

**Commissioned Officers Association (COA)**

**Aurora Borealis Branch**

**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**

## SOP History Record

Document History Record for: <u>Aurora Borealis Commissioned Officers Association Standard Operating Procedures</u>			
<i>Revision number</i>	<i>Date of revision</i>	<i>Effective Date</i>	<i>Description of Changes</i>
00	12/18/2015	10/01/2016	Creation of Standard Operation Procedure
01	4/14/15	10/01/2016	Two recurring events/ activity items added
02	11/07/2016	12/21/2016	S2- intro, S2:3a, S2:D3bi, S2:D34a, S2:D35a, S3 intro, S3a, S3E, S3H, S3I, S5, S6, Article III SIA
03	11/7/2017	11/29/2017	Added References, S2:A6, S2:B1, S2:B2, S2:E, S2:F, S3:D1, S3:D3, S3:D4, S3:F2e, S3:I5, S5:G, S5:H, S6, Article III C
04	11/28/2018	11/28/2018	Added References,
05	10/30/2019	10/30/2019	Article II: S2.D2, S2.D8, S3.B4, S3.C2, S3.G4f(4), S3.G4g(4), S5.C
06	9/30/2020	9/30/2020	Updated Reference, Article II: S2. A2d, S2. A4a, S2. A7a(3), S2. B1a, S2.B4, S2. C, S2. C1b &c, S2.C2a-g, S2.C4a (1), S2.C5, S2. D6a, S2. D7a, S2. D8a, S2.D9a, S3. B4d-f, S3. D1, S3.D2b, S3.D3a, S3.F1, S3.F2e, S3.G3b, S3.G4h(1.1a&b), S3.I2o(1&2), S5. C, S5. H1,

\*S= Section

## SOP Approvals

Printed Name	Title	Signature	Date
Brittany Keener	Branch President	<i>Brittany L Keener</i>	03/30/2016
Brittany Keener	Branch President	<i>Brittany L Keener</i>	04/14/2016
Adam Harris	Branch President	<i>Adam Harris</i>	12/21/2016
Kathryn Jacques	Branch President	<i>Kathryn Jacques</i>	11/29/2017
Leigh Hubbard	Branch President	<i>Leigh Hubbard</i>	11/28/2018
Michael Box	Branch President	<i>Michael Box</i>	10/30/2019
Joy Callaway	Branch President	<i>Joy Callaway</i>	9/30/2020

## **Purpose**

The Commissioned Officers Association (COA) Aurora Borealis Branch Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) provides operational and procedural guidance for the Anchorage local COA Branch. This SOP provides guidance on matters not addressed by the Aurora Borealis COA Bylaws.

## **Scope**

This SOP applies to all activities and actions related to all functions within the COA Aurora Borealis Branch. This SOP does not apply to documents created by other organizations outside of the COA Aurora Borealis Branch. The COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP complements the Aurora Borealis COA Bylaws. Please refer to the Aurora Borealis COA Bylaws for further guidance.

## **References**

Aurora Borealis COA

Website:

<https://auroraborealiscoa.org/>

Aurora Borealis COA Bylaws:

<https://auroraborealiscoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/COA-Bylaws-signed2.pdf>

Commissioned Officers Association of the  
USPHS: <https://coausphs.org/page/BranchInfo>

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## ARTICLE I

### MISSION STATEMENT

The primary mission of the Commissioned Officers Association (COA) Aurora Borealis Branch is the furtherance of the mission of the Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Incorporated by extending the national organization's activity in the state of Alaska, as outlined in the Bylaws of the Aurora Borealis Branch.

## ARTICLE II

### BRANCH RESPONSIBILITIES & ORGANIZATION

#### *Section 1.* Branch Responsibility

The COA Aurora Borealis Branch shall work with the Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service and local members to perform the following functions in accordance with the mission of COA Aurora Borealis Branch:

- A. Improve esprit de corps by fostering relationships among retired, active, and former officers of the PHS Commissioned Corps
- B. Serve as a resource by mentoring and counseling Branch members on Commissioned Corps matters
- C. Facilitate discussion and host social activities on behalf of Branch members
- D. Serve the community and nation by providing service opportunities
- E. Invest in Branch member careers by providing officer-ship development guidance
- F. Advance the promotion of health and wellbeing through fitness events

#### *Section 2.* Leadership

The COA Aurora Borealis Branch is governed by an Executive Committee which consists of a President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President, and nine standing committee leads (or co-leads).

- A. **President:** The Branch President must be a proficient meeting manager. The President must understand the Branch's mission and objectives, plan/ reside over

meetings, resolve conflicts, communicate effectively, ensure Branch participants follow-up on assigned tasks or projects, serve as an ex-officio member of all standing committees, and perform other functions as needed.

Because Branch participants are volunteers with many other responsibilities, the President should be respectful of time and keep meetings on schedule. The President must also guide the Branch to consensus. The Branch President has the following responsibilities:

1. Preside over monthly meetings and lead the agenda
  - a. Collaborate with the Secretary to prepare the agenda at least one week prior to the monthly meetings.
    - i. Request updates from standing committee leads.
    - ii. Add any additional items that may need to be addressed since the last meeting.
  - b. Respond to any e-mail requests for items to be added to monthly agenda.
2. Coordinate the Officer of the Branch Awards
  - a. Solicit for nominations for both Junior Officer of the Branch and Senior Officer of the Branch beginning with the October meeting. Set a deadline for nominations of December 1<sup>st</sup> with presentation of awards during the December meeting.
  - b. Criteria for nomination include: They cannot be on the Executive Committee, must display Officership daily, and be an active member of the Aurora Borealis Branch (including but not limited to volunteerism, committee lead, etc.).
  - c. The Executive Committee (President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer) will vote on the nominations to select a deserving Senior and Junior Officer. In the case that no nominations are received for one of the awards, you can award only a Senior or a Junior Officer.
  - d. Once selections are made, place an order (historically has been done through Bovey Trophies) for the award hardware to present to the awardees. Stock # CRY34 is a 3 ½ x 4” optical crystal award with the following painted

black on the front: RANK OFFICER NAME,  
Senior/Junior Officer of the Branch, YEAR, Aurora  
Borealis Branch, Commissioned Officers Association.  
An outline of the map of Alaska is frosted on the back

3. Provide Letters of Appreciation (LOA)/AB COA Coins

- a. At the end of each operational year, an LOA will be provided to each standing committee Lead, each member of the Executive Committee, and to those who lead/coordinated any other volunteer events as long as they have attended half or more of the Branch meetings. This can be in-person attendance, teleconference attendance, or by submitted proxy.
- b. Preferably, print in color with Aurora Borealis COA letterhead, sign, and present to each officer. If necessary, scan and e-mail the LOA to each individual officer for inclusion into their e-OPF.
- c. Guest speakers can be awarded a coin for their efforts.

