

**United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps**

**Junior Officer Advisory Group**

**General Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**

*Last Updated: September 2016*

## Table of Contents

<b>ARTICLE I</b>	PURPOSE .....	1
<b>ARTICLE II</b>	JOAG COMMITTEES AND MISSION.....	1
<b>ARTICLE III</b>	ORGANIZATION.....	2
<i>Section 1.</i>	Structure.....	2
<i>Section 2.</i>	Size.....	2
<i>Section 3.</i>	Representation.....	2
<b>ARTICLE IV</b>	LEADERSHIP.....	3
<i>Section 1.</i>	JOAG Executive Committee.....	3
<i>Section 2.</i>	JOAG Liaisons.....	3
<i>Section 3.</i>	Committee Leadership.....	3
<i>Section 4.</i>	Committee Chair.....	3
<i>Section 5.</i>	Executive Committee Liaison.....	3
<i>Section 6.</i>	Subcommittee/Workgroup Lead.....	3
<b>ARTICLE V</b>	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROLES .....	4
<i>Section 1.</i>	The JOAG Executive Committee .....	4
<i>Section 2.</i>	Additional Resources .....	4
<b>ARTICLE VI</b>	JOAG VOTING MEMBER AND LIAISON ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES...	5
<i>Section 1.</i>	Voting Members .....	5
<i>Section 2.</i>	JOAG Liaisons.....	5
<b>ARTICLE VII</b>	COMMITTEE ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES .....	6
<i>Section 1.</i>	Committee Chair.....	6
<i>Section 2.</i>	Executive Committee (EC) Liaison.....	7
<i>Section 3.</i>	Committee Secretary.....	7
<i>Section 4.</i>	Subcommittees/Workgroup Lead .....	8
<i>Section 5.</i>	Committee Projects.....	8
<i>Section 6.</i>	Committee Meeting Preparation .....	9
<i>Section 7.</i>	Requesting JOAG EC Review of New Committee Documents .....	10
<i>Section 8.</i>	Annual Review of All Existing Committee Documents.....	11
<i>Section 9.</i>	Review of Committee SOPs .....	11
<i>Section 10.</i>	Requesting JOAG Website Updates .....	11
<i>Section 11.</i>	Keeping the Committee Viable and Productive.....	12

<b>ARTICLE VIII</b>	<b>NEW PARTICIPANT ORIENTATION/MINIMUM STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	Committee Participation .....	13
<b>ARTICLE IX</b>	<b>ABSENTEEISM POLICY .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	Absenteeism Policy.....	14
<i>Section 2.</i>	Inactive Participants.....	14
<i>Section 3.</i>	Notifying Inactive Participants .....	14
<i>Section 4.</i>	Special Considerations.....	15
<b>ARTICLE X</b>	<b>TRANSITIONING.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	Incoming Chair Preparation.....	15
<i>Section 2.</i>	Incoming Chair Expectations.....	15
<i>Section 3.</i>	New Participants .....	16
<i>Section 4.</i>	Outgoing Chair.....	16
<b>ARTICLE XI</b>	<b>RECOGNITION.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	Committee Participants.....	16
<b>ARTICLE XII</b>	<b>GENERAL OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	JOAG Funds.....	17
<i>Section 2.</i>	Conducting Surveys .....	18
<i>Section 3.</i>	Requesting Access to the “Officer Locator Tool” .....	19
<b>ARTICLE XIII</b>	<b>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Section 1.</i>	Updates to the JOAG General SOP .....	20
<i>Section 2.</i>	JOAG General SOP Review .....	20
<i>Section 3.</i>	Approval .....	20
<i>Section 4.</i>	Minor Changes.....	20
<b>APPENDIX 1:</b>	<b>Glossary of Terms.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2:</b>	<b>JOAG Funding Request Form (FRF).....</b>	<b>22</b>

**UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED CORPS**  
**JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP**  
**GENERAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

**ARTICLE I**

PURPOSE

The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) General Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) provides internal guidance for the operations and procedures of all JOAG committees and workgroups. This SOP provides guidance on matters not addressed by the JOAG Charter or the JOAG Bylaws.

