

Assembly

Action Paper Author - Checklist (APA-C)

At first glance, this checklist appears to be a lot of work and might seem overwhelming, especially to someone who is new to the Assembly. However, it is designed to help you work efficiently, and thus, results in less effort and time to produce a clear, forceful, meaningful action paper. It also lessens the chance that your work will be in vain.

1. By being comprehensive with necessary detailed information, the APA-C facilitates your work.
2. Well-written and adequately researched action papers usually have a better chance of being approved.
3. There have been instances when an action paper has been approved by the Assembly but the Joint Reference Committee (JRC) closed the matter because what was being recommended by the action paper was already being done by our APA. Hence, the APA-C takes you through Step 1 to Step 3 to determine if there is a need for an action paper.
4. The APA-C employs hyperlinks so you can easily go directly to the information that you need on the APA Website.
5. The APA-C is sequential. You go to the next step only if instructed to do so.
6. For some Steps, you have a choice of what to do. Therefore, you do not have to do all of the items in the Step.

What is an Action Paper?

An action paper is a recommendation for our APA to take a specific action or actions (“Resolve”) with justifications for why this action or these actions should be taken (a “Whereas” list), the estimated cost of implementing the recommendation and who supports the recommendation (“Authors,” “Sponsors” and “Endorsements”). When the Assembly votes and passes an action paper, the action paper belongs to the Assembly and the Assembly is making the recommendation.

An action paper starts with an idea, for example, a solution for a problem, a correction of a disparity, a remedy for a gap in health care, a better procedure for conducting APA business or Assembly business, etc. If you develop your idea into an action paper, your idea will be the “Resolve” of your action paper.

You have a great idea but should our APA take action on your idea? Is there data that supports your idea? Does your idea benefit APA members? Does your idea help to achieve any of our APA’s strategic goals? Perhaps, our APA is already doing what you would be recommending. Why reinvent the wheel? Does your idea have to advance via an action paper or should you use other routes within our APA to have your idea considered, and perhaps, implemented? How does your idea relate to our APA Bylaws, and/or policy and procedures? What are the legal implications of your idea?

Steps 1 to 3 help you to determine the need for our APA to consider your idea. During these three steps, you will gather preliminary data that justifies your idea. Without the need for our APA to act on your idea and sufficient justification to support your idea, you would stop after completing Step 3.

This saves you the time and effort of doing the work of Steps 4 to 11. If your idea passes muster, you move on to **Steps 4**. If the Assembly passes the action paper, you advance to **Step 12**.



Step 1 – Testing Your Idea


To Do: Write down your idea and gather some preliminary data in order to determine whether the data justifies your idea.

Your Idea:			
To Do: 1 Through 6	Check		Check
1. Gather preliminary data.		4. Decide your idea has sufficient interest and support.	
2. Determine that the data supports your idea.		5. Determine that your idea helps achieve one or more of our APA strategic priorities. Go to: Strategic Priorities	
3. Talk with APA members.		6. Seek and receive mentoring as needed.	
Step 1 Completed		Check Here & Go Step 2.	

Step 2 – Not Reinventing the Wheel

To Do: Check if your idea has been implemented or is in the process of being implemented at our APA.

Resources	Check
A. Position Statements: “Position statements, developed and adopted through a well-defined process, provide the basis for statements made on behalf of the APA before government bodies and agencies and communicated to the media and the general public”. (<i>APA Operations Manual</i> Chapter 3 B.3.a page 22)]	
Go to Policy Finder If a Position Statement exists on your idea, check here and stop here . If a Position Statement does not exist on your idea, check here and proceed to B .	
B. Action Item Tracking System (AITS) (Items in process)	
Go to AITS If your idea is already in process , check here and stop here . If your idea is not in process , check here and proceed to C .	
C. Components	
Go to Councils for their descriptions and roster of members. To Do: 1. Determine which Council is or which Councils are pertinent to your idea. 2. Consult with the Assembly Liaison member of each Council that is pertinent to your idea. Go to Member Directory to contact the Assembly Liaison member(s) via email. If a Council is already working on your idea, check here and stop here . If a Council is not working on your idea, check here and proceed to D .	
D. Administrative Staff When you do your homework, the APA Staff is happy and willing to guide you, and provide advise and information.	



<p>Go to Administration Directory to determine the staff person or persons who would be involved in commenting on and implementing your idea</p> <p>Contact Allison Moraske, Associate Director, Assembly, Association Governance Department, if you have a question, need guidance or need to learn who is the appropriate staff person or persons who would be involved in commenting on and implementing your idea.</p>	
Step 2 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 3. 