4. National Local Branch Committee Meetings

- a. Ensure that at least the President, if not all Executive Committee members, attend the monthly National Branch Committee meetings.
- b. Collaborate with Executive Committee members to complete Local Branch Quarterly Reports and submit to National COA.
- c. The President will complete quarterly reports to send to National COA to include a summary annual report at the end of the OY.

5. Standing Committees

- a. The President is responsible for presiding over Standing Committees.
  - i. Newly formed or dissolved Standing Committees will be at the description of the Branch President.
  - ii. Gather recommendations for appointing or changing the Lead of a Standing Committee and make a final determination as needed.



6. Executive Committee Annual Task List. [Excel Spreadsheet/ Word Document]
  - a. Update:
    - i. Monthly tasks and due dates for next OY. Send out calendar invites for all due dates for the president, so all tasks are done on time.
    - ii. Committee and Subcommittee leads with point of contact.
    - iii. Information for room reservations.
    - iv. Add additional helpful resources.
7. Mentor the President-Elect
  - a. Review available resources
    - i. Bylaws
    - ii. The Standard Operating Procedure
    - iii. National COA website
      1. <https://coausphs.org/page/BranchInfo>
    - iv. Aurora Borealis website
      1. <http://auroraborealiscoa.org/>

As outlined in the Bylaws, the term duration for Branch President shall be a one-year term.

**B. President-Elect:** The Branch President-Elect is in a mentorship position. The President-Elect is mentored by the President in preparation to become the eventual Branch President. The mentorship period allows for a smooth transition during leadership change over as well as enhanced effectiveness in the Branch dynamics and leadership. The President-Elect shall act for the President in the absence of the President. The Branch President-Elect has the following responsibilities

1. Oversee Executive Committee Elections
  - a. Create a Nominating Committee by sending an email in April to the COA listserv requesting volunteers (typically

three to five officers).

- b. Solicit nominations for available positions.
  - i. Send an email in mid-May to the COA listserv describing the upcoming COA Executive Committee Election.
  - ii. Task the Nominating Committee with encouraging good candidates to apply for the elections.
  - iii. Gather nominations until mid-June.
- c. Notify the Branch via the COA listserv of running candidates and include nominating documents for candidates.
- d. Hold elections at the June Branch meeting.
- e. Tally the results with the Nominating Committee after the June meeting.
- f. Promptly forward final results to the Branch President for announcement on the COA listserv.

2. Coordinate updating the SOP

- a. Start this process in August after officers are familiar with their responsibilities.
- b. Determine best approach to updating all needed sections.
- c. Compile drafts as needed, creating a final SOP draft before the September COA meeting.
- d. Present any changes or major updates at or before the September meeting for approval, allowing at least one meeting of wiggle room in case revisions are needed.
- e. Have the Branch President approve the newest SOP version by signing and dating the document.
- f. Send the finalized SOP to the Website Coordinator for inclusion on the website.

3. Observe the Branch President and gather the necessary information/ knowledge to prepare for the upcoming term as Branch President.

4. The Branch President- Elect's address will be used to complete the Entity Mailing Address.

As outlined in the Bylaws, the term duration for Branch President-Elect shall be a one-year term.

C. **Secretary:** The Branch Secretary must be extremely organized and detail oriented. The Secretary must communicate efficiently, plan and prepare for meetings ahead of time, respond to requests of information in a timely manner, and ensure accurate documentation of Branch activities. The secretary shall maintain accurate minutes of the meetings and submit for timely website upload. The Secretary shall carefully preserve, on file, all reports and papers presented to the Branch and shall be charged with the necessary business and professional correspondence. The Branch Secretary has the following responsibilities:

1. E-Mail monthly meeting agenda to all members
  - a. Communicate with Executive Committee regarding agenda items.
  - b. Draft meeting agenda and disseminate electronically to all members.
  - c. Finalize meeting agenda and disseminate electronically to all members.
2. Compile meeting minutes
  - a. Maintain accurate records, "minutes" of all meetings of the Branch.
  - b. Take meeting minutes for all official Branch meetings and as requested by the President. This includes the monthly meeting and additional meetings for the Executive Committee.
  - c. If the secretary is unavailable to attend the meeting, the secretary must find a suitable replacement or make arrangements for meetings to be recorded. Secretary is responsible for taking minutes from the recordings within a timely manner.
  - d. First draft of meeting minutes for all meetings are sent to the Executive Committee for review and comment.
  - e. Distribute draft minutes for approval via the listserv to all members within a week after the meeting.

- f. Prior to approval, all recommended changes must be reflected in the draft minutes; the updated draft will be voted on and approved during the next Branch meeting.
  - g. After minutes are officially approved, final minutes are sent electronically to the Executive Committee and Website Coordinator for uploading to the website. The website will serve as a permanent archive repository for meeting minutes.
3. Secure Branch meeting venue for the operational year and one month into the following operational year.
- a. In November, contact the Alaska Native Medical Center Office of the CEO and Administrator to reserve the conference room 2 at (907) 729-1997.
  - b. If ANMC Conference Room 2 is not available, Southcentral Foundation conference rooms can be reserved, preferably the Kingfisher A and B or the Sophia Chase Board Room, through MSD Administration Department at (907) 729-3250 or by filling out the MSD room request form and emailing it to SCFPrimarycareconferencerooms@scf.cc.
4. Maintain attendance roster for monthly meetings
- a. Obtain current list from Membership or the COA website.
    - i. Keep track of attendance via proxy, tele/virtual and in-person; attach the list to the meeting minutes.
5. Update National COA within 30 days of the election with changes in the Executive Committee membership for the new operational year. This done by completing and submitting the Branch Officer Update Form available at:  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/coausphs.org/resource/resmgr/local\\_branches/bou\\_9.3.19\\_updated.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/coausphs.org/resource/resmgr/local_branches/bou_9.3.19_updated.pdf)

As outlined in the Bylaws, the term duration for Branch Secretary shall be a one-year term. The maximum term limit for Secretary is two consecutive years.

