



ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION (AGCRA) CHAPTER GUIDELINES, INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIZING AN AGCRA CHAPTER



GENERAL

The goals and aspirations of the Adjutant General's Corps Regimental Association (AGCRA) can best be served by Chapters in the field, which are organized and activated to build a network of motivated and interested members in their local areas. The fraternal bond formed by shared experiences and solved problems can be found at the Chapter level, where the commonalities of environment, mission, locality and structure create a positive atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect. Ultimately, the true strength of the Association will be determined by active Chapters and their programs, not by the Association's central headquarters. Chapters will guide the Association to maturity through increased membership, support for and education of AG Soldiers, Army Musicians, Recruiters / Retention personnel, Department of the Army (DA) Civilian (DAC) employees, and development of activities and programs designed to meet the needs and desires of members to be served locally.

It is critical to first understand that AGCRA and its associated Chapters are **"not"** official Army entities. AGCRA and its Chapters are U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) approved military non-profit organizations that must consistently check with and comply with local installation guidance and policy on operations and activities on military installations or within the Department of Defense (DoD) environment. The information enclosed within these Chapter Guidelines are rules approved by the Association's National Executive Council (NEC), but must also be validated with local installation authorities.

The Association will continue as a visible and energetic focal point for:

- Professional AG / Army HR, Army Band, Recruiting and Retention development.
- Adjutant General's Corps esprit-de-corps.
- Fraternal bonding for all elements of membership.
- Sharing information on AG / Army HR, Army Band, Recruiting and Retention programs, initiatives, and activities.
- Enhancement and expansion of member services.

HOW TO ORGANIZE

Determine the Feasibility of a Chapter:

Realistic assessment of a Chapter's potential is the critical first step to ensuring that success can be achieved. Steps in this process include the following actions:

- Identify the senior AG / Army HR, Army Band, Recruiting and Retention leader(s) in the local area whose leadership, support and resources will be helpful for Chapter activation and sustainment. Junior leaders should not be deterred from forming or reactivating a Chapter if senior leadership is otherwise not available.
- Contact and invite the key Officer, Warrant Officer, NCO and DAC leaders to a Chapter feasibility meeting. At this meeting, determine the geographical area and units the Chapter should serve, as well as the number of potential members assigned or living therein. Estimate the support that can be engendered and the esprit that could result. If all assessments are positive, designate the group in attendance as the Chapter Organizational Committee.
- Prepare and dispatch a letter of announcement concerning the Chapter's proposed activation. Schedule a general organizational meeting to which all potential members can be invited. This meeting would usually be held in the evening or during non-duty hours (i.e., breakfast or lunch), and should be open to all AG Soldiers, Army Musicians, Recruiting & Retention personnel, DAC employees, Volunteers, and affiliates, with special emphasis on attendance of Junior Officer, NCO and DAC leaders. Recommend the meeting be publicized by e-mail and posted flyers. Note – check before hand with military MWR or installation authorities about using DoD or Army e-mail systems for AGCRA activities. If DoD or Army e-mail systems are not available, contact the AGCRA Adjutant, Adjutant@agcra.com, for other possible communication options from the Association's social media outlets.
- At the meeting, criteria for AGCRA membership and Chapter activation should be discussed. Potential programs and activities should also be emphasized, as well as member services. A proposed slate of Chapter Officers should be nominated and voted on. Overall support for the Chapter should be assessed, and Association membership applications distributed to gain the commitment necessary to attain qualification for activation of the Chapter. If all indicators are positive, the Chapter should consider itself ready to petition the Association NEC for approval of activation and official chartering. Procedures for petitioning the Association are discussed below.

Membership Rules and Criteria for Chapter Activation:

Certain basic ground rules and criteria necessary to preserve and perpetuate the Association, as well as to protect the rights and responsibilities of its Chapters, are described as follows:

- Chapters can be activated only upon approval of the Association's National Executive Council, after an appropriate petition has been submitted.
- Activation petitions must contain the Chapter's initial slate of proposed officers, and the signature of 15 active members of the Association. Membership applications (with payment) may be submitted with the petition if sufficient signatories are otherwise unavailable.
- Chapter members must be Association members.

- Chapter officers must be members of the Chapter and the Association as well, and initially must be elected at a general membership meeting of the Chapter to which all members are invited.
- Within six months of activation, Chapters must submit their Chapter Addendums to the Association Constitution and Bylaws, or their own Constitution and Bylaws, for the National Executive Council's approval.