**ARTICLE II**

JOAG COMMITTEES AND MISSION

The JOAG has the following standing committees with respective missions:

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Executive                       | To serve the general JOAG membership in the execution of the JOAG vision, mission, and objectives.  |
| Awards                          | To facilitate the awards process and recognize junior officers for their accomplishments and commitment to the mission of the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS).   |
| Communications and Publications | To facilitate the dissemination of USPHS-related information to junior officers.  |
| Membership                      | To facilitate the annual selection of JOAG Voting Members through the nomination and appointment processes outlined in <b>Article VI of the JOAG Bylaws</b> and to increase the general membership of JOAG.   |
| Outreach                        | To connect and recruit newly commissioned junior officers to the activities of JOAG and to unite and connect current junior officers to JOAG through JOAG-sponsored activities at major events including the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. |
| Policy and Procedures           | To establish and update guidance documents and operating procedures governing JOAG.   |

Professional Development	To identify issues, provide advice and guidance, and propose solutions to foster and promote junior officers as professional, proud, and principled USPHS officers.
Public Health and Community Service	To enhance health and wellness of junior officers in the USPHS and their communities by providing information and tools that promote health and wellness, and by implementing and supporting community service activities that will promote public health, enhance the visibility of USPHS, and interact with other uniformed services.
Readiness and Deployment Workgroup	To promote officer fitness and readiness and provide opportunities to increase deployment-related knowledge, expertise, and training.
Recruitment and Retention	To recruit and retain junior officers in the USPHS.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **ORGANIZATION**

***Section 1.***     Structure

The broadest possible committee guidelines are established in the JOAG Bylaws. With approval of their EC Liaison, Committee Chairs may form permanent or ad-hoc Subcommittees or Workgroups within their Committee, as needed. Only the Executive Committee (EC) shall create Committee-level Workgroups, as needed.

***Section 2.***     Size

The size of each committee should be adaptable to meet its mission, as determined by the Chairperson.

***Section 3.***     Representation

All junior officers interested in serving on a committee are encouraged to do so. Every attempt should be made to ensure diversity in the following: Agency/OPDIV, professional category, geographic location, and rank.

## ARTICLE IV

### LEADERSHIP

#### ***Section 1.***     JOAG Executive Committee

This committee facilitates the execution of the vision, mission, and objectives developed by the JOAG membership. The JOAG Executive Committee shall consist of the following: Chairperson (Chair), Vice-Chairperson (Vice-Chair), Chairperson-Elect (Chair-Elect), Executive Secretary, and Financial Liaison.

#### ***Section 2.***     JOAG Liaisons

Liaisons may be identified and selected, as needed, to address issues of importance to JOAG. In coordination with the pertinent organization's leadership, the leadership of JOAG shall assign one junior officer to serve as the JOAG Liaison to specific USPHS organizations.

#### ***Section 3.***     Committee Leadership

The Chairperson of a JOAG Committee shall be a JOAG Voting Member and referred to as the Committee Chair. Two Voting Members may equally share a Chairmanship and be referred to as the Committee Co-Chairs. The Chair, at his/her discretion, may choose to appoint a single non-Voting Member to the role of Co-Chair.

#### ***Section 4.***     Committee Chair

The selection of the Chair for each committee is established in the JOAG Bylaws. The JOAG Chair may establish and disband a committee based on the needs of JOAG. The JOAG Chair appoints all Voting Member Co-Chairs and in certain circumstances may appoint a non-Voting Member Co-Chair. The current Committee Chair(s) may have input on future Committee Chair membership, but do not make appointments.

#### ***Section 5.***     Executive Committee Liaison

The JOAG Chair shall appoint a member of the Executive Committee to serve as the EC Liaison to each JOAG committee.

#### ***Section 6.***     Subcommittee/Workgroup Lead

The lead of the subcommittee/workgroup shall be referred to as the Lead.