- D. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer must possess an attention to detail. The Branch Treasurer must handle money account effectively, execute transactions properly, track purchase and account history, and navigate monetary systems. The Treasurer shall take charge of the funds of the Branch. The Branch Treasurer has the following responsibilities:

1. Submit written monthly financial reports to the Association meetings
  - a. Reports shall include:
    - i. The bank statement period covered by the report (typically one month).
    - ii. The interest earned, previous balance, and new balance for each Association bank account.
    - iii. A list of all expenses, including the amount, the payee, and a description of what was purchased for each expense.
  - b. Reports shall be reviewed for accuracy and certified by the Executive Committee at the monthly meeting and documented in the meeting minutes.
2. Responsible for keeping track of the coins via an inventory spreadsheet.
  - a. Spreadsheet should include:
    - i. Number of coins purchased
    - ii. Number of coins donated to the AB COA
    - iii. Number of coins awarded by the AB COA
  - b. The Treasurer is responsible for selling the AB COA coins.
    - i. If shipment of coins is necessary the treasurer will add a \$4 surcharge to the cost of the coins.
    - ii. The Treasurer will mail coins using their own money and then submit a request for reimbursement to the COA Executive Committee for approval (if under \$300). The Treasurer will always copy the EC for transparency purposes.
    - iii. For reimbursements over \$300 prior approval of the branch must be obtained.
  - c. The Treasurer will deposit the funds that they have received for coin purchases within one month
  - d. Guest speakers can be awarded a coin for their efforts by the President.

3. Maintain an orderly file of bank statements, check copies and monthly financial reports
  - a. This file, and the Association check book, must be given to the newly elected Treasurer at the end of the current Treasurer's term.
4. Write and distribute checks for Association-approved expenses
  - a. Reimbursement of approved expenses of Association members (versus directly purchasing goods or services) is prohibited unless a detailed receipt of the purchase is provided.
  - b. Expenses of \$300 or less can be approved by the President and President-Elect without a full Association vote for approval.
  - c. These expenses must be presented at the next Branch meeting as an FYI.
5. Expenses over \$300 cannot be paid without a full Branch vote for approval.
  - a. Any expense expected to exceed \$300 should be planned in advance and presented for an Association meeting vote before purchase.
6. Maintain the Association-approved list of approved check signers with the Association's bank
  - a. This list will generally consist of at least the current Treasurer and President.
  - b. Changing Association-approved check signers at the current bank requires:
    - i. Approved meeting minutes certifying the names of newly elected officers.
    - ii. All new Association-approved check signers, and all current Association-approved check signers, must appear in person at the bank together.
    - iii. All new Association-approved check signers must present a form of ID at the

bank.

7. Establish, maintain, and report tax information in support of the AB COA branch non-profit organizational status.

a. Treasurer shall file a 990-N e-postcard prior to May 15th with the IRS at: <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/annual-electronic-filing-requirements-for-small-exempt-organizations-form-990-n-e-postcard>

b. Under section “Ready to File”, click on Form 990-N Electronic Filing System (e-Postcard). Obtain username and password from the previous Treasurer or current President.

8. Provide advice to the Executive Committee regarding appropriate levels of spending and financial reserves

a. The Association should always retain financial reserves of approximately 2 years of revenue or \$4,000, whichever is greater, due to the very limited sources of Association revenue. Nearly all Association revenue comes from membership dues, currently \$20 per member, which is transferred, typically in September, from the National Commissioned Officers Association. The Treasurer must request these funds annually from the National Commissioned Officers Association. COA mails these funds as a check made out to the COA Aurora Borealis branch but will only mail the check to the home address of an Aurora Borealis officer. Typically, these funds are requested in September, but could be requested anytime throughout the year. A check request form must be completed using a personal email address from the following website: <https://www.coapayportal.com/coacof-check-request.html>

b. As outlined in the Bylaws, the term duration for Branch Treasurer shall be a one-year term. The maximum term limit for Treasurer is two consecutive years.

9. A biennial report must be submitted to the State of Alaska Department of Commerce by July 2 of every even year (2022, 2024, etc.) along with a processing fee. The report can be completed online using the AB COA entity number (10090485). The home addresses of the incoming Executive Committee will be used. Each Executive Committee member must be listed with their position title and as a “Director” as the state requires at least 3 Directors and 4 mandatory officers. The filing fee (\$25) should be paid with a personal credit card and submitted for reimbursement.

a. The Registered Agent for the organization must be updated annually with the State of Alaska Department of Commerce. The Registered Agent serves as the point of contact for the organization to receive

notices and processes from the State. During the first AB COA meeting of the incoming Executive Committee, the membership must approve the listing of the incoming Treasurer as the Registered Agent and this must be reflected in the minutes. The Treasurer will submit a Statement of Change form to update this contact person: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/08-447.pdf>. The filing fee (\$25) should be paid with personal credit card and submitted for reimbursement.

**E. Immediate Past President:** The outgoing past President shall serve on the Executive Committee and will assist with Branch affairs when needed. The Branch Immediate Past President has the following responsibilities

1. Function as a resource for the Executive Committee (specifically the Branch President) to reference when insight and unknown historical information is needed.

**F. Standing Committee Lead(s):** The Branch President will designate Standing Committee Leads. The Standing Committee Lead(s) shall perform the following functions:

1. Assign specific tasks and responsibilities to individual standing committee members as needed.
2. As appropriate, hold regular meetings, ensure effective communication amongst standing committee participants, and set project timelines to meet the overall expectations as set forth by the Branch President.
3. Submit regular updates on standing committee progress to the Secretary for inclusion in the COA Aurora Borealis Branch meeting minutes. External communication representing the Branch must be pre-approved by the Branch President
4. Review and revise the Standing Committee SOP as needed but not less than annually.