Step 3 – Knowing How Things Work

To Do: A. If your idea pertains to the APA Bylaws or policies and procedures, determine what the governance documents contain that is pertain to your idea B. If your idea does not pertain to the APA Bylaws or policy and procedures, learn what Bylaws or policies and procedures and/or code of parliamentary process are related to the process of your Action Paper being approved. C. Consult with our General Counsel when necessary about any possible legal issues related to your action paper. D. Consult with your Assembly officers when you have questions about procedure.


Tip: A Kindle version of the *American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Process* is available for purchase via the Internet.

Resources	Check Those That Apply
Bylaws and Operations Manual / Go to Organization Documents	
Assembly Procedure Code / Go to Assembly	
General Counsel: Contact Colleen Coyle, JD	

Status of Your Idea	Yes	No
Is it in the APA governance documents?		
Is it already implemented as an APA position statement?		
Is it already implemented as an APA action or program?		
Is it in process?		
<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If any are Yes, then STOP here! You have done your due diligence. THANKS!</p> <p>If any are Yes and you proceed with writing an action paper and submit it, the Administrative Staff will review your Action Paper to determine whether your Action Paper is a re-statement or reaffirmation of what is in existence in our APA. If it is such a statement, the Rules Committee will place your action paper on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar. The Administrative Staff will add documentation on the action paper that describes what is in existence and explains how the “resolve” of the action paper is redundant.</p> <p><u>What is Reaffirmation?</u> Answer: The Assembly approves (reaffirms) by consent what already exists.</p> <p>If all four are NO or your idea would be a <u>revision, change or improvement of what exists</u>, then:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">to Step 4</p>		


Step 4 – Writing an Action Paper

To Do: As a single author or in collaboration with other authors, write a draft action paper.

Action Paper Resources	
Writing a Successful Action Paper	
Blueprint for a Patient-Oriented Action Paper	
Action Paper Format and Instructions	
Action Paper Template	
Sample Action Paper	
Go to Action Paper Central	
Your draft is done – Step 4 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 5. 

Step 5 – Seeking and Listening to Comments / Making Revisions / Acquiring Sponsors


To Do: Place the draft of your Action Paper with the cost estimate on the Assembly listserv and ask for comments and sponsors.

Stakeholders	Check Those That Apply
Assembly Members – Go to: Assembly Listserv	
Pertinent Council – To Do: Email the draft AP with the cost estimate to the Assembly Liaison member or members of the pertinent Council or Councils and ask for their comments.	
Any APA Member To Do: Email the draft AP with the cost estimate to each member from whom you are seeking sponsorship and discuss the action paper with these APA members.	
To Do: List your co-authors and confirmed sponsors on your action paper.	
Policy: The Primary Author, who is listed first, <u>must</u> be a member of the Assembly. / Sponsors and Secondary Authors may be any APA Member. / A Sponsor is any APA member who supports the Action Paper but did not contribute to writing it. / Individuals, who are not APA members, cannot participate in Assembly business, and thus, cannot be authors or sponsors.	
Format: First Name, Second Name, Degree, APA Fellowship, Position Examples: Jane Doe, MD, FAPA, Rep, _____ District Branch John Doe, DO, Area ___ RFM Rep John A. Doe, DO, DFAPA, Rep, MU/R, _____ Caucus Jane A Doe, MD, MPH, APA Member	
Step 6 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 7. 

Step 6 – Getting Endorsements

To Do: 1. Choose which entity or entities you want to ask to consider your action paper for endorsement. 2. Arrange to have your action paper considered.

Entities Authorized by the Assembly Procedure Code to Endorse Action Papers		Check *
Entity	Arrange with:	
<i>Within the Assembly</i>		

Your Area Council	Your Area Representative	
Other Area Councils	The Area Representative of the Other Area	
Assembly Committee on Early Career Psychiatrist Representatives	Chair of the Committee	
Assembly Committee of Representatives of Subspecialties and Sections	Chair of ACROSS	
Assembly Committee on Resident-Fellow Members Representatives	Chair of ACORF	
Minority/Underrepresented Groups (Caucuses) of Members	Representative of specific caucus	
<i>Outside the Assembly</i>		
District Branches (DB)	DB Representatives	
State Associations (SA)	Area 2 Rep (New York State Assn.) Area 6 Rep (California State Assn.)	
To Do: List any entity that has endorsed your action paper and the date that the entity endorsed your action paper. Note: You do not list any entities that voted on endorsement and did not approve endorsing your action paper.]		
Step 6 Completed		Check Here & Go to Step 8. 


