

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

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**Purpose**

To provide department heads with guidelines for the public funding of memberships in professional associations.

Public funding of memberships is warranted when a clear and justifiable potential benefit exists, such as:

1. County management or processes receive a benefit from the membership such as through the sharing of technical knowledge, the obtaining of needed data or information, or the advantage of collective positions in matters of public policy and legislation.
2. Designated individuals and “persons in the service of the County” (as defined in Administrative Code Section 471) benefit through opportunities for professional growth, continued job-related education, and/or knowledge of the technical aspects of their work.

**Policy:**

Responsibility for the justifiable expending of budgeted public funds is upon department heads and appointing authorities. They shall consider the purpose of such memberships, as cited above and the following guidelines for public funding of membership.

1. Institutional memberships (on behalf of the County as an agency) will be limited to non-profit public interest groups such as the National Association of Counties, etc.
2. Attorneys employed on a permanent full-time basis in positions requiring that they be attorneys may have their required annual dues to the State Bar and San Diego County Bar paid for by the County in accordance with sections 492 – 493.1 of the Administrative Code of the County of San Diego.
3. Annual fees for job required licenses may be paid for by the County in accordance with section 494 of the Administrative Code of the County of San Diego.
4. Memberships in social, public service, or political organizations, or any listed as a lobby under the Political Reform Act of 1974 shall generally not be funded from

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County funds. Exceptions are those professional associations of administrators or directors of County departments including but not limited to the umbrella organizations of the National Association of Counties, and the California State Association of Counties.

5. Memberships in organizations whose charters discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin or disability are not to be funded with County monies.

6. Elected officials and their staff are exempted but encouraged to use this policy as a guide.

**Procedure**

1. Department heads should estimate and budget for such expenses during the annual budget process. Supporting documentation for all such expenses should be maintained by departments to substantiate compliance with this policy for a period consistent with applicable records retention policies.

2. The Auditor and Controller may include spot sample checks of adherence to this policy during regular audits.

3. Payment forms and procedures shall be prescribed by the County Auditor and Controller.

**Sunset Date**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-2031.

**Board Action**

- 4-15-80 (10)
- 10-5-82 (58)
- 10-30-84 (99)
- 5-15-96 (11)
- 6-12-07 (14)
- 12-09-08 (33)
- 12-07-10 (27)
- 11-14-17 (27)
- 10-08-24 (16)

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CAO Reference

1. Auditor and Controller
2. Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs