



## Forming an IAFN Affiliate Chapter

### What is an IAFN Affiliate Chapter?

The mission of the IAFN is to provide leadership in forensic nursing practice by developing, promoting, and disseminating information internationally about forensic nursing science. Chapters serve as local forums to advance IAFN's mission and vision of forensic nurses becoming universally recognized as the essential component of healthcare's response to violence & trauma.

### What is the Chapter's Purpose?

- Membership
  - Recruit and retain members through active, relevant offerings
  - Foster interaction and networking among forensic nurses in a specific geographic or practice area
- Education
  - Provide a vehicle for professional and public education
  - Promote evidence-based, trauma-informed practice
  - Encourage resource and information sharing
  - Promote a connection between research and practice
- Policy/Legislative work
  - Provide local leadership on local laws, policies, and regulations that affect patient access, practice, and standards related to forensic nursing

### Can I start a Chapter outside of the US?

IAFN's chapter model is based on the United States system of laws, regulations and values. IAFN realizes that this model may not work well for those outside of the United States. If you are interested in starting a chapter outside of the US, please start by contacting the IAFN Home Office to discuss options at [membership@forensicnurses.org](mailto:membership@forensicnurses.org).

### Relationship between Home Office & Chapters:

Chapters and the IAFN Home Office work closely together towards the mission of the IAFN. The IAFN Home Office exists as a foundation and resource to Chapter Officers and Chapters. Chapters are expected to communicate early and often with the IAFN Home Office about events, policy, finances, membership, and whenever questions arise. The IAFN Home Office respects and supports Chapter Officers coming forward in volunteer positions to support



Should you have any questions during the organization of your chapter, be sure to call the IAFN Home Office. The Home Office is always willing to help.

### **How Do I Start an Affiliate Chapter in My Area?**

This is a process! We want you to be successful and provide the following instructions and information that outline gauging interest, first meeting, next steps, roles and responsibilities of the Chapter and applying for Affiliate status. Typically, this process takes 6 months or more as potential Chapters meet, hold elections, complete the application, set up systems, and meet initial requirements for starting a chapter. Chapter Officers are incredible volunteers who take on an awesome responsibility in guiding chapters forward. This information and these processes exist to support Chapter Officers and help them understand the work involved to form and sustain the Chapter. Chapter officers and founders are our Champions who use their connections, enthusiasm and leadership skills to build interest, form relationships, and identify local opportunities to grow forensic nursing.

### **Steps to Forming an IAFN Chapter**

1. Contact the IAFN Home Office and let us know of your interest in starting a chapter. Email us at [membership@forensicnurses.org](mailto:membership@forensicnurses.org) or call us at 410-626-7805 x120
2. Review this document, The IAFN Chapter Affiliate Agreement, IAFN Chapter Bylaws Template, the Chapter Financial Policy, and Chapter Officer Code of Ethical Conduct all of which can be found at our website [www.forensicnurses.org/page/FormingChapters](http://www.forensicnurses.org/page/FormingChapters). These documents are the governing documents for your chapter's operations and should be referred to often, during formation and beyond. Frequently referencing these documents while you're building a strong foundation is critical to resolving later questions
3. Assess the need and interest in your area.
  - a. Discuss the idea with current IAFN members, and other forensic nursing friends and colleagues. Discuss the chapter's purpose and goals, and benefits of local membership. Emphasize the contributions the chapter could make in providing varied educational and networking opportunities for forensic nurses in your area.
  - b. Draft a recruiting email and ask the Home Office to forward to other IAFN members in your area.



- c. Join forensic nursing groups on social media or use nursing hashtags to spread your message and gauge interest.
    - d. The IAFN Conference is a great time to gather people to gauge interest!
    - e. Reach out to Forensic Nurses who aren't part of the IAFN yet. Sometimes forming a Chapter is the perfect way to engage these individuals. \*\*Note that all Chapter members and officers must also be current members of the IAFN. They cannot join the chapter without also joining IAFN.
    - f. Send an announcement of your introductory Chapter meeting (include the location, date and time) to medical centers, local IAFN members, and prospective members in your area. Consider also sending it to alumni and graduate nurse associations, schools of nursing, other local nursing association chapters, and local media.
4. If you have at least 15 people interested, congratulations, you're ready to move to Step 5. If not, keep doing outreach. Engage with the Home Office and Chapter leaders from other areas for ideas and suggestions to build interest. or hold a meeting with those who are interested and determine action steps to increase interest.
5. Once you have at least 15 people interested in forming a chapter, hold your first meeting. Always have an agenda and keep minutes.
  - a. The first meeting for the prospective affiliate chapter is a very important step in the organizational process. You must capture current IAFN member and potential members' interest and motivate them to actively participate and potentially volunteer.
  - b. Sample Agenda:
    - Introductions
    - Selection of a temporary chairperson to lead the meetings and secretary to record minutes
    - Review Chapter Documents (summary is ok- provide copies to anyone interested) & Chapter formation process
    - Purpose of Chapter in this location (Following questions might be reviewed in more detail at future meetings but might be helpful to start brainstorming)
      1. Are there current concerns/issues?
      2. Are there current opportunities?
        - a. Are there committees or other policy or procedure boards in the state with Forensic Nurse representation?



