



**Oncology Nursing  
Society**

# **Chapter Policy and Operations Manual**

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# Introduction

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Welcome to your leadership role within the **Oncology Nursing Society (ONS)** chapter. This manual provides the official guidance for managing local chapter operations, including roles, policies, and requirements to maintain an active charter.

Each board member must review this manual upon taking office and periodically throughout their term. It includes responsibilities, best practices, and compliance standards for maintaining chapter status.

For assistance, contact **ONS Chapter Relations staff** at [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org).

# Chapter Requirements

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Each ONS chapter must meet the following minimum criteria annually to remain in good standing and renew its charter:

- Host at least six [member events or engagement opportunities](#) open to all members.
- Achieve four [success metrics](#) across four distinct categories (including mandatory ones set by the ONS Board of Directors each year).
- Submit all four [Quarterly President Reports](#) and [Quarterly Treasurer Reports](#) by their respective deadlines.
- Maintain a minimum board of [five elected members](#), including a President, Treasurer, and three additional roles based on chapter needs. Additional roles beyond the required five may be elected or appointed at the chapter's discretion.
- Pay the annual [charter renewal fee](#) by the April 30 deadline.

**Note:** New chapters (since 2018) must have at least 100 members to be chartered. Existing smaller chapters remain active if all other criteria are met.

Chapters failing to meet requirements will be reviewed by the ONS Board of Directors, which may assign probationary status or disbandment.

## Member Engagement Opportunities

A member engagement opportunity includes any open event (in-person or virtual) such as:

- Educational programs
- Journal clubs
- Networking
- Social gatherings

Events restricted by industry sponsorship **do not** count toward the six required opportunities.

## Success Metrics

Success metrics ensure alignment with ONS's mission and cover the following categories:

- Member recruitment
- Donating to the Oncology Nursing Foundation
- Community outreach
- Educational opportunities
- Volunteerism
- ONCC certification connection

Chapters must meet **four metrics from four unique categories** annually, including metrics from any mandatory categories. Metrics and categories are reviewed annually and may be updated at the discretion of the ONS Board.

## Chapter Reporting

All reports are submitted via ONS online forms. Failure to meet deadlines may result in probation or chapter disbandment. Chapters must submit the following each year:

- Quarterly President Reports:
  - April 30 (Q1)
  - July 31 (Q2)
  - October 31 (Q3) (includes chapter election results)
  - January 31 (Q4) (includes success metric selection for the upcoming year)
- Quarterly Treasurer Reports:
  - April 30 (Q1) (includes chapter renewal fee)
  - July 31 (Q2)
  - October 31 (Q3)
  - January 31 (Q4)

## Chapter Renewal Fee

The renewal fee supports insurance, hosting, and education. Fees are based on chapter size, and ONS will send annual invoices to the mailing address provided for the chapter treasurer.

Chapter Size	Renewal Fee Amount
Small (Less than 50 members)	\$550
Medium (50-99 members)	\$650
Large (100-199 members)	\$750
Extra Large (200-399 members)	\$850
Mega (400+ members)	\$950

Payments are due **April 30** each year and can be submitted via the following methods:

- **Direct bank transfer:** ONS's account and routing number for electronic payment are listed on your chapter's invoice.
- **Check:** Please mail all checks to:  
 Oncology Nursing Society  
 PO Box 3510  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15230-3510

## Composition of the Chapter Board

Each chapter board must have at least **five elected members**, including:

- President
- Treasurer
- Three additional elected roles

Additional roles may be appointed or elected as needed.

Membership of the chapter board of directors is based on the qualifications found in the ONS bylaws and determined by the chapter's standing rules. Although appointed board members are welcome, **only those elected by the chapter membership may be voting members** of the board of directors.

**Setting term lengths:** Each chapter board must define the term lengths for all elected or appointed board roles in its bylaws.

**Standard term lengths:**

- Most board positions may have terms of up to three years.
- The president and treasurer may serve no more than two years in their roles, unless the chapter bylaws only allow one-year terms.

**Maximum consecutive service:**

- A board member who is re-elected may serve one additional consecutive term, for a total of up to six consecutive years on the board.
- The president and treasurer's two-year limit counts toward this six-year maximum.

**Required break after maximum service:** Anyone who reaches six consecutive years of board service must either take a break from board service or serve in a non-voting appointed role for a minimum of one calendar year.

If agreed upon by the majority of the chapter board, board members may serve in a virtual capacity if they are not located physically within their chapter's territory.

## Operations Guidelines

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### Chapter Standing Rules

Standing rules define the chapter's structure, board terms, and governance. Chapters should review these annually or whenever there is a change to the standing rules. A chapter standing rules template can be found [here](#). Any updates to a chapter's standing rules should be submitted promptly to [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org).