## ARTICLE V

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROLES

#### *Section 1.*     The JOAG Executive Committee

- A. Chairperson (Chair): The Chair acts as a liaison between the Group and the following entities: Agency representatives, Chief Professional Officers, the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) Chairs Group, and the Office of the Surgeon General. The Chair also facilitates, organizes, and maintains order in meetings of the Group and meetings of the EC.
- B. Vice-Chairperson (Vice-Chair): The Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair in his/her absence, shall serve as the official JOAG Liaison to the Commissioned Officers Association (COA)/Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Board of Directors and act as the official Executive Officer Liaison to professional advisory groups, committees and other groups as assigned by the Chair.
- C. Chairperson-Elect (Chair-Elect): The Chair-Elect shall act as the Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair and exercise all the rights and responsibilities granted to the Chair by the JOAG Charter and Bylaws.
- D. Executive Secretary: The Secretary shall inform the membership of meeting times and webinar/call-in information. He/she shall also be responsible for establishing meeting agendas in collaboration with the Chair and EC and distributing the agendas as appropriate, preparing and distributing approved minutes, recording and tracking attendance during JOAG General Member and Voting Member meetings, facilitating EC review of Committee/Workgroup documents, and maintaining the EC MAX.gov webpages, which include the EC SOP, EC tracker of priority initiatives, etc.
- E. Financial Liaison: The Financial Liaison shall keep the voting and general membership informed about JOAG financial matters and act as the JOAG financial point of contact to the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF), where the JOAG financial account is held. Additionally, the Financial Liaison will oversee all matters related to JOAG finances, including maintaining a fiscally responsible budget, processing deposits and reimbursements through COF, and making donations for junior officer scholarships to attend the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.

#### *Section 2.*     Additional Resources

The JOAG Bylaws provide additional procedural information for the EC.

## ARTICLE VI

### JOAG VOTING MEMBER AND LIAISON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### *Section 1.*     Voting Members

All Voting Members incur the following responsibilities:

- A. Attend and participate in Voting Member Meetings and General Member Meetings.
- B. Carry out committee-specific duties outlined in the Committee SOP.
- C. Score nominations for the JOAG VADM Carmona Inspiration Award.
- D. Score nominations for the JOAG VADM C. Everett Koop Award.
- E. Score applications for new Voting Members.
- F. Attend Meet and Greet events as established by the Membership Committee.
- G. Prepare written reports (to be included in the minutes) for the JOAG General Member Meetings.
- H. Be part of annual strategic planning at the committee level, including the annual review of the committee-specific portion of the JOAG Strategic Plan.
- I. Review SOP and other committee documents at least annually. **Note:** For documents that require EC review, review all documents in detail and certify that the document is ready for EC review prior to initiating the EC review.
- J. Review the JOAG Bylaws annually and other governing documents as necessary.
- K. Track the first 30 days of JOAG work, which is required for earning a Special Assignment Award during the second year of Voting Membership.
- L. Complete Mid-Year and End-of-Year Accomplishments Report for their respective Committee.
- M. Prepare end-of-year Letters of Appreciation to reward all committee members who met criteria for recognition. Prepare other recognition documents for participation of members in events or other programs, as needed. For more information, please see the [Awards SOP](#).
- N. Nominate two Outstanding Non-Voting Members and Secretary(ies) to be recognized at the annual USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium.
- O. Score nominations for the JOAG Senior Advisor (occurs every three years).
- P. Other duties as determined by the Executive Committee to meet the needs of JOAG.
- Q. If assigned as a liaison to another organization, such as a PAC, please see [Section 2](#) below for additional duties.

#### *Section 2.*     JOAG Liaisons

Liaisons may be identified and selected, as needed, to address ad-hoc issues of importance to JOAG. JOAG shall have a liaison to each of the Professional Advisory Committees (PACs), and may have liaisons to the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness, the

Minority Officer Liaison Committee, the Commissioned Officers Foundation Board, and the Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board.

