

HOSTESS CHAPTER HANDBOOK

CONVENTIONS OF WEST VIRGINIA STATE CHAPTER

P.E.O. SISTERHOOD



STEERING COMMITTEE AND PREPARATORY STEPS

According to West Virginia State Chapter bylaws, state convention is held the last weekend of April. Hostess chapters are encouraged to become acquainted with their responsibilities before serving as hostesses.

Attending convention in the years leading up to the hostess year is beneficial to understanding what is required and is an excellent time for the chapters who are to be co-hostesses to become acquainted and begin planning.

- 1) Two to three years prior to convention, the senior chapter (the chapter that has been organized the longest) is responsible for calling the first Steering Committee meeting. The Steering Committee is comprised of seven members. In the case of two hostess chapters, three members are from each chapter in addition to one treasurer. In the case of three hostess chapters, two members are from each chapter in addition to one treasurer.
- 2) Two co-chairmen are selected. They lead the search for a venue, oversee the work of the Steering Committee and coordinate completion of the Final Report. The co-chairmen determine which of them shall act liaison to the State Board, provide the welcome during convention and make announcements as designated in the convention program.
- 3) The convention treasurer is responsible for opening the checking account, paying all bills, maintaining accurate and complete records, preparing a budget vs. expenses report, preparing a net income/loss statement, completing the IRS-HC form from the State Treasurer annually in March, establishing a cut-off date for submission of expenses, and closing the checking account within three months following convention.
- 4) A convention checking account is established approximately two years before convention. The checking account is set up using the State Chapter FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number) and is not to be associated with a local chapter FEIN. Obtain the State Chapter FEIN from the State Treasurer. The title of the checking account is to reflect that it is for state convention for a particular year, e.g., "WV P.E.O. Convention 2025".
- 5) The convention treasurer obtains a copy of P.E.O.'s West Virginia state consumer sales tax exemption certificate from the State Treasurer.
- 6) The treasurer and Steering Committee co-chairmen are to have signature authority on the convention checking account. Monetary contributions from each chapter may be deposited into this account as "seed money". If there is money left over in the checking account after convention, it is returned equitably among the chapters. In turn, each chapter is responsible for ensuring that the amount exceeding its initial contribution and expenses is donated as quickly as possible in accordance with P.E.O.'s Financial and Fundraising Policy, i.e., donated primarily to the International Projects. ***Holding significant funds for a convention several years in the future is not in alignment with the Policy and is therefore inappropriate.***
- 7) The treasurer and at least one Steering Committee co-chairman jointly determine if expenses that exceed budget are acceptable.

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SUGGESTED COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A chairman is appointed for each committee. All chapter members should serve on one or more committees, as time and ability allow. Committees may be combined. Committee chairmen prepare a brief report of their activities for inclusion in the Final Report (see p.10)

One of the Steering Committee co-chairmen sends the State President a list of all committees and members by April 1 for inclusion in the printed convention program.

- 1) **Invitation to Convention Committee:** Invitation is given at convention one year prior to the convention being hosted and is based on the “theme” of the incoming State President. A paper invitation is distributed as well to all members in attendance. Consult the Registrar from the current hostess chapters to determine quantity; if unavailable, 150 should be sufficient.
- 2) **Call to Convention Committee:** Final draft of Call to Convention requires approval of the incoming State President before distribution. Email the approved Call to Convention and registration form in late January prior to convention to all local chapter presidents, all PSPs, the State Board, standing committee chairmen, the International Representative and other special guests designated by the State President.
 - a) Call to Convention includes: date and location of convention; what to bring/wear; hotel(s) information including telephone numbers, cost of rooms, and parking; deadlines, Registrar’s name, phone number and email; Love Gift letter and contribution form; Question form for Q&A period, and BIL activities.
 - b) Registration form includes: Top: form instructions, remittance instructions and deadline. Provide area near top of form for chapter letter and city, chapter treasurer’s name, phone number and email. Body: Provide area to list attendee names, attendee category, whether or not attending business meeting, meal options and cost. Include area for totals.
- 3) **Meeting Room Committee:** Responsible for set up and all amenities for the room in which the business meetings will be held. Most signage is passed on from previous hostess chapters. Refer to **diagram of meeting room on page 11**, suggestions below, and consult with State President as necessary
 - a) Skirted tables on platform to seat six with microphone, podium, chairs, signage and water
 - b) PSPs’ tables, chairs, signage and water
 - c) Standing Committee Chairmen tables, chairs, signage and water
 - d) Local Chapter Delegates’ tables, chairs, signage and water. Seating of the State Board’s chapter delegates to be coordinated with State President.
 - e) Visitors’ chairs (rows)
 - f) Chairs for Guards and Pages in designated places
 - g) American and Canadian flags (Canadian flag is supplied)
 - h) Piano/keyboard with stand for music (tuned and draped if necessary)
 - i) Microphone with music stand for song leader if required
 - j) Side podium with microphone