Duties of the Chapter Organizational Committee:

This Committee plays a key role in performing specific functions critical in the petitioning and activation process. These functions include:

- Coordination with the Association National Executive Council. Advance contact will save time and effort in the preparation of the activation petition and other administrative requirements. POC is the Association Adjutant, Adjutant@agcra.com.
- Definition of the Chapter's Limits and Boundaries. Chapters may be defined by location; such as a post, camp or station; by unit, such as a Battalion; or as a combination of the above. Whichever definition has the most potential for building esprit and morale should be selected by the Committee and submitted on the Chapter petition.
- Selection of the Chapter Name. Usually the committee will choose a name which has some link or affiliation with the installation, geographical area or unit(s) served by the Chapter. This recommendation must also be submitted with the petition.
- Nomination of the Initial Slate of Officers. This slate should contain, as a minimum, a nominee for a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Presidents for Awards, Plans and Programs, and Membership. These positions should be defined in the Chapter Addendum as the elected offices; however, the Association National Executive Council will approve the first slate as part of the petitioning process.
 - ✓ Special care must be taken to ensure that Officers, Warrant Officers, NCOs, DACs, and other potential membership groups receive appropriate and representative consideration in the nomination process of the proposed Chapter name and geographical area served.
- Organization and Conduct of the Initial Membership Meeting. As discussed in the Feasibility Section, the Committee must use this initial meeting to inform the potential membership about the Chapter's purpose, organization, and leadership, as well as to assess the overall support for activation. At a minimum, the following agenda items must be addressed at the meeting:
 - ✓ Discussion of the criteria for AGCRA membership and Chapter activation.
 - ✓ Briefing on potential Chapter programs and activities.
 - ✓ Discussion of the proposed Chapter name and geographical area served.
 - ✓ Nomination and concurrence with the initial slate of Chapter officers.
 - ✓ Membership recruitment.
 - ✓ Preparation and signing of the Chapter petition by the proposed Chapter President.
 - ✓ Support for Chapter activation.

- Submission of the Chapter petition. After the initial membership meeting is concluded and the support for activation is established, the Committee assumes responsibility for submitting the signed petition to the Association National Executive Council. Procedures for preparing and submitting the petition are discussed in the next section below.

Petitioning the Association for Approval to Activate a Chapter:

The petition format is a letterhead memorandum signed by the proposed Chapter President that includes the following within the memo or as attachments:

- Proposed Chapter name and quick summary of why the proposed Chapter name was selected.
- A proposed slate of Chapter officers, to include e-mail addresses (personal e-mail address preferred) and telephone numbers.
- Planned quarterly (minimum) AGCRA programs and activities for the next 12 months (i.e., breakfast, luncheon, guest speaker, etc.).
- The signatures of 15 active members of the Association that will be part of the Chapter upon activation. Membership applications (with payment) may be submitted with the petition if sufficient signatories are otherwise unavailable.
- Acknowledge that within six months of activation, the Chapter will submit their Chapter Addendums to the Association Constitution and Bylaws, or their own Constitution and Bylaws, for the National Executive Council's approval

Once completed, the Chapter petition and membership payments should be submitted to the Association as soon as practical. In lieu of sending any membership payments with the Chapter petition, individuals are highly encouraged to join AGCRA on the Association website at the link below.

<https://www.agcra.com/product/agcra-membership/>

In turn, the National Executive Council will consider the petition and vote to approve or disapprove the Chapter's activation. Once approval is granted, the Association will notify the Chapter by e-mail, along with forwarding a dated Chapter Charter memorandum.

The Chartering Ceremony:

Once the Chapter Charter has been approved, an appropriate ceremony or activity should be planned to commemorate the event. Usually, the ceremony will take place at a military club or some other suitable facility. The program should include, as a minimum, the official acceptance of the Chapter by the President, with appropriate remarks concerning the objectives and programs of the Chapter.

If possible, a prominent speaker should keynote the event. It is also recommended that a program be printed to highlight all the events and activities involved. An example Chapter Chartering Ceremony is provided below.

- Coffee Social
- Chapter President's Opening Remarks
- Breakfast or Lunch Buffet
- Chapter Activation
- Guest Speaker.
- Chapter President's Closing Remarks

CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

Chapter Finances:

AGCRA Chapters are not authorized to assess their members for dues. Only the Association National Executive Council is authorized to collect dues to support programs and activities benefiting the entire Army-wide AGCRA membership. Chapters can however request funding support for unique Chapter initiatives that cannot normally be supported through Chapter fund raising events.

Chapters are authorized and encouraged to find other means to finance their respective programs. Examples of Chapter fund raising projects are shown below. Please double check with local installation authorities or ensure installation approval is provided to ensure compliance. Chapter fund raising activities should not compete with AAFES, NAF, or commissary operations.