The term duration for Standing Committee Lead(s) shall be a one-year term with potential annual renewal. There is no maximum term limit for Standing Committee Lead(s) as the President has discretion on lead(s) appointment. To ensure consistency within the committee, co-lead terms will be offset with resignation from the co-lead position occurring on alternating years and no two co-leads within the same committee resigning positions in the same year. This may require an individual to stay on more than one year.

### ***Section 3.*** Standing Committee Responsibility



A Standing Committee is an established and recurring program within the COA Aurora Borealis Branch. Oftentimes, projects within the standing committees are identified. A project is defined as a short-term tasking or assignment that may or may not have a definitive termination date, depending upon the tasking and any applicable deadlines.

The COA Aurora Borealis Branch consists of nine standing committees: Officer Development, Membership, Publications, Readiness Advocacy Team (RAT), Community Outreach, PHS Athletics, Promotion/ Retirement Ceremony, Uniform, and Website. Responsibilities of each standing committee are outlined below:

A. Officer Development Forum

1. Mission Statement – To promote development of officers and inspire esprit de corps through various topic discussions and presentations that encourage mutual learning and shared practices.
2. Duties
  - a. Organize officer development meetings at least twice a year or more often if the need arises.
3. Committee Positions
  - a. The committee will be made up of two co-leads. The two co-leads will take the responsibility of organizing the officer development meetings.
4. Procedures
  - a. Organize officer development meetings at least twice a year or more often if the need arises.
    - (1) Determine the need of the meeting/forum from the members of the branch in order to promote a meaningful topic discussion.
    - (2) Find a guest speaker.
    - (3) Arrange a date, time, and location of meeting/forum to be held.

B. Membership

1. Mission Statement – Develop tools to interact and attract new members, maintain, and update Aurora Borealis listserv, retain current members, and identify and recruit new members.
2. Duties
  - a. Maintain the list of active members and update the listserv accordingly.
  - b. Update member status as needed.
  - c. Identify potential new members.
  - d. Actively pursue new members.
  - e. Identify mechanisms for membership retention and promotion.
  - f. Update the Welcome Packet for new officers annually when leadership changes over.
  - g. Strive to ensure all PHS categories are represented within the COA.
3. Committee Positions
  - a. Membership Coordinator
  - b. Membership Assistant Coordinator
4. Procedures
  - a. Access national COA website to get the list of active members. Active member for Aurora borealis can be found under “Directory” tab click on “Membership Directory” tab. Also work with president who can pull alternate list that only the branch president has access to.
  - b. Update AB\_COA Listserv as needed to ensure new members are added and old members are deleted. Also troubleshoot any type of listserv rejections and solve issues officers may have regarding membership or receiving listserv emails.
  - c. Update the Welcome Packet that has been given to Area Liaison for dispersal to new officers when they arrive in the area. This will be updated on an annual basis when branch leadership changes

over, saved as a PDF, and emailed to the area liaison.

d. In case of any discrepancy in officer's membership status contact Ms. Donna Sparrow (dsparrow@coausphs.org), Membership Coordinator, National COA to update status of officer.

e. Work with fellow officers to encourage any non-member officer to join COA.

f. Verify active vs. non-member through membership list pulled from the National COA by the President.

g. Provide monthly report at the branch meeting and follow-up with attendees on any outstanding questions.

C. Publications

1. Mission Statement – The mission of the Publications Standing Committee is to publish articles in the COA *Frontline* and on the COA Aurora Borealis Branch website.

2. Duties

a. Publish articles and photos in multiple venues including the COA *Frontline* and the COA Aurora Borealis Branch website.

b. Disseminate COA Frontline via the listserv and highlight AB COA branch officers when an article is published.

c. Communicate and work closely with branch leadership to ensure all activities COA Aurora Borealis Branch is involved with that are appropriate for publication be published.

d. Review and update Publications Coordinator section of the SOP annually.

3. Committee Positions

a. Publications Coordinator

b. Interested members of the Aurora Borealis Branch

4. Procedures

- a. Publish articles and photos
  - (1) COA *Frontline*
    - a) Criteria for *Frontline* Articles
      - i. All officers mentioned in articles, authors of articles and “photo courtesy of” individuals must be current COA members or COF donors
    - b) Format
      - i. Article: Word format using Calibri, font 10; Article title: Century Gothic, font 14, italic and bold
      - ii. Submit to [Frontline@coausphs.org](mailto:Frontline@coausphs.org); in the subject line: title of article, branch name
      - iii. Max 1000-word count
      - iv. Provide author information
    - c) Photos
      - i. Submit as a jpeg and attached to the same email submission
      - ii. Provide a suggested caption
    - d) Deadline
      - i. 15th of the month prior to the next *Frontline* publication
  - (2) COA Aurora Borealis Branch website
    - a) Send articles and photos for publication on the COA Aurora Borealis Branch website to the Website Coordinator.
    - b) Communicate and work closely with branch leadership
  - (3) Ensure all activities COA Aurora Borealis Branch is

involved with are appropriately pursued for publication.

D. Readiness Advocacy Team (RAT)

1. Mission Statement – To promote basic readiness, communicate RedDOG updates and offer events to complete readiness requirements
2. Duties
  - a. Communicate reminders and/or updates regarding basic readiness requirements. Serve as readiness subject matter expert(s) for the branch.
  - b. Coordinate Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and/or fitness events as needed for the branch and community. Document each event with photos and number of participants. Consider writing and submitting articles to USPHS publications, such as COA Frontline, PAC Newsletter, or Dog House News.
  - c. Observe and verify APFTs upon request.
  - d. Observe and verify weight reports upon request.
3. Committee Positions
  - a. The committee will be made up of one lead or two co-leads whom will take the responsibility of organizing various readiness events (ex: APFT, group exercise and/or any requested event that supports the basic readiness of officers).
4. Procedures
  - a. Publicize Readiness Events
    - (1) Announce upcoming events at meetings.
    - (2) Send email reminders to branch members.

E. Community Outreach

1. Mission Statement – To positively support and impact our community through COA led volunteer-based efforts and contributions.

