

Dues, Memberships, and Subscriptions

Objective:	To establish County policy regarding County funding and/or payment of dues, memberships, and subscriptions.	Policy/Procedure Number:	01-08
Reference: (All Applicable Federal, State and Local Laws)	Opinions 72-721, 77-308, 79-336, 80-501 and 81-136 of the State Comptroller	Effective Date:	January 12, 1981
Legislative Policy Statement:		Responsible Department:	County Administration
General Information:	Funding of professional memberships and subscriptions is warranted when a clear and justifiable potential benefit exists.	Modified Date (s):	February 19, 2019
		Resolution No.:	2019-26
		Next Scheduled Review:	February 2024

I. Definitions:

Fees or Dues - Monies paid to an association or organization to provide services, materials, and/or information.

Membership - Fees or dues paid for an individual or an institution to join a technical, business, or professional organization for a specific length of time.

Professional Association - A membership organization comprised of individuals engaged in the same profession who come together for the purposes of shared mission, vision and strategy, professional development, and legislative advocacy.

Subscription - Payments in exchange for receiving technical, business, or professional periodicals or access to information.

II. Policy:

A. Membership and subscription dues for County employees may be authorized only when the following criteria are met:

1. The endeavors of the professional association or organization must be directly related to the position of the employee.
2. It is determined by the appropriate Department Head that membership or subscription with the organization will be beneficial to employees in the performance of their duties and professional development and participation therein will increase the efficiency of County government.

B. Membership or subscription in organizations which are primarily beneficial in a personal manner shall not be authorized.

C. Organizational rather than individual memberships should be obtained whenever possible to allow participation by several or alternate employees.

D. Funds shall come from departmental budgets receiving primary benefit of the employee membership.

E. Where applicable the governing collective bargaining agreement addressing professional membership or association fees for unionized employees and contractual agreements with non-unionized employees will prevail.

III. Procedure:

A. Legislature Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Legislature to:

- Review all paid memberships in the annual County budget and affirm that approved membership dues directly contribute to the County's mandate.
- Ensure membership organizations are not duplicative in function or membership.

B. Department Head Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of individual Department Heads to:

- Review and approve all department membership, dues, & subscription requests.
- Ensure that approved membership or subscription dues paid on behalf of employees directly contribute to the department's mandate and directly relates to the position of the employee.
- Ensure joining organizations are not duplicative in function or membership.
- Determine if membership or subscription renewals are still relevant to the department's and employee's scope of work.
- Encourage and promote the sharing of materials and information received through memberships or subscriptions.
- Document paid memberships in the annual County budget for review by the Legislature.
- Cease employee eligibility for payment of memberships and/or subscriptions at the termination of employment.

C. Employee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of employees to:

- Request in writing to their Department Head for approval and payment of membership or subscription dues.
- Provide documentation from the association or organization as to how the membership or subscription contributes to the mandate of the department.