(*) Check those that you have chosen and have arranged to review you action paper.

Step 7 – Submitting the Final Version of Your Action Paper

To Do: Email your action paper as a Word document to actionpaper@psych.org before the action paper submission deadline prior to the next Assembly.

What will happen to your Action Paper after submission?

1. You will receive a Cost Estimate of implementing the “Resolve” of your action paper [See Step 8.]
2. The pertinent APA component or Administration staff will comment in writing. This will be added to your action paper.
3. The Assembly Rules Committee will review your action paper. [See Step 9.]
 - A. If the Rules Committee decides that the resolve of your action paper is recommending something that already exists in our APA, the Rules Committee will place your action paper on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar.
 - B. The Rules Committee will assign your action paper to one of the reference committees, whether it is or is not placed on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar.

	Check
Step 7 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 8. 


Step 8 - Implementing Your Idea Has a Cost

Note: Authors do not do a cost estimate. The Administration Staff does a cost estimate.

To Do: 1. After you receive the cost estimate, review it, and if you have any questions or you question the cost estimate, contact Allison Moraske, who can direct you to the Administrative Staff, who did


the cost estimate. 3. Consult with this Administrative Staff and ask for a clarification and/or the justification of the cost estimate, as needed. 4. Once you are satisfied with the cost estimate or have no data that would challenge it, accept the cost estimate that has been added to your action paper. Another option would be for you and any co-authors to revise the resolve in such a way that the cost of APA’s taking action on the revised resolve will cost less than implementing the original resolve. Consult with pertinent Administration Staff about this option to determine how much implementing the revised recommendation (resolve) would cost in order to determine if it would cost less and how much less it would be.

Note: It would be unlikely that you would have data that would challenge the cost estimate done by the Administration Staff because the Administration Staff has the necessary data and formulas regarding the cost, including the necessary human resources and time required, for carrying out an action, creating a resource document, doing a project, establishing a workgroup or component, implementing a program, producing a position statement, and/or providing Administration Staff support.

	Check
Step 8 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 9. 

Step 9 – The Rules Committee Has Decided that Your Action Paper’s Resolve Is a Reaffirmation

Your action paper will be on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar, which will be on the agenda near the beginning of the first plenary. Prior to the Assembly, the Rules Committee assigned the action papers on the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar to the various reference committees. At the first plenary, any Assembly member can ask for an action paper to be removed from the Reaffirmation Consent Calendar, and thus, the action paper is removed. The Reference Committee, to which the removed action paper has been assigned, will consider the action paper.

	Check
Step 9 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 10. 

Step 10 – Working with Reference Committees

What is a reference committee? Answer: Go to: Assembly Fast Facts – Top Ten FAQs – Reference Committees (see [Action Paper Resources](#))

Pre-Assembly

To Do: If the Chairperson of the Reference Committee, which is considering your action paper, contacts you, cooperate with the Chairperson.

At the Assembly: A Hearing for Your Action Paper

To Do: 1. Attend the open hearing session of the Reference Committee that is considering your action paper and speak in support of your action paper. 2. Write what you will say in support of your action paper and submit it to the APA staff person assigned to the reference committee before you testify.

Note: Your allotted time will be two minutes. Others *, who are not members of the reference committee, may testify in support of or in opposition to your action paper. Each will have two minutes to testify. Members of the reference committee might ask questions of those who are testifying but there is no debate. [* Assembly members, Administrative Staff, BOT members, Members of APA Components]

Tip: If you have authored more than one action paper, they might be assigned to different reference committees. Be prepared for this and arrange for co-authors or sponsors, who are Assembly members, to present your other action paper or action papers at the other reference committee or reference committees, while you present one of your action papers at one of the reference committees.

What will a reference committee do with your action paper?

Each reference committee will:


- A. take ownership of your action paper and it will no longer be yours.
- B. hold an open hearing and conduct a closed deliberation.
- C. go into closed session and deliberate on the action paper – either deciding to support the action paper, not support it or support it with changes, which the reference committee writes. Therefore, reference committee will recommend that the Assembly either adopts, not adopt or amend the action paper as changed by the reference committee.
- D. write a Reference Committee Consent Report – containing: 1. its recommendation – support, not support or support with changes – for each action paper it has considered and its explanation for each recommendation, and 2. its recommendation of where the action paper should be referred if it is passed by the Assembly.