2. Duties

- a. Be in direct contact with Event and Subcommittee Leads providing organizational and reporting structure to volunteer activities and events.
- b. Be the primary reference for knowledge of all community events
- c. Assist Leads with gathering volunteers for events and additional support as requested. Collect volunteers by sending out email or excel spreadsheet to COA list serv approximately one month prior to listed event.
- d. Collect completed activity reports and assign subcommittee and event leads as deemed appropriate
- e. Be the point of contact for officers requesting development of new public outreach opportunities.

3. Committee Positions

- a. Committee Lead
- b. Event/Subcommittee Leads
- c. Volunteers

4. Procedures

- a. Event/Subcommittee Lead
  - (1) Contact organization for volunteer requests and specified commitments and report to Team Lead.
    - a) Team Lead will work in conjunction with Event/Subcommittee Leads to develop an email and spreadsheet to ask for volunteers via the COA list-serv.
    - b) Event/Subcommittee Lead will manage/update the volunteer spreadsheet.
  - (2) Send completed spreadsheet with required information to Team Lead.

- (3) Have a specified Lead/organizational representative present at the venue for each volunteer time slot.
- (4) If Event Coordinator is unable to be at the venue, they will work with the Team Lead to assign a volunteer as lead for the event. This person will then act as the event coordinator and collect volunteer forms at the venue.

b. Volunteer

- (1) You must be at least 16 years of age.
- (2) Arrive at the assigned time and location.
- (3) Uniforms are not required. Dress code is typically casual, athletic with no denim unless otherwise noted.
- (4) Fill out and turn in volunteer form and give to Event Coordinator at the venue unless otherwise specified.

F. Uniform

1. Mission Statement – The mission of the Uniform Standing Committee is to keep COA Aurora Borealis Branch members updated with current uniform policy and promote visibility in uniform by providing a local resource for uniforms and devices ready to wear.
2. Duties
  - a. Stay informed on current uniform standards.
  - b. Effectively disseminate updates on uniform standards and policies on the COA Aurora Borealis Branch Website.
  - c. Provide information to COA members on changes in uniform standards and policy at monthly COA meetings or through email notices.
  - d. Function as a resource for questions submitted on current and changing uniform policies.

- e. Provide a local resource for items needed by officers to promote visibility in uniform by managing local donations. Keep information up to date with the Website Coordinator. Ensure donated funds are given to the Branch Treasurer.
3. Committee Positions
    - a. Lead(s)
  4. Procedures
    - a. Uniform Resource
      - (1) Uniform resource officer
        - a) Research standing uniform information on the CCMIS website.
        - b) Review annual uniform updates and provide the updates to Branch members.
    - b. Provide updates to the Aurora Borealis Website Coordinator
      - (1) Review content of the Aurora Borealis website quarterly and update it as new policies and procedures become available.
- G. Website Coordinator
1. Mission Statement – The mission of the Website Coordinator is to maintain the COA Aurora Borealis Branch website.
  2. Duties
    - a. Execute posting of information, modification requests, format changes, and general maintenance of the COA Aurora Borealis Branch website.
    - b. Coordinate with Standing Committees and branch membership to keep all website content up to date.
    - c. Communicate and work closely with branch leadership to ensure all website guidelines are followed and needs are met.
    - d. Oversee domain and server fees are current and do not



lapse.

- e. Review and update Website Coordinator section of the SOP annually.
- f. Maintain Aurora Borealis COA Social Media Accounts:  
G-mail account: [auroraborealiscoa@gmail.com](mailto:auroraborealiscoa@gmail.com)  
Facebook: facebook.com/auroraborealiscoa/  
Instagram: @auroraborealiscoa  
Twitter: twitter.com/AB\_COA or @AB\_COA  
Obtain passwords from previous Website Coordinator.

### 3. Committee Positions

- a. Website Coordinator
- b. Social Media Coordinator

### 4. Procedures

#### a. Granting Access to Website

- (1) Anyone can register to the site. Casual browsers do not need to register. Users need to register if they wish to post comments on anything or list their items in the Uniform Exchange.
- (2) Administrator access is needed to modify the website. This access can only be granted by a current administrator. An administrator can grant access two ways:
  - a) Assign the administrator role to an existing user – this is the recommended process
    - i. The new administrator must register for the website. This is done through the REGISTER link on the homepage.
    - ii. The new administrator tells the existing administrator the username whose role needs to be changed.
    - iii. The current administrator signs into the website.


- iv. In the dashboard, select USERS from the top menu option.
  - v. Locate and click on the new administrator's username.
  - vi. Find the ROLE option and change it from Subscriber to Administrator.
  - vii. Click the UPDATE USER button.
- b) Create a new user – this requires the administrator to create the new administrator's username and know their email address
- i. The current administrator signs into the website.
  - ii. In the dashboard, select USERS from the top menu options.
  - iii. Select the ADD NEW button.
  - iv. Enter all required and desired information. Change the role from Subscriber to Administrator.
  - v. Click the Add New User button.
- b. Coordinate an Annual Content Update
- (1) Review the website pages for outdated content at the beginning of the operational year.
  - (2) Communicate with Standing Committee Leads the need to provide updated content for their respective pages.
  - (3) Receive and update page content.
    - a) Sign into the website.
    - b) Either go directly to the page to be edited or find the desired page listed after clicking the

PAGES top menu option in the dashboard.

- c) Update the page content paying close attention to how it looks.
  - d) After all desired changes have been made; click the UPDATE button on the right of the page.
  - e) Browse to the newly modified page to confirm changes display appropriately.
- (4) Attempt a second update halfway through the operational year.
- c. Post All Meeting Minutes
- (1) Once you receive the approved meeting minutes from the Secretary, add them to site.
  - (2) Sign into the website
  - (3) In the dashboard, select PAGES from the top menu options.
  - (4) Find and select the MEETING MINUTES page
  - (5) Edit content accordingly.
    - a) To add an attachment to the page, make sure your cursor is in the desired location of the link, and then select ADD MEDIA.
    - b) Select the UPLOAD FILES tab.
    - c) Locate the location of your desired attachment
    - d) Select INSERT INTO PAGE
  - (6) Select the UPDATE button once the page is complete
  - (7) Of note – this page is password protected from the public. Users must enter the password of “coa” in order to view the minutes.
- d. Post All Relevant Items Shared Via the Listserv (excluding meeting minutes)