### Code of Conduct

All board members must:

- Act in the best interests of the chapter, avoiding situations in which personal or professional interests could compromise volunteer duties.
- Act with integrity and uphold ONS's mission and vision.
- Foster respect, inclusion, and professionalism.
- Maintain transparency, accountability, and confidentiality.
- Participate development and training to effectively support the chapter.

## Board Member Responsibilities

All chapter board members, whether elected or appointed, must:

- Understand the mission and vision of ONS.
- Understand the relationship between ONS and the chapter.
- Contribute to the development of the chapter goals and objectives.
- Implement policies and procedures established by the chapter board of directors.
- Direct the implementation and evaluation of success metrics to ensure that chapter goals are achieved, policies and procedures of the chapter and ONS are followed, and the needs of the chapter membership are met.
- Develop, approve, and monitor an annual chapter budget.
- Complete any required reporting.
- Contribute to the development of the chapter board of directors and general membership meeting and event agendas.
- Attend all meetings and events of the chapter board of directors and the general chapter membership.
- Participate and contribute to a successful transition meeting between outgoing and incoming members of the chapter board of directors and standing committee chairs (if applicable).
- Recognize the professional achievements of chapter members.
- Maintain effective lines of communication among chapter members, the chapter board of directors, and the chapter relations staff at ONS.

## Elections

Elections are conducted annually (for a January–December term) via mail or electronic ballot. Results must be documented in the **Q3 President Report**. All ballots must be approved by a majority vote of the chapter board of directors before distribution to the membership. All completed ballots must be returned to the chapter board or nominating committee (if applicable) for tally. Refer to the [Chapter Elections Handbook](#) for more detailed information.

## Vacancies

If the **President** resigns, the **President-Elect** or designated member assumes the role. Other vacancies are filled by board appointment.

## Position Descriptions for Additional Elected or Appointed Roles

Sample position descriptions for all roles can be found in the [Chapter Elections Handbook](#). When crafting additional position descriptions, they should include:

- Position criteria
- A list of responsibilities
- An estimated time commitment and term limits for the position (e.g., presidential term is no more than two years).

The nominating committee and board of directors should review the responsibilities annually and revise them based on the growth of the chapter and the roles of the positions. All new or revised position descriptions should be submitted to the chapter board for final approval.

## Board Meeting Guidelines

- Meetings must be held at least quarterly.
- Meetings must be scheduled at the start of each term.
- Quorum is required if voting on official chapter business.
- Emergency meetings are scheduled as deemed necessary by the president or a majority vote of the board of directors.
- The president should notify the members of the board of directors of the date, time, and location of meetings at least two weeks in advance.
- An agenda, minutes from the previous board meeting, and committee reports should be shared with members of the board of directors at least two weeks prior to each meeting date.
- The president presides at all meetings of the board of directors.
- In the absence of the president, the president-elect or vice president will preside.
- In the absence of the president-elect or vice president, the treasurer will preside.
- A quorum of elected members of the board of directors, as defined in the chapter's [standing rules](#), is required to conduct business.
- Each elected officer of the chapter's board of directors present at a meeting is entitled to one vote. All motions must be passed by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting.

## Succession Planning

Chapters should plan leadership transitions proactively to maintain continuity and train new leaders through mentoring and transparent elections. See the [Chapter Election Handbook](#) for more information on election logistics.

## Training and Development

ONS provides leadership training, webinars, and governance education. Board members may be encouraged or required to participate in training opportunities, as needed. Training opportunities will be communicated to the appropriate board positions via email and will also be posted on the [Chapter Leaders Community](#).

## Chapter Policies

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### Contracts

Routine event contracts (e.g., hotel and restaurant events) may be signed without notifying ONS if the contract clearly states it is between the **chapter and the venue**. The full ONS chapter name must be used at all times in contracts. It is the chapter's responsibility to ensure that its contracts comply with these policies.

Contracts requiring ONS approval must be sent for review prior to entering or signing any contracts. This may include contracts for staffing support, office space, website hosting, and other similar services. Forward such contracts to ONS staff at [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org).

### Alcohol

All alcohol service must be handled by venue staff. No board member may serve alcohol.

### Disclaimers

All chapter materials must include an approved disclaimer statement. Approval for the use of the disclaimer statement must be obtained from [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org).

### Antitrust

Chapter presidents must sign an **antitrust statement** annually. This statement is included in the Quarterly President Report. No individual may represent ONS publicly without prior approval. Any communications that may raise antitrust issues, including but not limited to the potential sharing of competitively sensitive information, should be reviewed by ONS legal counsel. Contact [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org) for assistance.