Note: Most action papers are referred to the Joint Reference Committee (JRC). Action Papers that have resolves that are within the scope of the Assembly are referred to the Assembly Executive Committee (AEC). A reference committee could recommend an action paper be referred directly to the Board of Trustees (BOT) as per the Assembly Procedure Code and give justification in its Reference Committee Consent Calendar Report for this recommendation. The Assembly would need to approve the Reference Committee Consent Report that has this recommendation in order for the specific action paper to go directly to the BOT. If this specific action paper is removed from the respective Reference Committee Consent Calendar Report, then the Reference Committee's recommendation to send it directly to the BOT would be subject to debate.

- D. present its Reference Committee Consent Report to the Assembly at a plenary

Note: The Reference Committee Consent Reports shall be available to all the Assembly members the evening before the plenary in which they are scheduled to be presented. The Area

Councils and Assembly groups will have an opportunity to discuss the reports before the plenary.

	Check
Step 10 Completed	Check Here & Go to Step 11. 

Step 11 – Reference Committee Consent Reports at the Plenaries

The Presiding Officer will accept each Reference Committee Consent Report in succession and ask if any Assembly member wishes to remove any action paper from the respective Reference Committee Consent Report. When an Assembly member asks for an item to be removed from a Reference Committee Consent Report, it is removed. Then the Assembly will vote to accept the respective Reference Committee Consent Report, either with no action papers having been removed or with the remaining action papers, if any action paper or action papers have been removed. Therefore, by voting to approve a Reference Committee Consent Report, the Assembly is approving the respective Reference Committee’s recommendation – support, not support, support with changes – for each action paper that has not been removed.


Any action paper, which is removed from any Reference Committee Consent Report, is subject to debate at the plenary. You and other Assembly members, including your co-authors and action paper sponsors who are Assembly members, can be recognized by the Presiding Officer of the Assembly and speak in support of the action paper. Other Assembly members can be recognized by the Presiding Officer and speak in favor of or in opposition to the action paper. Motions to amend the resolve of the action paper can be made during this debate.

Tips:

1. If a reference committee supports your action paper as it was written, do not ask to remove it from the respective Reference Committee Consent Report.

However, another Assembly member might remove the action paper, which you have written, from the Reference Committee Consent Report if that member disagrees with the Reference Committee’s recommendation.

2. If a reference committee does not support the action paper, you need to decide if you want to ask for it to be taken off its Reference Committee Consent Report, as a strategy in order to have the Assembly debate and pass it, even though the reference committee had recommended to the Assembly that the Assembly should not pass the action paper.
3. If a reference committee supports the action paper with changes, you need to decide if you want to ask for it to be taken off its Reference Committee Consent Report, as a strategy in order to make a motion to amend the resolve statement of the submitted action paper in order to have the Assembly pass that resolve instead of the one recommended by the reference committee.

	Check
Step 11 Completed	
Check Here	If the Assembly passes the Action Paper, Go to Step 12. 

Step 12 –Tracking the Approved Action Paper and Consulting

Although an approved action paper belongs to the Assembly and is no longer your action paper, you may track its progress and be involved in this process. You are the expert on the action paper. You researched the issue, wrote the action paper and know the justifications (whereas list) for what the action paper recommends (resolve).


To Do: Talk with the Assembly members who will be explaining the action paper to the body to which it has been referred. You will be helping them to know the action paper.

Referred To	Consult With	Check One That Applies
JRC	Immediate Past Speaker, Speaker-Elect and Recorder	
AEC	Your Representative(s) on the AEC	
BOT	Speaker and Speaker-Elect	

The JRC will usually refer action papers to the pertinent component or components (most likely an APA Council or APA Councils) and/or the Administration for them to study, discuss and work on the “resolve” of the action papers and report back with recommendations to the JRC. The Recorder will inform the primary authors via email about the JRC’s disposition of action papers.

To Do: Talk with the pertinent person about the action paper based on where the JRC referred the action paper.

Referred To	Consult With	Check All that Apply
Administration	CEO and Medical Director	
Council or Councils	Assembly Liaison of each council to which it was referred.	
Standing Committee	Chairperson of the Standing Committee or Standing Committees to which it was referred.	

Step 12 Completed	Check Here. 
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Even if the Assembly did not pass your action paper, you have taken action in the arena.

"It is not the critic who counts. ... The credit belongs to the [person] who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by the dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly ... who, at worst, if [one] fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that [their] place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat." – President Theodore Roosevelt