Meeting Room Committee (cont'd)

- k) Projection screen, audio visual equipment. Ensure functionality Thursday evening and Friday and Saturday mornings. Ensure State Technology Chairman's needs are met.
 - l) Cover windows in doors if necessary
 - m) Check and repair signage as needed
 - n) Provide any special microphone or space needs for Period of Instruction, Time of Remembrance, or Invitation to Convention
- 4) **Registration Table Committee:** Works with the State Treasurer to plan, prepare and staff the registration tables. The State Treasurer will prepare prefilled sign-in rosters and provide them to the chairman of the Registration Committee. Two registration tables are suggested, one for local chapter delegates and one for visitors. (The State Board, standing committee chairmen and PSPs typically sign their respective rosters on Thursday through the State Treasurer.) Individuals not listed on the prefilled sign-in rosters may not proceed until their membership is validated by a member of the Credentials Committee, which is appointed by the state president.
- a) Registration table is open at all times or until all tickets, etc. are picked up. It should also be open morning of second day to handle late registrants and to answer questions before beginning of the meeting.
 - b) A separate table to collect Love Gifts table should be set up. Work with the State Treasurer to determine her needs and placement of table.
- 5) **Registrar:** One person designated to receive all registration forms and payments and prepare final attendee list for use by Registration Committee
- 6) **Hospitality Committee:** Plans any refreshments for the registration period and provides items such as welcome packets, gift bags, miscellaneous décor, etc.
- 7) **Badges, Meal Tickets and Folders Committee:** Designs and prepares badges (badges must indicate who is a P.E.O. and who is not as badges determine admittance to the meetings). Designs and prepares folders which are assembled at or before convention with materials supplied by State President and placed at registration tables. Designs and prepares meal tickets for all delegates, officers, visitors, hostesses, etc.
- 8) **Time of Remembrance Committee:** Works with the State Vice President to provide any resources she may need for the Time of Remembrance. Committee is responsible for arranging the room, having a "quite please" sign at the entrance, distributing programs, and may be asked to obtain flowers, act as ushers, etc.
- 9) **International Representative Liaison:** Corresponds with International Representative regarding any special needs, provides transportation to and from airport, arranges to ship gifts, etc. to her at end of convention.
- 10) **Pre-convention Dinner Committee:** Arranges for dinner on Thursday evening prior to start of convention for: State Board (5), International Representative (1), chairmen of standing committees (7), and others as desired (co- chairmen of convention, etc.) May be held in member's home, restaurant, or at convention site, as circumstances dictate. Committee may wish to send a written invitation with R.S.V.P. to each individual. Consults with State President as necessary.

- 11) **Celebration Luncheon Committee:** Plans menu, decorations, and makes special seating arrangements desired by State Secretary. State Secretary typically designs and prints programs, but Committee should verify with her.
- 12) **Banquet Committee:** Plans menu, decorations, entertainment, and makes special seating arrangements desired by State President. State President typically designs and prints programs, but Committee should verify with her. Program typically includes a welcome, grace, Project recipient speech(es), greetings by the IR, and a response by a guest or BIL.
 - a) A reception honoring the International Representative usually precedes the banquet and if so, is coordinated by the hostess chapters.
- 13) **Pre and Post-Convention Luncheons Committee:** Arranges for State Board to eat lunch at noon on day before convention starts and at noon after the close of convention. The committee should consult with the State President to determine the location for the pre - convention luncheon and consult with the State Vice President for the location of the post-convention luncheon. For example, these luncheons may be held in the President's suite or in a separate small conference room. The cost of the meals is the responsibility of State Chapter.
- 14) **Tellers Baskets Committee:** Arranges for these to be available at convention. State President or a designated Past State President will provide ballots to the Tellers.
- 15) **Special Gifts Committee:** Selects and arranges for gifts (if any) to be given State President and International Representative from hostess chapters.
- 16) **Project Displays Committee:** Works with State Historian, Membership Committee Chairman, and local chapters bringing project displays to ensure adequate space, provide any forgotten supplies, etc.
- 17) **Hostess Attire Committee:** Determine what the members of the hostess chapters will wear to identify themselves as hostess chapter members.
- 18) **BIL Activities Committee:** Investigates, obtains, and disseminates information on activities of interest to BILs who accompany their spouses.
- 19) **Hostess Boutique Committee:** Only hostess chapters may sell items at convention. Revenue that exceeds expenses is ultimately to be donated to the International Projects in accordance with P.E.O's Financial and Fundraising Policy.

