Comply with HRPM formatting and plain language requirements.
October 1, 2014	Replaced WLB-12.6, dated May 3, 2013, and streamlined the policy to address recognition of associations, use of agency resources for recognized associations, and authority for attending annual and quarterly board meetings of recognized associations.
May 3, 2013	Replaced WLB-12.6 dated May 2, 2007. Pen and Ink Change clarified the authority level required for attendance at conferences.
May 2, 2007	Replaced MSC-10.1 dated April 24, 2007. Paragraph 4 Recognition Procedures was revised to remove the Council of African American Employees (CAAE) from the listing of FAA Recognized Associations and to delete a portion of the last sentence in paragraph 4.
April 24, 2007	MSC-10.1 Employee Associations policy established.
July 12, 2000	FAPM Letter 630-1 Participation At Conferences or Conventions of Women and Minority Group Organizations canceled and replaced as MSC-10.1.