- A. Requirements for JOAG PAC Liaisons
  1. A Voting Member of JOAG who can communicate freely and effectively between JOAG and their PAC
  2. Ideally, have been an active JOAG member for at least a year to ensure familiarity with JOAG and a consistent message between the JOAG and their PAC
- B. Requirements for JOAG Liaisons to other USPHS organizations
  1. Have interest, knowledge, and experience in both organizations
  2. Be selected with input from the leadership of the respective organization he/she will be corresponding with
- C. JOAG Liaison roles and responsibilities
  1. Attend JOAG General Member meetings and respective organization meetings
  2. Provide updates about their respective organization to JOAG and vice versa
  3. Share JOAG-requested messages with their respective organization (via listserv or other methods)
  4. Share organization-requested messages with JOAG (e.g. request posting from EC liaison to distribute material to JOAG members via the listserv or other methods)
  5. Represent JOAG and act as an advocate for JOAG to respective organization
  6. Ensure that the designated alternate (Please see JOAG Proxy/Alternate Form on page 17 of the Bylaws) provides a report at a JOAG or organization meeting in the absence of the designated JOAG liaison

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **COMMITTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### ***Section 1.***     Committee Chair

The Committee Chair must be a proficient meeting manager. The Chair must understand the committee's mission and objectives, plan meetings, resolve conflicts, communicate effectively, and ensure committee members follow up on assigned tasks or projects. Because committee members are volunteers with many other responsibilities, the Chair should be respectful of time and keep meetings on schedule. The Chair must also guide the committee to consensus.

Responsibilities of the Committee Chair include:

- A. Preparing and distributing meeting agendas in advance and including agenda items that realistically fit within the allotted meeting time
- B. Involving as many committee members as possible in discussions by soliciting opinions and experiences
- C. Ensuring committee members understand expectations for assigned tasks and projects

- D. Summarizing major points or decisions
- E. Keeping discussions on subject
- F. Utilizing facts to resolve conflicts
- G. Maintaining objectivity
- H. Praising committee members and acknowledging individual and group contributions
- I. Listening to all committee members and all sides of an issue
- J. Facilitating committee meetings/conference calls to ensure optimal time utilization
- K. Ensuring individual project milestones are met and, if not, identifying the cause and rectifying the problem
- L. Assigning action items to individual committee members
- M. Communicating project progress and committee activities to the JOAG Executive Committee through the EC Liaison
- N. Providing orientation to new committee members
- O. Keeping the committee viable and productive, as outlined in [Section 11](#), below

**Section 2. Executive Committee (EC) Liaison**

The EC Liaison serves as the JOAG Chair’s designee to the JOAG Committee. The roles of the EC Liaison are as follows:

- A. Attends Committee meetings as needed as the EC representative
- B. Updates the JOAG Chair and EC on the progress of the Committee
- C. Communicates the EC’s recommendations to the committee Chair and members
- D. Provides guidance on policy and procedures relevant to JOAG
- E. Advises committee Chair and members on new and existing projects
- F. Reviews and finalizes committee-specific documents (See [Sections 7, 8, and 9](#), below)

**Section 3. Committee Secretary**

The Committee Chair is responsible for selecting a Committee Secretary. When deemed necessary or advantageous by the Chair(s), two committee members may occupy the role of Secretary and shall be assigned the title of Co-Secretaries. The Secretary of each committee is responsible for the following essential committee functions:

- A. Communicate upcoming general meeting information, including agenda, meeting time, call-in information, and distribution of materials to committee members
- B. Maintain contact information for all committee members
- C. Maintain accurate records of committee member attendance
- D. Perform an attendance record review and prepare a report at least twice a year to determine attendance rates of committee members
- E. Provide monthly general meeting attendance and recordkeeping
- F. Advise the Chair when Participants do not meet minimum standards for meeting attendance and inform such Participants that they will be listed as Inactive Participants as outlined in [Article IX, Absenteeism Policy](#)

- G. Record, store, and if appropriate, distribute meeting minutes and General Member Meeting notes to committee members
- H. Designate an alternate (co-secretary, when applicable) to fulfill his/her duties if he/she cannot attend a meeting, or at a minimum, alert the Chair well in advance of a possible absence so that another person can be assigned the responsibilities

**Section 4. Subcommittees/Workgroup Lead**

Committee Chairs may form permanent or ad-hoc Subcommittees or Workgroups within their Committee, as needed (only the EC can create Committee-level Workgroups). The lead of the subcommittee/workgroup shall be referred to as the Lead. The Committee Chair is responsible for identifying and appointing said Lead(s).

