



PROFESSIONAL
ORGANIZERS
IN CANADA



ORGANISATEURS
PROFESSIONNELS
AU CANADA

Professional Organizers in Canada

Member Handbook

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Governance

The mission and vision of Professional Organizers in Canada is: ***Providing Visibility, Credibility, and Connection***. This statement was developed as part of a strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan is available on the website under *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / POC*.

Professional Organizers in Canada was established in 1999 as a virtual association. Our members and our volunteers live across the country and even internationally.

POC contracts with an association management company who provides us with an executive director and assists us with day-to-day operations such as website management, conference management, member registration, and our education programs.

National Board of Directors

The national board of directors is composed of professionals from all sectors of the organizing industry across Canada. It normally consists of ten directors, plus the immediate past president and the executive director.

Members of the board are elected for two-year terms, and elections are held every year in advance of the annual general meeting. All positions on the board of directors are volunteer positions, with the exception of the executive director.

There are many other members who volunteer their time and experience to complete the many tasks required to run the association. If you are interested in how you can become involved, please contact the director of volunteer management.

Bylaws

POC's bylaws outline the governance of the association and were updated in 2017 in accordance with the Not For Profit Corporation Act in Ontario, where POC is incorporated.

In addition to our bylaws, which are rarely changed, we have a book of policies and procedures. The P&P outlines how we do things, and is an important document to familiarize yourself with. It's updated regularly, so it's wise to use the version from the website, rather than downloading a copy.

Both of these documents can be found on the POC website under *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / POC*.

Code of Ethics

POC has a Code of Ethics which is a set of principles and guidelines that each POC member agrees to adopt. The Code of Ethics is posted under *About / Code of Ethics* on the POC website.

By adopting the POC Code of Ethics as part of your business philosophy, you let your clients know that you are professional, ethical, and that their concerns are important to you.

Both the public and POC members have the right to file a complaint with the POC ethics committee if they feel a member has violated the Code of Ethics. When this occurs, a complaint review committee is struck and the procedure detailed in the Ethics Policy and Procedure is followed. The ramifications of being found in violation of the Code of Ethics vary but could result in a loss of membership. The Ethics Policy and Procedure can be found under *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / POC / Code of Conduct and Ethics Complaint Policy and Procedure*.

Benefits of belonging to POC

Networking

POC offers its members the opportunity to meet and network in person at their own chapter meetings, virtually (when available) at other chapter meetings, or through the Cyber Chapter.

Chapter meetings provide the opportunity to:

- Share ideas and enlist help through round table discussions;
- Expand their education through guest speakers and presentations;
- Help raise the profile of organizing locally and nationally;
- Provide opportunities to learn from fellow organizers;
- Make valuable business and vendor connections.

POC members also have access to social networking groups through the public POC social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), on the closed Member Only Facebook page, and on Chapter Facebook Groups.

Conference

POC holds a conference or summit annually, in person and/or virtually in various locations across Canada. Attendance includes:

- Educational workshops covering the latest trends in the industry;
- Informed speakers that are both educational and inspiring;
- Discovering new business ideas;
- Access to new vendors and products at the POC Expo;
- Opportunities to develop relationships and network nationally and internationally;
- Opportunities to learn about the association and how you can become involved as a volunteer!

Education

POC offers educational content to its members through chapter meetings, the annual conference or summit, as well as a variety of live and recorded courses, available on demand. These classes are geared to organizers at all levels from novice to more experienced. The Trained Professional Organizer certificate program consists of 12 class credits and a written exam. See pages 9-10 for more information.

Media & Public Relations

Professional Organizers in Canada strives to bring attention to its members and to the organizing industry as a whole. POC is often contacted to provide the professional organizing perspective and advice to various publications and media outlets.

Media Alert and News Release Tips can be found in the *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / Business* section of the website, to guide you in your interactions with the media. See page 7 for information about use of the POC logo.

POC will share professional organizing–related media coverage of a member or a member’s business if POC is mentioned in the coverage. Submit using the *Members in the Media* form found under the Media tab on the POC website. Members can apply to be a part of our *Influencer Program*, where their blogs, videos and articles will be shared on POC social media platforms. Members can find more information and apply for this under *Members Only / POC Influencer Program*.

POC also promotes the industry and our members through our public pages on social media such as Facebook and Instagram. Members can tag POC Instagram and Facebook accounts on their posts, and those posts will be shared on our Instagram stories and Facebook feed. Members can do this by tagging @professionalorganizersincanada on Instagram and @professionalorganizerscanada on Facebook.

Input from our Members

Members have an opportunity to shape the organizing industry and POC's direction by providing input and feedback directly to chapter executives and national board members. Volunteer opportunities afford an even greater voice in the future of the association. Additionally, POC periodically circulates surveys and hosts town hall meetings as a more formal means for members to have their say.