- Auctions of Corporate Sponsor Donations of Prizes and Goods
- Bake Sales
- Car Washes
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Flea Markets
- Garage Sales
- Golf Tournaments with Entry Fees
- 5K / 10K Runs
- Raffles

Chapter Records:

The Chapter Executive Council must decide where the permanent records of the Chapter shall be located. Every effort must be made to systematically make a record of the activities and programs in which the Chapter becomes involved for future reference. Usually, an after-action report will suffice for this purpose, so long as it contains copies of all plans and promotional materials used in conjunction with the event.

The Chapter Secretary is normally charged with the responsibility of maintaining and posting the Chapter's records. The Secretary must be particularly attentive to keeping accurate minutes of all Chapter Council and General Membership meetings. The Secretary should also maintain a permanent policy file which houses all resolutions and permanent guidance and decisions on issues and other matters emanating from both the Association and the Chapter.

The Chapter Treasurer must produce a monthly financial statement which, at a minimum, lists the following items:

- Beginning Balance
- List of all Income Items and Amounts
- List of all Expense Items and Amounts
- Ending Balance

Each Chapter fund-raising activity must be duly and properly recorded by the Treasurer in the form of a Cost Center with complete disclosure of all revenues and expenses involved therein.

An annual financial report must be prepared by each Chapter Treasurer. Full disclosure of all revenues and expenses, particularly those involving unrelated business income, must be reported in compliance with Internal Revenue Service requirements for a nonprofit organization. Forms and other guidance in this area will be provided to Chapters by the Association Treasurer on an as needed basis.

Chapter Headquarters:

One permanent Chapter headquarters location should be chosen and reported to the Association. Change of Chapter Council Members should have no bearing on the permanency of this site. Additionally, the Chapter's mailing address will be provided to the Association Adjutant at Adjutant@agcra.com.

Chapter Reports:

Soon after the commencement of a new fiscal year on July 1st, Chapters should submit an Annual Report covering their programs and activities for the previous year, as well as their planned events for the coming year. The template for the Chapter Annual Report can be found within the AGCRA Chapter Recognition Program MOI (POC is the Association VP, History at History@agcra.com). This report will be used by the Association headquarters to determine viability of all Chapters.

Chapter Annual Reports should contain the following items:

- A complete listing of Chapter Officers and Committee members from the previous and current fiscal year (include Chapter mailing addresses, and Chapter Officer e-mails & phone numbers)

- Description of programs and activities sponsored by the Chapter during the previous and current year
- Listing of the Chapter meetings held during the previous year
- Number of Chapter members
- Listing and number of Association presented awards from the previous year
- Problems encountered during the previous year
- Description of fund-raising activities executed
- Recommendations to the Association

CHAPTER PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Location Variables:

Each Chapter will be likely to involve itself in different programs and activities depending on the location, composition, and needs of the Chapter. Example – the objectives of a Chapter in Germany will probably vary considerably from those of one located in the United States.

Networking:

Information and idea sharing are a vital ingredient in the recipe for Chapter success. Chapters which share the common problems of location, mission, OCONUS language, and cultural differences should communicate regularly to exchange notes on their endeavors, particularly those which have produced positive results benefiting each entity and its membership.

Program and Activity Menu:

The following listing is proposed only as an idea generator for potential programs and activities which a Chapter may choose to sponsor:

- **Athletic Competitions:** A Chapter can organize its own league, or its teams can be sponsored and supported in the vast array of intramural sports in the Army repertoire.
- **Awards:** The Chapter should prepare and submit all recommendations for Association awards. Note – the AGCRA Achievement Medal is considered the Chapter President’s award to recognize AGCRA members for outstanding achievement or service.
- **Fund Raisers:** This subject is discussed under Chapter finances.
- **Organization Day:** The birthday of the Corps on June 16th provides a unique opportunity to sponsor competitions and activities in a commemorative environment.
- **Publications:** A Chapter newsletter with Chapter unique news can be a popular item.
- **Social Activities:** Can present an excellent opportunity to enhance the Chapter’s esprit-de-corps.

- Soldier Education: Continuing emphasis on doctrinal updates and Army HR, Band, Recruiting & Retention developments are vital for career enhancement.

ASSOCIATION SUPPORT FOR CHAPTERS

Awards:

A comprehensive awards program has been developed by the Association to recognize exceptional performance and service by members of the Association. The National Executive Council of the Association is the awards approving authority. Awards criteria are published separately and posted to the Association website, www.AGCRA.com.