- A. *Responsibilities.* A pre-designated subcommittee/workgroup Lead will be entrusted with the responsibilities of the Committee Chair and committee Secretary as outlined above, as they pertain to the individual assigned project.
- B. *Authority.* The Lead shall have the authority and responsibility to assign specific tasks and responsibilities to individual subcommittee/workgroup members as needed. Additionally, Leads will:
  - 1. Maintain awareness of the project timeline and ensure that goals are met and, if not, identify options to resolve the problem and meet projected goals
  - 2. Communicate project progress and subcommittee or workgroup activities to the committee Chair and to the entire committee during regular committee meetings and as needed

**Section 5. Committee Projects**

As mentioned earlier, achievement of the committee's projects should be based on JOAG's strategic plan. All committee projects should be related to the mission and goals commonly agreed upon by the committee and the JOAG Chair. Each committee should follow the steps outlined below for each project as a guide and make sure to keep JOAG leadership apprised of the current status of each project through the committee monthly report. All committee members should be aware of this general process for committee projects and share responsibility for seeing projects through to completion (particularly any designated Leads for particular projects); however, ultimate responsibility for all projects that take place within the committee, even when delegated, resides with the committee Chair(s).

- A. Identify specific projects through collective committee member brainstorming, conferring with other USPHS officers and JOAG leadership
- B. Gather additional information as needed
- C. Review the committee's need for outside assistance. Determine what assistance JOAG or other junior officers can provide (e.g., should other committees or the general membership be involved in the activity?)
  - 1. Create an Action Plan with timeline

2. Identify next steps and ultimate goal of project
3. Identify project lead
4. Identify and assign specific tasks
5. Establish reasonable timeline to complete tasks and discuss results
6. Get updates from project lead
7. Evaluate results and assign new tasks, if appropriate
8. Keep appropriate JOAG leadership apprised of project status
9. Ensure appropriate and timely recordkeeping for each task
10. Repeat steps 1 through 7 as needed, until project is completed
11. Include project updates in JOAG report
12. Ensure acknowledgement of project completion and project team members to JOAG leadership and other authorities as appropriate

**Section 6.     Committee Meeting Preparation**

- A. *Agenda.* The Chair prepares a written agenda with input from the committee members. Allocate sufficient time for each topic on the agenda. Items not on the agenda should be saved for new business at the end of the meeting.
- B. *Date and Time.* The committee meeting date, time and location (if applicable) is designated by the Committee Chair/Co-Chairs. A change in time, date, and frequency of the monthly call can be initiated only through the Chair/Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Secretary(ies). Every effort should be made to keep committee meetings as originally scheduled. Scheduling a monthly reoccurring meeting increases meeting attendance and participation.
- C. *Notification.* The committee Secretary shall email an agenda and supporting documents to the committee in advance of the meeting; this serves as a reminder and will increase attendance.
- D. *Meeting Logistics*
  1. Start and end the meeting on time. The committee Chair should respect the committee members' valuable time. Stick to the agenda and follow the time allotted to the agenda items.
  2. Introduce unique participants and visiting speakers (if appropriate) during the meeting. Introduce and recognize new members joining a meeting for the first time and identify them as such to the committee.
  3. The Committee Secretary should be assigned to take minutes. The meeting may be recorded to assist in the subsequent preparation of written minutes. The written minutes are the official record of the meeting. Minutes from the preceding meeting should be distributed prior to the new meeting for committee review. Records of action plans for specific projects should clearly show specific tasks and the designated committee member responsible for achieving each task.
  4. Work through the agenda. To help the committee keep track of agenda items, the Chair should ask the committee members to give status reports on their progress. This

report can be given in writing or verbally. Agenda items should be handled in the following order; however, the Chair can adopt, adapt, or reject these in favor of a more simplified approach as needed. Robert's Rules should be followed, as described below:

- a. Announce the item
  - b. Ask for or give a report on the item
  - c. Allow discussion
  - d. Ask for a motion
  - e. Ask for a second to the motion
  - f. Ask for any further discussion
  - g. Repeat the motion
  - h. Call for either a voice vote or a show of hands
  - i. Announce the motion for adoption or failure
  - j. If the motion fails, call for a new motion and second. Generally, there should be no discussion until a new motion is made under this circumstance, although some discussion may be necessary to form a new motion.
  - k. Repeat steps a. through j. until the item is resolved and go to next item
5. Summarize the action items and due dates that have resulted from the meeting
  6. Establish a date and place for the next committee meeting
  7. Adjourn the meeting