3. Is there an area we need acute, IAFN Home Office support?
  4. What can we do by connecting and leveraging our voices?
    - Who is interested in running for office?
      1. Hold a vote or determine when/how voting will take place
    - Vote or otherwise determine if there is interest for next steps
      1. If interested in moving forward:
        - a. Assign tasks to prepare affiliate chapter application packet.
        - b. Choose one person to spearhead this process.
      2. Set Date & Time for next meeting
    - c. Sample first meeting follow-up
      - Email minutes to IAFN Home Office, everyone who attended, and everyone who expressed interest. The IAFN Home Office can forward to anyone in your geographic area.
      - Ask IAFN Home Office any questions that came up that you'd like answered
      - Hold an election for Officers. Make this a transparent process from the beginning
      - Email any Chapter Documents out to meeting participants
      - Schedule next meeting
      - Any other action items as determined in the meeting
6. When planning Chapter meetings consider:
- a. Geography
  - b. Accessibility
  - c. Time commitments
- If an in person meeting simply isn't possible given geographic constraints, consider using Zoom, Skype or another video conferencing provider. Chapters are required to have one in person meeting a year. Many Chapters hold this meeting at the IAFN annual conference.
7. Review the Chapter Officer Positions
- a. The IAFN and all affiliate chapters' fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31. The chapter's Board of Directors term begin on January 1 and end December 31.



- b. The four essential chapter officers are: President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary. More information and detailed descriptions of each Chapter Officers roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Chapter Bylaws Template.
  - c. Some Chapters have Board of Directors and Committees. See the Chapter Bylaws for more information.
8. Review the Financial Responsibilities
- a. The IAFN is committed to responsible financial management. The entire organization, including the board of directors and staff, will work together to make certain that all financial matters of the organization are addressed with care, integrity, and in the best interest of IAFN.
  - b. Once Chapters are approved, they will, with the help of the Home Office and in accordance with the Chapter Financial Policy, open a bank account.
  - c. All chapter funds must be used for the specified purposes of IAFN and the chapter as outlined below. All IAFN Chapters are organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes and no part of the accumulations, gains or profits of the chapter shall benefit any private individual, except as provided below:
    - to grant educational scholarships to chapter members or to nursing students for attendance at professional nursing programs.
    - to purchase books, audiovisual aids, and computer-assisted instruction for other forensic nursing-related educational endeavors.
    - to produce community educational programs.
  - d. Understanding Tax Exemption
    - For Chapters operating in the United States, the most common misunderstanding about tax-exemption is that it exempts the Association and its chapters from all taxes. However, this is not the case. Tax-exempt status means only that the Association and its chapters do not pay federal tax on income from activities that are related to the organization's purpose – education. However, if income is generated by an activity unrelated to the organization's purpose, the Chapter may have to pay tax on that income. Chapters shall disclose if this type of income is generated in their annual renewal documentation.
    - See the Chapter Financial Policy for additional information.
  - e. Donations