Online Directory

Through the *Find an Organizer* link on the POC website, potential clients can quickly search for an organizer by geographic location, service specialty, or by name. Each member has the ability to customize their personal profile to highlight their areas of expertise.

New members are required to complete three specific classes in order to be included in the Find an Organizer directory. These classes are:

- Introduction to Professional Organizing
- Ethical Standards for POC Members
- Safety Practices for Professional Organizers

Once you have completed these courses, your profile will be added to the Find an Organizer Directory. You may verify the POC courses you have taken by logging into the *Members Only* section of the website and viewing your profile.

If you took these courses before joining POC, please contact us so that we may find your records in our database and add this information to your profile.

POC Talk Newsletters

The national edition of POC Talk is published electronically on a monthly basis, and circulated to all members and associate members except those who have opted out. Each issue includes news from the board and national committees, helpful information and an opportunity to find out what is happening in the organizing industry.

Chapter editions of POC Talk are published by each chapter and circulated to its members. Each issue includes information about upcoming meetings, meeting summaries, and other important information.

Special editions of POC Talk may be released from time to time, as deemed necessary by the board of directors.

Marketing

POC members can download the digital POC logo for use on their marketing materials from the *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / Membership* section of the website.

Business Insurance

POC has partnered with Zensurance to develop a customized and comprehensive business insurance program. More information about the program as well as links to application forms and FAQs can be found on the POC website under *Members Only / Member Benefits*.

Health Insurance

POC offers group health and dental insurance for our members through Sun Life Assurance. See the *Members Only / Member Benefits* section of the website for more information.

Chapters and Special Interest Groups

POC currently has eleven chapters across Canada. Chapters provide members with local education and networking opportunities as well as a place to connect, learn and grow.

Chapters often host guest speakers covering topics such as accounting, stress management, public speaking, and social media. Chapters have facilitated round table discussions where ideas, experiences, and opinions on such matters as e-mail marketing, advertising, workshops, presentations and client relations are presented. Chapters also promote and implement national programs at the local level.

For members who cannot attend in-person meetings there is Cyber Chapter, where organizers gather online each month.

To view a list of chapters and their meeting details, including event descriptions, click on the chapter name from the list on the website.

Choosing a Chapter

In order for membership fees to be allocated properly, all members of POC are required to choose a chapter affiliation. A member may choose which chapter they wish to belong to. Although a POC member must choose a chapter affiliation, they may attend meetings of any chapter meeting.

Chapter Handbook

For in-depth information on matters concerning chapters and their administration, the Chapter Handbook is available through the POC website under *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / Chapter*.

Special Interest Groups

In addition to chapters, POC has several special interest groups that meet virtually. See the web page under the *Chapters* tab for links to current groups, and their membership criteria.

Making the most of the POC Website

Contacting POC

Most questions can be directed to one of the e-mail addresses on the *Contact* page of the POC website. For the quickest response possible, please ensure you direct your inquiry to the appropriate email address.

General Inquiries

- Purchasing the Business Template package;
- Ethics enquiries that cannot go to the Ethics chair;
- Any enquiry that does not fall under the headings below.

Website / Login Problems / Personal Data & Privacy Policy

- Login or website problems;
- To report bounced emails from any POC email address;
- Adherence to Canada's privacy laws.

Inquiries from Media

- Inquiries from the media;
- Members' submission of their media coverage for Members in the Media.

Training Program

- Class schedules and registration.

Member Support

Regular Members

- Membership renewal;
- Changing chapters;
- Changing membership status.

Associate Members

- Associate member program and benefits;
- Sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

POC Conference

Conference Program

- Questions for members of the national conference committee (NCC);
- Information about conference or summit;
- Proposals for conference sessions.

Conference Trade Show and Sponsorship Opportunities

- Information and applications for conference participation, sponsorship, and advertising.

Contacting the Board of Directors

The board of directors welcomes inquiries and are available to address members' concerns. You will find a list of board members and their responsibilities under *About / National Board* on the website. Please see the *Contact* page of the POC website for links to their direct email addresses.

Downloadable Documents

There are many helpful items available for members, including national and chapter documents, membership downloads, business documents, logos, and more. We recommend that you NOT download governance documents, but rather use the ones on the website. This will assure that you are using the most recent versions.

The download section is continually updated with new items so check back frequently.

POC Logo Use

The POC logo is available in the *Members Only / Downloads and Guidelines / Logos* section of the POC website. There is also a link to *Brand and Logo Guidelines*, which outlines standards for use to ensure consistency in branding.

Should you require assistance or have any questions, please contact the [director of marketing and communications](#).

POC Facebook Groups

POC hosts a closed Facebook group and chapter Facebook groups, available to all POC members. Facebook groups are useful if you:

- are looking for business advice;
- have important information you would like to share with other organizers;
- see information in the media that would benefit our membership;
- want to connect with other organizers in your area or across the country.