## Fundraising

Chapters may raise funds for their chapter operations in the geographic area designated in their standing rules. All fundraising items must contain the national ONS logo. To comply with federal fundraising regulations, the following statement must be displayed prominently:

**“Contributions or gifts to the Oncology Nursing Society are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.”**

If fundraising for the Oncology Nursing Foundation, please refer to the [Foundation Fundraiser Toolkit](#) for additional considerations. As a reminder, donating chapter funds to other nonprofits that are not related directly to oncology nursing is not permissible, per the policies of the Internal Revenue Service.

## Social Media

ONS encourages its chapters to use social media to promote chapter activities. Social media can be a powerful tool to reach current and new members, increase chapter visibility, and promote ONS’s mission. ONS has developed this policy for chapters to follow when using social media:

- **Be polite and courteous.** Chapters should be respectful when interacting with others on social media. Chapters should refrain from name-calling, profanity, threats, harassing or discriminatory language, bullying, or similar conduct. Anything that is inappropriate in real life is inappropriate on social media.
- **Be smart.** Chapters should ensure that all social media activity serves the mission of ONS and relates to the chapter’s activities. Chapters should not use social media in any way that would poorly reflect ONS, the chapter, or ONS members.
- **Represent the chapter.** When an ONS chapter uses social media, that chapter represents itself, not ONS. Chapters must adhere to all ONS chapter policies while using social media sites and must always act with credibility and integrity. Chapters should not use the ONS name or logo without ONS’s prior approval.
- **Verify content and sources.** Chapters should verify that informational posts are based in facts and come from reliable sources.

- **Be mindful.** Certain topics are ripe for problems on social media. Do not express personal opinions on political topics or similar matters.
- **Respect confidentiality and privacy.** Chapters must not disclose any ONS or ONS chapter confidential or proprietary information, trade secrets, or any other material covered in chapter policies. Chapters should respect the privacy of individuals and avoid sharing personal or private information.
- **Keep accounts secure.** Chapters are responsible for securing their social media accounts and ensuring that use of the chapter account has been authorized by the chapter.
- **Respect the law.** Chapters assume all risks and liability arising from their use of social media. Chapters should have the consent of any person before posting a picture or video of that person. Chapters should comply with all applicable laws, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks. Chapters should also comply with the terms and conditions for each social media platform that they use. ONS will not be responsible if a chapter violates any law or any terms and conditions of a social media platform.
- **Respond accordingly.** ONS may monitor chapter social media activity, but the chapters themselves are in the best position to ensure compliance with this policy and effective use of social media. Chapters should use their judgement to determine whether a social media post violates this policy and should be removed or deleted.
- **Follow this policy.** While chapters represent themselves—not ONS—on social media, ONS may ask chapters to remove or delete posts if ONS believes that those posts violate this policy, the law, or any other policy that applies to the chapters. In addition, if a chapter violates this policy, ONS may report the social media account to the applicable platform, direct the chapter to delete certain content or suspend or relinquish its social media account, or exercise any other rights that ONS may have.
- **If in doubt, ask.** Chapters should contact [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org) with any questions about this policy.

## Chapter Websites

ONS will provide each chapter with a dedicated community site; this site has the ability to send messages to chapter members, collect RSVPs and payments for chapter events, and create chapter membership reports. ONS staff will assign administrative permissions to board members for their chapter site upon request. Chapter websites are only to be used for chapter business.

## Logos

Chapters may only use approved ONS chapter logos per [brand guidelines](#). Modification or cobranding is prohibited without written consent.

### Logo ownership:

- The ONS chapter logo is owned by ONS National.
- All goodwill associated with the use of the ONS chapter logo will inure to ONS National.
- ONS National reserves all rights in the ONS chapter logo not expressly provided herein.

### Chapter logo:

- Official chapter-related purposes and only to indicate that the chapter is a chartered chapter of ONS National in good standing.
- The chapter shall use the most current version of the ONS chapter logo, as ONS may update from time to time, including to the extent any intellectual property notices are shown, such as ™ or ©.
- The chapter shall comply with the current brand guidelines issued by ONS National.

### Restrictions:

- The chapter's right to use the ONS chapter logo is revocable, nonexclusive, nontransferable, and nonlicensable.
- The chapter shall not modify the ONS chapter logo, except that the chapter may place the chapter's name or geographic designation immediately adjacent to the ONS chapter logo in plain text, without any additional designs or graphics, and subject to ONS National's brand guidelines.
- The chapter shall not use the ONS chapter logo in conjunction with any other trademark or in any way that is likely to adversely affect ONS National's name, goodwill, or business interests.
- The chapter shall not use the ONS chapter logo in violation of any applicable law or which, in ONS National's view, might mischaracterize the relationship between ONS National and the chapter (including but not limited to mischaracterizing the chapter's status as a separate legal entity), tarnish or disparage the image and goodwill of ONS National, or cause confusion, mistake, or deceive others into believing that ONS National is the origin or sponsor of or certifies the chapter's activities except as authorized by ONS National.
- The chapter shall not take any action inconsistent with ONS National's ownership of the ONS chapter logo.
- The chapter shall not seek to register or claim any rights in the ONS chapter logo or any confusingly similar trademarks or assist or encourage others to do so.

