

# Government Relations Guidelines and Procedures

## Guidance Document

*Approved December 1992; Amended November 2018*



## Issue Identification and Prioritization

Each year the Government Relations (GR) Department shall provide AIHA members with the opportunity to identify the top public policy issues that may be of interest to the Association and the profession.

The GR Department will use the most efficient means to survey the membership. This may involve the mailing of surveys, emailing of surveys, or online surveys.

After soliciting member input on the top public policy issues for the Association, the results of the survey shall be forwarded to the AIHA Board of Directors. After receiving the results of the public policy issues survey, a subgroup of the Board, or other entity charged by them, shall be convened to develop a report that contains rank ordered recommendations on what the top public policy priorities should be for the coming calendar year. This report shall be presented to the Board for consideration and approval. Following approval, the membership and other interested parties shall be notified of the Association's public policy priorities for the coming year via press releases, articles, email, or online through AIHA's website.

The purpose of Position Statements, White Papers, Fact Sheets, and Reference/Guidance Documents is to educate public policymakers, AIHA members, other OEHS professionals, and the general public on the Association's views regarding issues AIHA considers important.

As a professional organization, AIHA promotes its profession, workforce health, and community health through the lens of the Association's Mission, Values, and sound, scientific principles.

The following criteria shall be used for evaluating the development, review and approval. Documents should:

1. Support and promote AIHA's mission, goals, values and content priorities.
2. Enhance and promote outreach, training, and education about the industrial hygiene profession to the workforce, public, and government officials of every kind.

3. Professionally articulate and provide sound scientific basis for advancing or sustaining effective workforce and community health initiatives and programs to truly protect human health against adverse safety, environmental and occupational health-related issues.
4. Support a common understanding and acceptance of industrial hygiene principles, and the use of sound scientific rationale that is reflective of the frame tying together the Association's diverse membership of private sector, government, and non-governmental (e.g., nonprofit and academic) entities.
5. Support AIHA members and partner organizations through education, training, certification, registries, and consensus standards development aimed at advancing the profession's value to the workforce and to communities in an ever-changing world, while promoting effective knowledge, critical thinking and technical competency to the IH profession to significantly develop safe and healthy working conditions and communities impacting human health.

The GR Department shall monitor activity in Congress, the Executive Branch, Federal Agencies such as OSHA, NIOSH, EPA and others as relevant, and the States to determine issues that may have a direct impact on the Association and the profession.

When AIHA's Director of Government Relations (Director) becomes aware of a proposed rule, opportunity to join a coalition, comment on legislation, or other similar issue, the following process shall be initiated:

- 1) Director sets up a Survey Monkey poll to see if AIHA should submit comments, and if so, what, specifically those comments should address. Director sends the poll to all volunteer group (VG) Officers through Catalyst – AIHA's closed online social media platform. If this is a State issue, the LS Officers are also contacted through Catalyst.
- 2) When a simple majority of poll respondents indicate that comments should be submitted, or in the Director's judgement such comments are warranted, and no opposition is voiced, then the Director drafts comments.

- 3) Draft comments are circulated to AIHA senior staff for review.
- 4) Staff edits are incorporated into a new draft, which is circulated to all VG Officers (and Local Section (LS) Officers as appropriate) for review and edits via Catalyst.
- 5) Edits are incorporated into the draft comments and a second round of feedback is sought from VG Officers (and LS Officers as appropriate), time-permitting.
- 6) Edits are incorporated into a near-final draft, which is sent to the AIHA President for a final round of edits and approval.
- 7) Any edits from the President are incorporated into a final version, which the Director then submits to the governmental entity, posts on AIHA's website and includes in AIHA's Weekly State and Federal Government Relations Update.

## Testimony

There will be requests to AIHA to provide elected officials (or appointed officials when of a regulatory nature) with either a written statement for the record or in-person testimony.

When a request is received to provide a statement for the record, this statement shall be developed by the appropriate AIHA committee, task force, or other appropriate individual in close consultation with GR and any others deemed appropriate by the President. The statement shall be forwarded to the Board for approval. If time constraints prevent contacting the full Board, the Executive Committee shall review the statement(s) and give final approval. If time constraints require immediate approval, the President has the authority to approve.

When a request is received to provide in-person testimony on any issue, the President shall decide the Association's spokesperson. Whenever possible the individual chosen to represent the Association will have knowledge of the issue at hand. This individual is likely to have been involved in the issue for several years. Circumstances may warrant the

President delivering the testimony with the technical person present to address detailed technical questions.

Written testimony should be based on the approved Position Statement, White Paper and other related Board-approved documents for the subject. It should be developed and compiled solely between the GR and the individual presenting it. This affords the opportunity to structure the testimony to the presenter's style. STI will be consulted on any matter of a technical nature.

Testimony shall be forwarded to the Board for prior approval. If time constraints prevent contacting the Board, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to approve such testimony. If time constraints require immediate approval, the President has the authority to approve.

In all circumstances, the Board will receive a copy of all statements for the record, comments on regulatory activity, and testimony.

## Notification to the Membership

The GR Department will use the *Synergist* and other available means to alert the membership on issues of importance. In the next available issue of the *Synergist*, a summary of a Position Statement and/or White Paper will be printed. This shall be done working in close consultation with communications and member services and others. Together, they will utilize the most efficient system for notifying the membership.

GR shall create an "update" periodically to inform the Board and Local Sections, committee Chairs and other interested individuals of activity taking place.

## Task Forces

The number of issues requiring input from AIHA continues to grow. To assist the Association in meeting deadlines in response to many issues, task forces may be if warranted to recommend and/or develop positions for the Association.

## Political Action Committees

AIHA has never established a Political Action Committee (PAC) for Federal or State elections. AIHA requires that Local Sections not establish federal PACs. AIHA Local Sections wishing to create a PAC to influence State elections are advised to consult legal counsel to determine their legality under appropriate state law. Formation of such a State PAC must be independent of the Local Section to avoid any conflict of interest, either financially or professionally, and assure that PAC funds are accounted for in a strictly separate manner.

## Applicability

Nothing in the guidelines and procedures herein adopted by the Board is intended to alleviate the responsibility of the GR Department to take all steps to include other departments in consultation on specific issues if the need arises. These guidelines and procedures are intended only to pertain to those issues involving GR. The Board recognizes that several technical committees will be called upon to provide Position Statements, White Papers and other such documents which are not related to GR. In such cases, the Scientific & Technical Initiatives or other pertinent departments within AIHA shall have jurisdiction.

## Conflicts of Interest

All active volunteers of an AIHA committee, working group, task force, or other such entity are required to adhere to AIHA's Conflict of Interest Policy.