- (1) Monitor the listserv for volunteer opportunities, future events to participate in, and pertinent information to officers.
- (2) Sign into the website
- (3) In the dashboard, select +NEW from the top menu options.
- (4) Enter the title, description, and content for the new post.
- (5) In the bottom right of the Add New Post page, select a respective category for the post. If a category does not apply, leave it blank.
- (6) When finished, find and click the PUBLISH button on the right of the page.
- (7) Browse to the homepage to confirm changes display appropriately.

e. Maintain Website

- (1) Execute WordPress Updates when available
  - a) In the dashboard, select  from the top menu options (there will be a number next to it if updates are available).
  - b) Chose the SELECT ALL box.
  - c) Click the UPDATE NOW button.
- (2) Customize and edit as needed/ appropriate
  - a) The process can vary greatly depending on what is needed or is being changed. The site is fairly easy to navigate and modify areas that are not frequently touched. If it is not obvious how to do something, consult a past administrator or view the HELP content under the dashboard's DOCUMENTS top

menu option.

f. Maintain Server Requirements

- (1) Server maintenance and ownership requirements are ultimately carried out by our server provider/host (Bluehost). We pay them to carry out these items, as well as using a part of their server to store all data related to the website.
- (2) To maintain our server hosting, we must ensure that our fees are paid in a timely manner and that the Website Coordinator is setup to receive notifications from Bluehost.
- (3) To change email notifications, do the following:
  - a) Go to [www.bluehost.com](http://www.bluehost.com).
  - b) Login to the HOSTING side. It will automatically take you to server hosting home page.
  - c) Click the top menu option, ACCOUNT.
  - d) Update desired contact information and select the UPDATE button.
- (4) Hosting services are set to expire 05.01.2023. Before this date, new fees will need to be submitted to continue server hosting. To continue server hosting with Bluehost, do the following:
  - a) Click the link you received in your email, OR, Go to [www.bluehost.com](http://www.bluehost.com).
  - b) Login to the HOSTING side. It will automatically take you to server hosting home page.
  - c) A notification will appear prompting you that your server service is about to expire. Follow the prompts and links.
  - d) Gather necessary cost information to present to COA leadership. Present this information to them and receive approval prior to

purchasing.

- e) Complete purchase as directed by leadership (via completion of prompts and links as outlined above).

g. Maintain Domain Requirements

- (1) We must purchase the rights to call our site [auroraborealiscoa.org](http://auroraborealiscoa.org) (similar to owning, but with recurring payments to process registration requirements).
- (2) To maintain our domain, we must ensure that our fees are paid in a timely manner and that the Website Coordinator is setup to receive notifications from [www.register.com](http://www.register.com).
- (3) To change email notifications, do the following:
  - a) Go to [www.register.com](http://www.register.com).
  - b) MANAGE ACCOUNT or LOG IN to My Account Manager. It will automatically take you to the account dashboard.
  - c) Hover over the ACCOUNT link toward the upper right of the screen and select CONTACT INFORMATION.
  - d) Update desired contact information. Of note, the first and last name cannot be modified without completing a registrant transfer. This will cost money to register the domain name under a different account, so it should only be pursued if the domain is about to expire.
- (4) The domain is set to expire on 10.01.2024. Before this date, new fees will need to be submitted to continue use of our domain. To continue using [www.auroraborealiscoa.org](http://www.auroraborealiscoa.org), do the following:
  - a) Click the link you received in your email, OR, Go to [www.register.com](http://www.register.com).
  - b) MANAGE ACCOUNT or LOG IN to My

Account Manager. It will automatically take you to the account dashboard.

- c) A notification will appear prompting you that your domain is about to expire. Follow the prompts and links.
- d) Gather necessary cost information to present to COA leadership. Present this information to them and receive approval prior to purchasing.
- e) Complete purchase as directed by leadership (via completion of prompts and links as outlined above).

h. Gather Website Content

- (1) The website coordinator is not responsible for generating website content; however, always listen closely at meetings and gatherings for potential content that is available to add to the website.

i. Social Media Coordinator

- (1) Will maintain social media accounts and passwords
- (2) Will post relevant branch activities to social media accounts

- a. All post will be in compliance with the USPHS code of conduct and will be free from the following, but is not limited to, posting comments or pictures that: reveals personally identifiable information (PII) about a patient or recipient of services provided by the officer while acting in an official capacity; has the potential to affect the integrity or success or otherwise compromises or jeopardizes an agency or Corps mission; is a violation of an agency or Corps policy; shares or reveals specifics regarding a Corps deployment (e.g., dates, locations, assignments, etc.) including but not limited to any pictures taken during a deployment; disobeys a lawful order (e.g., during a Corps deployment). For the purposes of this Paragraph, social media includes websites, applications, and web-based tools that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content and where people or groups can engage in dialogue, interact, and create, organize, edit, comment on, combine, and/or share content. This Paragraph does not apply to posts on social media that the SG, or his/her designee, has approved.

- b. Post will only be made by the Social Media Coordinator or their designee.

#### H. PHS Athletics

1. Mission Statement – To promote approved PHS Athletics events for the COA Aurora Borealis Branch.
2. Duties
  - a. Communicate reminders and/or updates regarding current and future approved PHS Athletics events.
  - b. Encourage officers to participate or be event leaders for this initiative from the Office of the United States Surgeon General.
  - c. Serve as a resource for those interested in being a participant or leader for PHS Athletics events.
3. Committee Positions
  - a. Lead(s)
4. Procedures
  - a. Publicize PHS Athletics Events
    - (1) Announce upcoming events at meetings.
    - (2) Send email reminders to the branch.

#### I. Promotion Ceremony Committee

1. Mission Statement – To promote the recognition and celebration of promotions of branch members.
2. Duties
  - a. Call for volunteers to assist with planning.
  - b. Select a date/time for the ceremony.
  - c. Reserve a room for the ceremony.
  - d. Solicit distinguished guests and speakers – local leadership, PHS/COA leadership.