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VENUE SELECTION

- 1) The Steering Committee co-chairmen work closely with the incoming State President as they near final selection of the convention venue. The incoming State President tours the venue with the co-chairmen, coordinates obtaining final approval from the Board, reviews projected expenses that State Chapter will be responsible for and signs the contract. *See page 9, “Convention Hall Rental/Deposit Costs”*
- 2) The Schedule of Events from the past year’s convention program will be helpful in understanding the normal flow and location of convention activities, however, the incoming State President is consulted to determine if she foresees any changes.
- 3) Factors to consider in selection of the venue include:
 - a) **Meeting Room:** The room must be capable of seating the State Board and International Representative (6) at a table on a platform all voting members of convention (approximately 80) in classroom style plus visitors in chairs at the back (40-50). Those criteria plus the *Meeting Room diagram on page 11* should be shared and discussed with venue management to determine the room dimensions required.
 - b) **Workshop space:** The room must accommodate a minimum of 80 (i.e., voting members). The Meeting Room may be used if acceptable to the incoming State President.
 - c) **Time of Remembrance space:** Must accommodate same number as the Meeting Room. The Meeting Room may be used if acceptable to the incoming State President.
 - d) **Conference room for PSP meeting** on Friday afternoon: Must accommodate approximately 20 at conference tables.
 - e) **Registration area:** Should be located adjacent to the Meeting Room with space for registration tables, Love Gift table, and sufficient walking/queuing space.
 - f) **Project display and chapter scrapbook area:** Must have sufficient space for tables for six Project displays, Golden Girl display, Membership table, and state and local chapter scrapbooks.
 - g) **Hostess Boutique:** This space is at the discretion of the hostess committee.
 - h) **Dining room:** Must accommodate 200. Avoid using a room, such as the Meeting Room, that must be ‘flipped’.
 - i) **Luncheon and banquet food selection, quality, price:** Assess the options of plated meals vs. buffet, including time involved to serve/self-serve. Consider asking if the venue will provide a taste-testing to the Steering Committee.
 - j) **Reception Friday evening:** A cash bar is typically offered during the reception before the Friday banquet.
 - k) **Welcome reception Thursday evening:** This reception is typically hosted by the incoming State President’s chapter at its expense. Discuss location options with the incoming State President, e.g., her hospitality suite, a medium-sized conference room, etc.

- 1) **Lodging:** A “room block” should be obtained. The number of rooms needed for each night will vary. Guidelines for each night are:
 - i) Wednesday: Consult with the incoming State President to determine if she and the Board will arrive on this day for preliminary activities.
 - (1) State President – one suite (may prefer a hospitality suite to facilitate board meeting, etc.)
 - (2) Board – two standard doubles (assumes two board officers in each room). Increase rooms if it is anticipated that a board member’s spouse will be there. Discuss with incoming president.
 - (3) Possibly International Representative – one suite
 - ii) Thursday: Rooms for the Board, International Representative, Standing Committee Chairs and Past State Presidents (PSPs), and visitors
 - (1) State President – one suite (may prefer hospitality suite)
 - (2) Board – two doubles minimum (see note above re: spouses)
 - (3) International Representative – one suite
 - (4) Standing Committee Chairmen plus PSPs – 12 doubles
 - (5) Visitors – Estimate number of rooms taking into account lodging for hostess chapter members and incoming president’s chapter members assisting with the welcome reception. Assume double occupancy.
 - iii) Friday: Ditto Thursday, plus rooms for local chapter delegates and additional rooms due to arrival of spouses of the board
 - (1) State President – one suite (may prefer hospitality suite)
 - (2) Board – four doubles or four kings (their spouses often arrive on Friday, necessitating two board members moving out of their rooms into other rooms)
 - (3) International Representative – one suite
 - (4) Standing Committee Chairman plus PSPs – 12 doubles
 - (5) Local chapter delegates – 27 doubles
 - (6) Visitors – Refer to factors listed for Thursday and previous year’s numbers for Friday night to determine additional rooms for visitors.