Among the awards currently in existence are the following:

- Lifetime Achievement Award (formerly Horatio Gates Gold 2nd Award).
- Order of Horatio Gates - Gold and Bronze: Presented for distinguished or extraordinary service to the Army / AG Corps and Association.
- Horatio Gates Honorary: Presented to non-AG Corps personnel for distinguished achievements and service promoting the objectives and purposes of the Adjutant General's Corps
- COL Robert L. Manning Achievement Medal: Presented to recognize outstanding achievements and/or meritorious service of members who promote the objectives and purposes of AGCRA, the AG Corps, or Army. The Achievement Award also serves as the Chapter President's Award to his / her members.
- Benjamin Harrison Medal: Presented for outstanding leadership, high academic proficiency and exceptional physical fitness to the overall outstanding graduates of Army professional development courses.
- Theodore Roosevelt Medal: Presented for extraordinary physical fitness.
- AIT Medal of Excellence: Presented for outstanding leadership, high academic proficiency and exceptional physical fitness to the overall outstanding graduates of AG Corps advanced individual training courses.
- MG William H. Gourley Leadership Award: To recognize the Adjutant General Captains Career Course officer who best emulates the leadership qualities of MG Gourley during his more than 40 years of service to our Corps, Army, and Nation.
- COL Frank C. Foster, Jr. Award for Writing Excellence: To recognize excellent writing for any officer enrolled in the Adjutant General Captains Career Course or Warrant Officer Advanced Course.
- Teri Maude and Debra Strickland Spouse Medal: To recognize spouses and widows of AGCRA members at the Chapter level with approval authority at the National Association level.

Focal Point:

The Association serves as a visible and energetic focal point for AGCRA esprit-de-corps, professional development and fraternal bonding in the total Army force and for branch affiliated Retirees. Through its publications and other means of communication, the Association will concern itself with the continued education of AG Soldiers, Army

Musicians, Recruiting & Retention personnel and DACs, and the mission preparedness of their units / posts.

It will also serve as a clearing-house for sharing information and worthwhile ideas from Chapters in the field concerning their programs and activities. It will also focus on the continued growth of the Association's membership, and the provision of continuously improving support and services to members and their Families.

Publications:

Four types of media are currently in use to inform Association members and support their interests, described as follows:

- 1775 - Is a periodic journal detailing AG Corps professional articles, membership news, regional activities, Army doctrinal changes, Band news, and other Corps specific information and related subject matter.
- Association Website: Is located at www.agcra.com devoted to providing members with the latest Association news, member information, Sutler Store products, an electronic membership directory, and an electronic means with which to correspond with the Association National Executive Council.

Sutler Store:

The Sutler Store will stock AG Corps and AGCRA unique items which cannot be obtained from any other source. Discounts will be authorized for Association members and for bulk purchases by Chapters as approved by the Association National Executive Council.

The store will endeavor to operate a highly responsive mail-order business serving Chapters, members and the AG Corps worldwide. Suggestions for items to be stocked and sold are welcome.

COMMON PITFALLS IN CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

Membership:

Chapter membership initiatives cannot be allowed to languish at any Chapter location.

Chapter Addendums or Chapter Constitution and Bylaws:

Constitution and Bylaws Addendums, or separate Chapter Constitution and Bylaws, are the official and legally binding rules by which Chapters operate. They should not be too detailed or restrictive. Chapters must also check with and comply with local installation guidance and policy on operations and activities as a non-profit organization.

Changes of Address:

An organization that moves its people as much as the Army presents a constant challenge for its affiliates to live with. Nothing is more distracting for the Association than members moving and failing to update their membership mailing address.

The urban legend that persists with AGCRA members is that the Association automatically keeps up with PCS moves and changes of addresses because we're affiliated with the Army; as a non-profit organization this is "not" true. Chapters can help to avoid this problem by emphasizing changes of address to members and updating their Chapter affiliation at the Association's website within the Member's Section.

Membership:

True growth and progress within the Association occurs through increased membership. Chapters must assume an active role in recruiting new members and retaining current members. It is not a job that the Association National Executive Council can do from afar.

Records:

Poor record keeping is the quickest way to find trouble. Financial matters must be fully documented and properly recorded in perpetuity, and must comply with local installation guidance and policy.

Reputation:

Reputations are earned, not given. Leaders must be very careful to avoid the stigma that the Chapter is an 'officers' organization. Share leader jobs and other responsibilities among all segments of the membership, including Retirees.

Sharing the Workload:

The tendency to let or ask one or two members in each Chapter to do all the work must be overcome. Share the wealth, the glory and the burden.

Status:

The Association and its Chapters are nonprofit organizations. The AG Corps itself is the official government entity. The Association and Chapters are privately funded as non-profit organizations. The Corps is funded with appropriated moneys from the Department of Defense. Work done on behalf of the Association or its Chapters must be voluntary, and a Chapter insurance policy protects members from liability. Work done for the Corps is protected from liability by the federal government. Separate the two concepts just like church and state.

SUMMARY

The ultimate success of the Association and the satisfaction of its members will relate directly to the efforts put forth by the Chapters in the field. Growth in membership, continuing education, professional development, networking ideas, improving programs, and perpetuating the AG Corps are functions and responsibilities that the Association can advocate, but only its Chapters can effectuate.