- e. Call for volunteers for Color Guard/music (National Anthem and PHS March).
- f. Organize decorations/refreshments/food. Historically the event budget has been \$500. Obtain budget approval during the April meeting for an event in August, and a minimum of 4 months prior to the actual ceremony date. The budget amount is subject to vote and approval of the branch.
- g. Call for volunteers to read bios of promoted officers during the ceremony.
- h. Develop a program for the ceremony, print in color, and bring to the ceremony for distribution to those in attendance.
- i. Coordinate with Alaska Area Office IHS Liaison for a list of promoted officers/review published list on CCMIS website and compare to the list of Aurora Borealis Branch members. Also be aware of non-competitive promotions from O-2 to O-3 which are not published on the main list.
- j. Send invitations to promoted officers and branch members as well as guests. Manage RSVPs. Coordinate number of RSVPs with volunteers who are in charge of refreshments and food.
- k. Manage room set up and clean up the day of the ceremony (ensure proper flags are in the room for the Color Guard).
- l. Coordinate with Branch Exec-committee as to who will lead the ceremony – Branch President preferably.
- m. Ensure proper PHS protocol is followed for the pinning ceremony.
- n. Coordinate with Professional Photo subcommittee to offer professional photos during the ceremony.
- o. Ceremonies/Color guard/Marching in uniform
  - (1) Marching in a parade in uniform and in a formation requires permission from the OSG Drill team. Same standards for forming a Color guard for ceremonies

- i. There will be standard training
  - ii. No officer above the rank of 0-5
  - iii. Full length picture in uniform of those officers participating may be required
- 2 Promotion ceremonies and Award Ceremonies should be sponsored by the agencies you work for not the local COA unless permission from headquarters is obtained.

1. Committee Positions

- a. Lead(s)

2. Procedures

- a. Organize all volunteers

- (1) Announce upcoming events at meetings.

- (2) Send email reminders to the branch.

- (3) Hold committee meetings as necessary.

3. Request Aide de camp if necessary, for distinguished guest/speaker.

- a. Aide-de-Camp and/or Escort Officers will be recruited and assigned by the executive committee upon a request for assistance from the Alaska Area IHS.

- b. In coordination with the IHS and the requests of the dignitary, an Aide-de-Camp and/or Escort Officer will be assigned based on the needs of the guest.

- c. Aide-de-Camp will be assigned by the executive committee EC based upon:

- (1) Input provided by the senior branch category representative.

- (2) Consideration of the dignitary's PHS category.

- (3) Rank (Open to officers O-3 to O-5).

- (4) Branch membership in good standing.

- (5) If the visit objective is nontechnical/administrative in nature, the assignee will be openly selected by the EC from a pool of self-nominated, AB branch, junior PHS officers (O-3 and below).

- d. In all instances, the Escort Officer will be:
    - (1) Openly selected by the EC from a pool of self-nominated, junior PHS officers (O-3 and below).
    - (2) A branch member in good standing.
  - e. The announcement for the available positions will be made at a COA meeting prior to the visit, with timing based upon security considerations. If there is short notice of the visit, an announcement may be made through the COA list serve.
4. Promotion Ceremony Protocol
- a. See Appendix 1.

**Section 4.** Ad-hoc/ Special Committees

Ad-hoc/ Special committees are formed in response to the COA Aurora Borealis Branch needs, as directed by the Branch President, and as might be required by the Bylaws. Ad-hoc/ Special Committees are often a result of planning for recurring events/ activities (Section 5).

**Section 5.** Recurring Events/Activities/ Donations

Events and activities sponsored by COA Aurora Borealis Branch are common and a part of the Branch responsibilities. Many events and activities are unaffiliated with the Community Outreach Committee. Although a majority are recurring and expected to happen, the occurrence shall be at the determination of the Branch President (with appropriate Branch voting for needed funds). Commonly sponsored events/ activities include, but are not limited to:

- A. Junior Officer Registration Scholarship to COA/COF (vote needed) – Call for scholarship nominations in February, applications due in March, and results announced in April
- B. Executive Committee Member Scholarship (vote needed) – announced in February
- C. Tuition Scholarship for High School Students (vote needed) - Call for scholarship nominations in January, applications due in March, applications reviewed, and results announced in April
- D. Picnic/ Membership Drive – Held in place of the May meeting
- E. Professional photographs – Held at Promotion Ceremony, early fall.
- F. Bone Marrow Transplant Drive – Held in May
- G. Alaska State Science and Engineering Fair (vote needed in March for award money) – Held in April
- H. Donations – Funds for various causes (Veterans Day, Memorial Funds etc.):
  - 1. Officer Memorials (i.e. flowers, etc):

Type of service provided – Donation of flowers  
Eligibility includes COA branch member officers and immediate family.

Authorized dollar amount – \$150 max

Type of service provided – Donation to memorial or charity in remembrance of officer

Eligibility includes COA branch member officers only

Authorized dollar amount – \$150 max

## 2. Charitable Donations

Type of service provided – Donation to charity

Authorized dollar amount – \$150 max

Funds will be voted on in two fashions:

2. Ideally, during a branch meeting previous to the donation request.
3. Secondary, by electronic member vote to determine if branch supports the cause and a donation amount determined by majority vote. It will be the responsibility of the President to alert the branch on the final decision.

## **Section 6.** Letters of Appreciation

The COA Aurora Borealis Branch shall disseminate Letters of Appreciation (LOA) to Branch members who meet the minimum standards for Branch participants (ARTICLE III). At the end of each operational year, an LOA will be provided to each Standing Committee Lead, each member of the Executive Committee, and to those who lead/coordinated any other volunteer events as long as they have attended half or more of the Branch meetings. This can be in-person attendance, teleconference attendance, or by submitted proxy.