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CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS

The steering committee should review the proposed contract closely to ensure it is clear and comprehensive, consulting with the incoming president as necessary before requesting her signature. Contract provisions should include the following, at minimum:

- Cost of hall and ancillary room/area rental
- Room set-up charges
- A/V equipment rental cost
- Wireless Internet availability
- Piano/keyboard rental including piano tuning
- Cost of meals and gratuity %
- Food and beverage minimums
- Hotel room rates
- Room block and minimum obligations
- Room occupancy reports
- Cancellation notification requirements for both parties
- Parking
- Circumstances resulting in penalties
- Allowing payment by check at conclusion of convention for expenses borne by State Chapter (e.g., balance of hall rental, board's hotel rooms)
- Force Majeure clause

Consider negotiating the following:

- Discount on standard hotel room rate for the entire period of convention (include Tuesday and Wednesday nights if needed)
- Five upgraded rooms at the standard hotel room rate for the Board and International Representative (if unable to negotiate five, explore at least one large suite for the state president at the standard rate)
- 20% attrition on room block
- Free conference room set-up
- 40% discount on A/V rental
- No hotel resort fees
- Provisions that offer early check-in and late check-out, storage for the hostess committee's supplies, and vouchers for off-site parking are advantageous.

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ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES

Hostess Chapter Expenses: Thursday evening dinner, badges, meal tickets, decorations, folders for convention program, gift/treat bags, entertainment and all other items not paid by State Chapter.

State Chapter Expenses: Hall rental; piano/keyboard rental; audio visual equipment rental; printing of bylaws, programs and proceedings; and meals, lodging and transportation of the executive board and chairmen of standing committees and musicians(s) and chairman of the nominating committee when not otherwise members of convention

CONVENTION HALL RENTAL DEPOSIT/COSTS

Although the cost of convention hall rental is ultimately borne by State Chapter, **the timing of payment must be considered during planning.** The convention committee may be able to avoid advancing the deposit on (or full cost of) convention hall rental and have it paid directly by State Chapter instead. To do so, the committee must notify the incoming president of the needed amount by mid-March of the year *preceding* the year of the hostess' convention. That will allow State Chapter to incorporate the amount into its annual proposed budget, which will be voted upon the following month at state convention. If the proposed budget is approved at that state convention, State Chapter will issue a check directly to the venue shortly afterward. If this timing is not amenable to the Steering Committee's plans, the required deposit/cost must be paid out of the convention committee's checking account and a request for reimbursement subsequently submitted to State Chapter

International Chapter Expenses: All lodging, meals and transportation expenses of the International Representative. She is responsible for submitting her meal choices and check to the registration committee and for making her room reservations. The state president typically works with the International Representative to ensure she submits her registration and makes her reservations.

Local Chapter Expenses: Expenses for its elected delegates to state convention including meals, lodging, and transportation

FINAL REPORT

The convention committee's Final Report is to be submitted by the Steering Committee co-chairmen no later than July 1 to the immediate Past State President (electronic copy) current State Board officers (electronic copies), and State Secretary (three hard copies). The State Secretary will send the report to hostess chapters for the next three years. The report includes the following items:

- 1) Steering Committee Timeline
- 2) Steering Committee Overview and Recommendations
- 3) Total number attending convention by category (from Credentials Committee chairman)
- 4) Total number attending luncheon
- 5) Total number attending banquet, including visitors and BILs
- 6) Lodging information: Hotel name(s), rates, number of rooms blocked, number of rooms occupied
- 7) Financial Reports
 - a) Convention Committee Budget vs. Actual Expenses by category
 - b) Net Income/Loss Statement
 - i) Show contributions returned to each chapter and "excess" returned to each chapter
- 8) Costs borne by State Chapter
- 9) Committee Reports
- 10) Copy of Call to Convention including registration form
- 11) Copy of Convention Schedule of Events
- 12) Copies of luncheon and banquet programs
- 13) Copy of delegate folder cover
- 14) Other information as desired

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MEETING ROOM DIAGRAM

U.S. Flag

Canadian Flag

Vice President	International Representative	President	Podium/ Microphone	Organizer	Treasurer	Secretary
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[Head Table on Risers, Podium with Microphone]

Chair
Chair
Chair
Chair

Podium/
Microphone

Chair for
Page

Chair for
Page

Piano
Microphone
Music Stand
A/V Rolling Cart

15' to 18' is the suggested distance from head table to 1st row of PSPs

Past State Presidents**					
Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair

Past State Presidents**					
Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair

Delegates					
Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair

Committee Chairmen					
Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair

Delegates					
Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair	Chair

Delegates					
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Guards Chair*
Guards Chair*

Tellers Baskets

*Chairs for guards by all exterior doors.
 **If more than 12 PSPs, reassign delegates accordingly.