**Indemnification:** The chapter shall defend and indemnify ONS National for any claims, damages, liabilities, and costs and expenses (including reasonable legal fees) incurred by ONS National arising out of or related to the chapter's unauthorized or improper use of the ONS chapter logo or violation of these terms.

**Termination:**

- Upon revocation or relinquishment of the chapter's charter, the chapter shall immediately stop using the ONS chapter logo.
- Upon written notice to the chapter, ONS National may prohibit the chapter from using the ONS chapter logo if ONS National determines, in its sole discretion, that the chapter has violated or may violate these Terms or the Chapter Policy and Operations Manual.

**Quality control:** ONS may, from time to time, request samples of the chapter's use of the ONS chapter logo to evaluate the chapter's compliance with these terms.

Below are examples of ONS Chapter logos that are approved and will be provided to chapters upon request:



## Territory Disputes or Divisions

Chapters should resolve disputes collaboratively; unresolved matters are escalated to the **ONS Board of Directors**.

Chapters may collectively choose to divide into two or more chapters to better serve the membership in an area. A new chapter(s) can be separated from an existing chapter as follows:

- The new group selects its geographic area.

- The existing chapter submits a letter of agreement to the ONS chapter relations staff ([chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org)) that a new chapter would like to be formed from the requested territory within the area. Revising the chapter's standing rules will require redefinition of existing chapter's geographic area.
- Funds from the existing chapter will be proportionally divided between the new groups, based on the territory and membership of the resulting split.

## Conflict of Interest

All Presidents must sign an annual **conflict-of-interest** statement. Potential conflicts should be reported to ONS. This statement is included in the Quarterly President Report.

## Removal of a Board Member

If a board member fails to fulfill their duties or violates the chapter's code of conduct, a formal removal process may be initiated to preserve the integrity and effective operation of the chapter. This process typically begins with an internal review by the chapter board, during which concerns are documented and the member is given an opportunity to address the issues raised. If the situation cannot be resolved amicably, ONS staff must be notified. The board member in question should be given the opportunity to speak to the situation, and, if applicable, the chapter board may vote to remove the member from their position. Any violations should be communicated to ONS staff to ensure transparency and compliance with organizational policies.

## Probationary Status and Disbandment

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ONS wishes to assist chapters in retaining their charter status and will work with chapter leaders who are experiencing difficulties with meeting requirements. Contact ONS staff ([chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org)) to learn more.

### Probationary Status

Chapters failing to meet any of the rechartering requirements will be automatically placed into a probationary status, effective the day after the missed deadline.

- First violation: Chapters will have one month past the deadline to meet any outstanding requirements.

- Second violation: Chapters will have two weeks past the deadline to meet any outstanding requirements.

ONS staff will notify chapters of probationary status and will communicate requirements to become compliant and any relevant deadlines. Subsequently, chapters will be recommended to the board for disbandment as a result of the following:

- Failing to meet requirements by the end of their probationary period
- Entering a probationary status more than twice within a three-year period

ONS staff will notify chapter leaders and the chapter membership once a disbandment has occurred. Chapters who have been disbanded by the ONS Board must close any existing bank accounts (e.g., checking, savings, certificates of deposit) and send remaining chapter funds as a donation to the Oncology Nursing Foundation. Chapter members will be given the option to switch their membership to another ONS chapter.

Chapters who wish to disband must first discuss options with ONS staff by contacting [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org). Staff will work with chapters to determine the best course of action, including recruitment of a new chapter board, merger with neighboring chapters, or, if no alternatives exist, disbandment of the chapter.

## Formation of a New ONS Chapter

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Members wishing to introduce a new ONS chapter should reach out to [chapters@ons.org](mailto:chapters@ons.org) and request a Chapter Charter Application. Before a chapter charter can be granted, newly forming chapters must meet the following requirements:

- Recruit a minimum of **100 chapter members before formal chartering**. A listing of 100 current ONS members must be provided to ONS staff for verification.
- Undergo a two-year probationary period.
- Hold at least six meetings per year during the probationary period.
- Complete four success metrics during the probationary period.
- Hold an election to identify the required five board positions (president, treasurer, and three additional board positions). Each of these positions must be for two-year terms to ensure continuity during start up.
- Submit the Quarterly President Reports each year during probationary period.
- Submit a completed Chapter Charter Application with all supporting documentation.

The ONS Board will consider the request upon the recommendation of ONS staff.

*Revised 3/26.*