**Section 7.**     Requesting JOAG EC Review of New Committee Documents

All new committee documents must be reviewed by the JOAG EC and approved by the JOAG Chair (or designee) prior to dissemination outside of the committee or to the general JOAG membership. *Note: Please refer to [Section 9](#) of this Article for Review of Committee SOPs.*

- A. The Committee Chair will send a request for document review via email to the committee's EC Liaison. The request should include all pertinent deadlines so that the EC can prioritize its review if necessary. The review time allowed will be commensurate with the length and complexity of the document.
- B. The committee's EC Liaison will review the document in its entirety before sending it to the Executive Secretary for coordination of the full EC review.
  1. The EC Liaison may send the document back to the Committee Chair for further revision if needed.
  2. If the document does not require edits, the EC Liaison will send the document to the Executive Secretary.
- C. If further revisions of the document are requested by the EC, the committee's EC Liaison will forward the suggested revisions to the Committee Chair via email.
- D. The Committee Chair should send a request for final document review via email to the committee's EC Liaison. The EC Liaison will review the final document to ensure all EC comments have been incorporated and addressed appropriately.

- E. After final review of the document by the EC members, the JOAG Chair (or designee) shall be the final approving authority. The final approval should be communicated to the EC Liaison and Committee Chair via email.

**Section 8. Annual Review of All Existing Committee Documents**

All committee documents should be reviewed by the Committee Chair and EC Liaison at least once annually (preferably during the first quarter of the operational year). Minor revisions may be reviewed and approved by the EC Liaison. Major revisions should be reviewed by the JOAG EC and/or approved by the JOAG Chair (or designee). For major revisions, the committee's EC Liaison will review the document in its entirety before sending it to the Executive Secretary for coordination of the full EC review, as outlined in [Section 7.B.](#), above. *Note: Please refer to [Section 9](#) of this Article for Review of Committee SOPs.*

**Section 9. Review of Committee SOPs**

Each Committee shall strive to maintain an updated SOP by continuously reviewing and updating its respective SOP throughout the operational year.

- A. *Major Changes.* Refers to new procedures or significant revisions to existing procedures. Major changes to existing committee SOP Article(s) shall be sent through the EC Liaison for initial review. The EC Liaison will then submit the updated SOP Article(s) to the Chair-Elect and Chair for approval.
- B. *Minor Changes.* Minor changes to the SOP (i.e., to correct spelling or grammar or to clarify unclear wording) shall be made by the Committee with concurrence by the EC Liaison.
- C. *Yearly Review.* A yearly review of each committee SOP shall be performed by the Committee, EC Liaison, and the JOAG Chair. The yearly review process shall start during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, April-June, of the JOAG operational year. Committee SOPs shall be submitted first to the Policy and Procedures Committee for review of format and general content. The committee shall make revisions, if necessary, following Policy and Procedures Committee review, then submit the revised draft SOP to the Chair-Elect and Chair for review. After receipt and incorporation of edits or comments from the Chair-Elect and Chair, the SOP shall be considered final and will be posted to the JOAG Governing Documents webpage with a hyperlink on the committee's website.

**Section 10. Requesting JOAG Website Updates**

Each committee shall designate a Website Coordinator to coordinate updates to the committee's website. The Website Coordinator shall submit website update requests to the Website Subcommittee using the JOAG Website Update Request Form located on the Communications and Publications Committee's [Website](#). Committee requests for website updates should be made no more than once per month. Committee chairs or Website Coordinators/POCs should assemble requested changes from all of their respective Subcommittees into one bulk request. More

frequent requests will be accepted when they are time-bound or urgent. Examples of time-bound or urgent requests include: changes in teleconference line information for an upcoming meeting, or urgent changes in JOAG and/or PHS policy.