Each chapter has guidelines for their Facebook group, which are normally found at the top of the group page. Some guidelines are mandated at the national level, but chapters may also add their own rules.

Please bear in mind that not every POC member uses Facebook, so it should not be used as a primary communication tool within your chapter.

Advanced Recognition

Silver Leaf Status

Silver Leaf status is available to any POC member who has been in business as an organizer for at least five consecutive years, who has been a POC member in good standing for at least the past two consecutive years, and who has accumulated 35 service points through volunteering with POC. Silver Leaf status is not automatic. Members who meet the criteria must complete the application (available on the website) and submit it with the required documentation.

Members who achieve Silver Leaf status receive a certificate and a pin, and are entitled to use the Silver Leaf logo on their own business materials. They are also denoted by a special icon in the Find an Organizer directory results. They receive special recognition and exclusive education sessions at conference.

Gold Leaf Status

Gold Leaf status in Professional Organizers in Canada recognizes members who have demonstrated a high level of commitment and service to the association and the professional organizing industry. Such status informs the general public that these members have an advanced level of experience and have made a significant volunteer contribution.

Professional organizers who have obtained Silver Leaf status, have been members in good standing of Professional Organizers in Canada for at least ten years, and who have accumulated 100 service points are eligible for Gold Leaf status. Members who meet the criteria must complete the application form (available on the website).

Members who achieve Gold Leaf status receive a certificate and a pin, special discounts and offerings, and are entitled to use the Gold Leaf logo on their own business materials. They receive special recognition at conference, along with exclusive education and networking sessions. They are denoted by a special icon in the Find an Organizer directory.

Platinum Leaf Status

Members who have achieved Gold Leaf status, who have been members of POC for at least 20 years, and who remain involved in the POC community, are eligible for their Platinum Leaf status. Members who meet the eligibility criteria may apply by contacting the director of membership with a brief description of their continued involvement in POC.

For more information on Silver, Gold, or Platinum Leaf status, please see the relevant section under the *Members Only* tab, or contact [Member Support Services](#).

Education

Courses

POC courses cover a wide range of subjects. A course list can be viewed on the website under [Education and Events / Courses](#). Click on each link to view descriptions, schedule and prices. Be sure to log in to access member pricing.

POC introduces new classes on an ongoing basis so be sure to check the site regularly.

Trained Professional Organizer Program

Benefits

By completing the [Trained Professional Organizer \(TPO\) program](#), you get a competitive market advantage and add to your credibility as a professional organizer. Information contained within the TPO program will give you the skills and knowledge to:

- Keep up-to-date on industry standards;
- Discover new tools that will help your business;
- Improve your self-confidence;
- More confidently teach/coach your clients;
- Build your capacity to earn more money.

Trained Professional Organizer Exam

The TPO exam is open to all members who have completed the required credits, and also to those who qualify to challenge it. It is not available to non-members.

The exam is offered twice a year, and is in a multiple-choice format. More information can be found under [Education and Events / Trained Professional Organizer Program](#).

If you need accommodation for a POC course or the TPO exam, please contact the [director of education](#).

Awards

POC has three awards for members who have made noteworthy contributions to the organization and our industry: the Ambassador Award, Harold Taylor Award and President's Award. The Ambassador and Harold Taylor Awards are presented annually while the President's Award is given on a special merit basis.

Ambassador Award

The **Ambassador Award** was created to honour a POC member who gives back to other organizers, who is involved with his or her chapter and who devotes time and energy volunteering in the local community. Chapter members and members of the local community may nominate POC members who have made outstanding contributions in these areas.

Harold Taylor Award

The **Harold Taylor** award recognizes outstanding individual contribution, guidance, and direction to the organizing profession, and support of Professional Organizers in Canada. Any POC member may nominate another member for this award.

President's Award

The **President's Award** is given at the discretion of the president, to a member whose contribution to the association is deemed worthy of this significant acknowledgement. This award is not open to nominations from members.

The history, nominating criteria, and a list of previous winners of these awards is on the website at *About / Awards*. Calls for nominations are made in the late spring, and awards are presented at the annual conference.

Membership Classifications

Regular Member

A regular or individual member is a person who works in the field of professional organizing, as an employee of an organizing business or as the owner of an organizing business. A regular member is entitled to voting privileges, may hold office, and may serve on a committee, a chapter executive or the national board.

Multi-Person Business Member

Organizing businesses with employees or multiple owners may purchase multiple memberships at a discounted rate.

Emeritus Member

Members are eligible for emeritus membership if they are no longer engaged in the organizing profession, are at least 55 years of age, and have been a POC member for at least five years.

Associate Member

An associate member is a national or regional organization which is primarily engaged in the manufacture, distribution, and/or sales of organizing-industry related equipment, supplies or services.