- Many Chapters solicit and receive donations from corporations and other sponsors to launch and support their activities. While no restrictions exist to obtaining such funds for the chapter, those donations are not deductible by the donors as charitable contributions as defined in section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States.
  - Inquire with the IAFN Home Office for sample letters and more information.
- f. Gambling, Raffles
- A number of Chapters may sponsor raffles at their meetings as a means of generating income. Since many local area laws prohibit gambling, a raffle's validity will depend on the gambling laws in the area where the raffle is held. If you do not know what the laws are for your area, you should contact the appropriate state or similar authority.
9. Set up a System for Accurate Record Keeping
- a. Chapters hold meetings, hire presenters for trainings, collect or manage member dues, file federal taxes, execute contracts with venues, provide scholarships for members, provide donations to the IAFN foundation among a host of other things.
  - b. Chapter Officers are responsible for accurate record keeping for all Chapter related information, finances, membership etc. All information must be provided to IAFN as part of the annual renewal
  - c. This information is confidential and not to be used for any purposes outside the purpose of the Chapter.
  - d. The IAFN Home Office will provide chapters with support, sample forms, and training on the appropriate documentation to track the chapter's revenue and expenses. Chapters will be responsible to keep track of all credits and debits to the chapter.
  - e. The Treasurer will keep all bank deposit receipts and monthly statements. Documentation must be kept for seven years.
10. Are you ready to apply for Affiliate Status?
- a. If you can answer yes to the following questions, Congratulations, you are ready to submit the Application for Affiliate Status, move onto step 11 below.
    - Have held 2 or more meetings?



- Have 15+ members who have expressed interest in continuing the Chapter?
  - Have elected Chapter Officers?
  - Have all Chapter Officers reviewed all Chapter documents including the Chapter by-laws, Chapter Affiliation Agreement, Chapter Financial Policy, and Chapter Officer Code of Ethical Conduct?
  - Have had consistent interest in the Chapter for a minimum of 6 months?
- b. If no, keep working on building the foundation for a sustainable Chapter. The IAFN Home Office will continue to be a resource for you throughout the process.
11. Apply for your Chapter's Employment Identification Number (EIN) (Chapters in the US)
- Chapters will have their own federal identification number.
  - The U.S. Employer Identification Number (EIN) is a nine-digit identification number for businesses and organizations and is similar to the Social Security Number (SSN) which serves as an identification number for individuals in the US. The Internal Revenue Service requires that all non-profit organizations and their subordinate groups within the U.S. (i.e. Chapters must obtain an EIN).
  - Chapters must list Chapter name on EIN application as "International Association of Forensic Nurses XXXX Chapter" where the XXXX is the name of the state and use the Home Office Address as the address on the application. Please confirm correct chapter name with the Home Office prior to filing.
  - To obtain an EIN, Go to the following link:  
<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>
  - You should receive the EIN # within minutes of filing. When the provisional charter is received, the Board grants permission on behalf of the Association for the Chapter to be included under its Group Exemption Number (GEN). When the EIN statement is received, send a photocopy of the statement bearing the Chapter's EIN to the Home Office.





## 12. Apply for Your Affiliate Chapter Status

- a. Once your chapter has been running successfully for 6 months, including having at least 2 meetings with 15 committed members with intention on sustainability, the Chapter is ready to apply for Affiliate Chapter Status.
- b. All affiliate chapters must be chartered by the IAFN.
- c. Application for Affiliate Chapter Status includes:
  - Letter of intent to the IAFN Board to create a chapter, including chapter name. Include any specific chapter goals.
  - Signed copy of the Chapter Bylaws
  - Signed copy of the Chapter Affiliation Agreement by the Chapter President
  - Signed copy of the Chapter Financial Policy
  - Confirmation letter of an Employer Identification Number (EIN)
  - \$75 application fee payable to the "IAFN" in USD
  - List of Chapter Officers (see form)
  - List of Chapter Members with IAFN membership numbers (must be current IAFN members)
  - Introductory chapter meeting minutes
- d. After all materials have been submitted, the application will be forwarded to the IAFN Board of Directors for approval of chapter status.

## 13. Once chapter status has been approved:

- a. The IAFN Chief Financial Officer will establish a bank account in the chapter name.
  - All Chapter Officers have a Fiduciary Responsibility to the Chapter. The Chapter Financial Policy and all other governing Chapter Documents will be followed at all times by all Chapter Offices.
  - The Chapter Treasurer and Chapter President will sign Bank Card Agreements, when applicable, and be governed by that agreement.
  - Chapter Dues –Dues are set at \$30. Chapter Dues will be collected by the IAFN Home Office and remitted to chapters on a quarterly basis with a full listing of those members who have paid or renewed. Chapters shall extend reciprocity to members transferring from other chapters.
- b. The IAFN Home Office will provide the following:





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**p 410 626 7805**  
**f 410 626 7804**

- Additional training to Chapter Officers on their resources and the online community that will be used for all Chapter Communication after reaching Affiliation Status.
- Chapter logos and style guide on using the logos

■ [info@ForensicNurses.org](mailto:info@ForensicNurses.org)

6755 Business Parkway, Ste 303  
Elkridge, Maryland 21075

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