In general, website update requests should:

- A. Be specific to JOAG and/or junior officers
- B. Be cleared for posting through proper channels of authority
- C. Be presented in a format that uses the least amount of space
- D. Follow the site template
- E. Be in compliance with regulations set forth by HHS under Section 508 (29 U.S.C. 794d). This includes downloadable material on the website (i.e. Adobe PDF files)
- F. Not be redundant

Refer to the JOAG Communications and Publications Committee SOP for further information on requesting website updates.

### ***Section 11. Keeping the Committee Viable and Productive***

To ensure the committee is running effectively, it is important to maintain vital, contributing members on the committee. The Chair and subcommittee/workgroup Leads will take the following steps:

- A. Ensure committee members know the purpose of the committee and the standards to maintain Participant status. This should initially be done through timely and consistent new Participant orientation, including distribution of policies, responsibilities, and procedures of the committee.
- B. Committee member assignments should be clear, specific, and achievable. The Committee Chair or subcommittee/workgroup Lead is responsible for ensuring this is done.
- C. Periodic checkups or regular committee reports will keep committee members focused and productive.
- D. Inquire about the interests and experiences of new volunteers to make sure volunteers are matched with the right subcommittee(s) or project(s).
- E. At times, it may be necessary to address a performance issue with a committee member. If this occurs, it is important to minimize hard feelings. After all, this person is volunteering his/her time to the committee and may be better prepared and willing to do so in the future; however, for the benefit of the committee, quick action is better than waiting until the person is rotated off the committee. Use the following suggestions to start this process:
  - 1. Talk with the committee member. Are there outside issues affecting his/her committee involvement, e.g., pressures from a boss? Is the committee member truly interested in the activities of the committee? Can you help resolve any of the issues raised?

2. Be up-front with the individual. Explain that because of absences or lack of follow-through, his/her involvement on the committee is not up to par.
3. An ineffective committee member might just be on the wrong committee. Every opportunity should be made to involve a junior officer who is interested in JOAG, but may have joined the wrong committee. Ask the committee member about their interest and what they hope to accomplish in the committee. If, based on the committee member's response, another committee may be a better fit, seek out an opportunity to involve the member with that alternate committee.
4. Before talking to the committee member, try to find a stand-alone project that he/she can handle to be put forward as a possible suggestion for involvement in the current committee or another committee that the member may assist with.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### NEW PARTICIPANT ORIENTATION/MINIMUM STANDARDS

#### ***Section 1.***     Committee Participation

Committee members can participate as Participants or Observers. Members should be made aware and given the option of choosing participation status. This is especially important for new members. It is the responsibility of the Committee Chair to inform all members about the two options for involvement: Participant or Observer.

- A. *Participants.* The following are the expected roles and responsibilities of all committee/workgroup Participants:
  1. Willingness and ability to give the necessary time to attend meetings and perform duties
  2. Active participation in discussion and willingness to listen to and respect other viewpoints
  3. To think in terms of the welfare of the group rather than personal interests
  4. Ability to accept and follow through on assignments
  5. Maintain minimum standards for Participants as listed below:
    - a. Attending at least half of the eligible meetings since joining the Committee (*See [Article IX, Absenteeism Policy](#)*)
    - b. Active participation in at least one project and/or subcommittee annually
    - c. Active participation in meeting discussions and providing input to the Committee Chair's (or Co-Chairs') solicitations

At any time, a participant may change his/her participation from Participant to Observer by contacting the Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary and notifying the leads for the activity that he/she was involved with.

- B. *Observers.* Each committee shall encourage attendance at all meetings from any junior officer who wishes to remain abreast of current issues, but does not wish to encumber the responsibilities of a Participant.
1. A committee Observer is an officer who wishes to maintain awareness of committee issues and is under no obligation or requirement to participate, maintain a minimum level of attendance, or other responsibility.
  2. Observers are not eligible for recognition as outlined in [Article XI](#).
  3. At any time, an Observer may change his/her participation status to Participant by contacting the Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary and volunteering for a committee activity.

## ARTICLE IX

### ABSENTEEISM POLICY

#### ***Section 1.***     Absenteeism Policy

Committee members should inform the Committee Secretary or Chair if they will be unavailable to make a Committee meeting. To maintain their status, Participants need to attend at least half of the eligible meetings since joining the committee.