Handling LOAs for members from other branches

Officers will receive a LOA for a single event if:

1. The Organization that the Aurora Borealis Branch volunteered with is not providing LOAs, AND the officer is a member of the Aurora Borealis Branch
2. The Organization that the Aurora Borealis Branch volunteered with is not providing LOAs, AND the officer is a member of a COA branch that the Aurora Borealis Branch invited to help participate in the event
3. The Aurora Borealis Branch hosted the event (ex – annual picnic)

## **ARTICLE III**

### **MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR BRANCH PARTICIPANTS AND QUALIFICATIONS TO RECEIVE A LETTER OF APPRECIATION**

## **Section 1.** Committee Participant - Committee participant minimum standards include:

- A. Attending at least half of all COA Aurora Borealis Branch meetings. This can be in-person attendance, teleconference attendance, or by

submitted proxy

- B. Active participation in at least one project or standing committee annually
- C. Officers will receive a LOA for a single event if:
  - 1. The Organization AB COA volunteered with is not giving out LOAs and the volunteer officer is a member of AB COA.
  - 2. The Organization AB COA volunteered with is not giving out LOAs and the officer is a member of a COA branch that AB COA invited to help participate in the event.
  - 3. The AB COA hosted the event (ie. Annual picnic).

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **TRANSITIONING**

***Section 1.*** Transition Procedure: Incoming and outgoing positions should schedule a meeting to discuss the transition. The COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP shall function as a hand-off document with examples and in person demonstrations to supplement knowledge sharing. The incoming and outgoing president will be available to assist in the orientation to new positions.

#### **ARTICLE V**

##### **CHANGES TO THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

***Section 1.*** Updates to the COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP: The Branch President-Elect shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP. Updates to the SOP may be initiated as needed by any executive or standing committee member. Any executive or standing committee member may request a review of the SOP or suggest a change to the SOP through correspondence with the President-Elect. If deemed worthy of further review, such a review shall occur with drafting of new proposed verbiage.

***Section 2.*** COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP Review: The President-Elect will initiate the yearly review process. The COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP shall be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee Leads to ensure the SOP is up-to-date and adequate to meet the needs of the Branch.

**Section 3.** Approval: COA Aurora Borealis Branch SOP requires review and approval by a Branch vote when a two-thirds quorum is observed at a regularly, scheduled meeting. After a majority vote in favor of changes, the SOP shall be considered accepted and final.

**Section 4.** Minor Changes: Minor changes to the SOP (i.e. to correct spelling or grammar or to clarify unclear wording) may be made without Branch approval.

## **Appendix 1: Promotion Ceremony Protocol**

### **Promotion Ceremony Protocol**

1. Attendees, Officers, and others seated in auditorium/room 5 minutes before ceremony begins.
2. Master of ceremony (traditionally the branch President has served in this role) proceeds to podium. If there is live singing of the national anthem have performers standby.
  - 2.1 Script: “Ladies and Gentlemen, please rise for the entrance of our distinguished guests and remain standing for the presentation and posting of the colors and the singing/playing of the National Anthem”
  - 2.2.1 Master of ceremony calls the room to ATTENTION, distinguished guests/any Aide-de-camp enter.
  - 2.2.2 Once distinguished guests/aides get to their seats, Master of ceremony calls “Color Guard, Present Colors”
  - 2.2.3 Color guard performs presentation of the flag.
  - 2.2.4 Color guard calls, “Present arms”, color guard begins to salute at which THE FIRST NOTE OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM SHOULD BE PLAYED OR SUNG.
  - 2.2.5 At the conclusion of the National Anthem, Color guard calls “Order Arms”, then “Color Guard, Post Colors” (flag bearers post flags, flag bearer return to formation, “Color Guard Forward, March” (Color Guard then calls “Halt” once the back of the room is reached and “Dismissed”)
  - 2.2.6 At that time Senior Officer should command “At Ease”, or the Master of Ceremony asks the room to please be seated.
3. Master of Ceremony makes welcoming remarks.
4. Local leadership (i.e. ANTHC, SCF representatives), then distinguished guests each take the podium to make remarks.
5. After all remarks are completed, the podium is turned back over to Master of Ceremony.
6. Distinguished guests/Senior Officers who are participating in the pinning will take center stage at this time.
7. By order of rank (highest to lowest) Adjutant (this is an assistant(s) (or volunteer bio reader) to the Master of Ceremony) calls one Officer at a time to the stage to be promoted. (The Adjutant may call the audience to ATTENTION but may leave

the audience seated, if desired.)

8. Officer and family member(s) or dignitary proceeds to stage. The Officer takes a position of  
ATTENTION to the LEFT of the Senior Officer, facing the audience. The family member stands to the LEFT of the Officer, facing the audience.
9. Once at attention, adjutant (or volunteer bio reader) may make remarks about the Officer being promoted (reads bio) and introduce family member or dignitary who will assist in the promotion.
10. Adjutant (or volunteer bio reader) reads the promotion order.

10.2 “ATTENTION TO ORDERS: BY VIRTUE, AND PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY <NAME>, <OLD RANK> <FIRST NAME> <LAST NAME> IS HEREBY PROMOTED TO THE GRADE, <NEW RANK>, AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 205, PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT, AS AMENDED “

11. Officer being promoted hands correct shoulder boards to Senior Officer and family member (or dignitary if no family member present).
12. Senior Officer and family member replace the old shoulder boards with the new shoulder boards.
13. Senior Officer shakes the hand of the officer and family member.
  - 13.2 If a Senior Commissioned Corps Officer is presiding, he/she stands in front of the officer (facing the Officer) and the promoted Officer renders a hand salute and holds salute until it is returned by the Senior Officer.
14. Master of ceremony initiates applause.
15. Promoted Officer and family (if present) exit stage.
16. Senior officer resumes position in front of audience and cycle is repeated for all Officers to be promoted.
17. CLOSING – Master of Ceremony takes to podium to make closing remarks (including where and when refreshments will be served).

17.2 If stage size permits, Master of Ceremony then asks newly promoted Officers to stage to form a line (highest to lowest rank) and take the oath of office.

17.2.1 Read by Senior/Distinguished officer:

“Please repeat after me:  
I, [state your name],  
Do solemnly affirm  
That I will support and defend  
The Constitution of the United States  
Against all enemies, foreign, and domestic;  
That I will bear true faith  
And allegiance to the same; That  
I take this obligation freely,  
Without any mental reservation

Or purpose of evasion.  
That I will well and faithfully discharge  
On which I am about to enter,  
So help me God.”

- 17.3 Prompt the singing of the USPHS March and play recording of USPHS Ensemble.
- 17.4 Invite family members to stand with promoted officers, and all members of the audience to come up and congratulate promoted officers.
18. All proceed to refreshments.