#### ***Section 2.***     Inactive Participants

Participants who miss more than 50% of the meetings in an operational year (October through September) or since joining a committee shall be considered inactive and ineligible for the committee's end-of-year letter of appreciation. The committee Secretary shall keep attendance of all meetings and notify the Chair if a Participant has fallen below the 50% mark.

#### ***Section 3.***     Notifying Inactive Participants

Active participation will be determined by the Committee Chair using the committee participation guidelines outlined above. Those Participants who fall below the 50% mark will be sent an email by the Chair or Secretary informing them of their status and asking if they would like to continue to participate in the respective committee(s). Officers who fail to reach the 50% mark may be designated as an Observer. Those officers who choose to disassociate from a committee, not respond, continue to fail to make meetings, or are designated as an Observer will not achieve the minimum recognition of a Participant as outlined above. Those officers wishing to remain an active part of a committee should provide a timely reply stating continued interest and desire to still be considered as a Participant. The officer will then be required to make the next meeting and maintain 50% attendance at all future meetings.

#### ***Section 4.***     Special Considerations

These guidelines are intended to encourage at least 50% attendance at meetings; however, it is recognized that there may be individual cases that warrant special consideration (e.g., weekly scheduling conflict, extended deployment, officer in a clinical billet, etc.) where an officer is not able to make enough meetings, but substantially contributes to the committee. Therefore, the Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs) reserves the right to utilize discretion in determining whether or not an individual should be recognized as a Participant.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **TRANSITIONING**

#### ***Section 1.***     Incoming Chair Preparation

Incoming Chair orientation guidelines and practices should be established for the committee Chair, should involve the outgoing Chairperson, and should include:

- A. Emphasis on the importance of the position (committee members will look for ideas, leadership, and support from the Chair)
- B. Discussion of all duties and responsibilities
- C. Review of the committee's SOP
- D. Review of JOAG policy, practices, and procedures (JOAG Charter, Bylaws, General SOP, Committee-specific SOP, and Strategic Plan; *available under the [Governing Documents](#) section of the JOAG website*)
- E. Review of past accomplishments and current work of the committee
- F. Review of committee member assignments
- G. Recommendations for future co-leads of subcommittees
- H. Review of standards used for accepting new committee members
- I. Identification of available resources

#### ***Section 2.***     Incoming Chair Expectations

The incoming Chair is expected to:

- A. Lead the committee in a professional manner
- B. Provide support and new initiatives to improve existing processes
- C. Review and suggest changes, as appropriate, to the committee's process, with input from committee members
- D. Review and understand the JOAG Charter, Bylaws, and General SOP, Committee-specific SOP, and Strategic Plan (*available under the [Governing Documents](#) section of the JOAG website*)
- E. Review and approve assignments of committee members

- F. Designate new co-leads of subcommittees if needed
- G. Review and approve communications and criteria used for recruiting and accepting new committee members
- H. Identify and recruit new junior officers for involvement in the committee as necessary
- I. Function and act as a mentor to new subcommittee leads as necessary

**Section 3.**     New Participants

Every committee Chair should conduct a “New Participant Orientation” for new Participants, similar to the one the Chair received from JOAG. This orientation includes communication of Participant roles and responsibilities and the minimum standards for maintenance of good standing of committee participation as outlined in [Article VIII](#).

**Section 4.**     Outgoing Chair

After the duties and responsibilities of the Chair have been transitioned to new leadership, the outgoing Chair shall:

- A. Remain available to answer questions from the new leadership when needed
- B. Provide historical perspective for decisions that were made by the committee in the past

## ARTICLE XI

### RECOGNITION

**Section 1.**     Committee Participants

Junior officers who maintain the minimum standards for Participants (*See [Article VIII](#)*) will be acknowledged through the following methods:

- A. A written letter signed by the JOAG Chair suitable for inclusion in the officer's eOPF  
*Note: Voting Members do not receive written letters of appreciation and are ineligible for other JOAG awards. Unless they also participate in non-secretarial activities that support a Committee, committee Secretaries do not receive written letters of appreciation, but are instead recognized as a group at the annual Symposium. Only in the case that a Secretary partakes in other activities that support the committee would he/she get an LOA.*
  1. Specific detail on the individual officer’s contributions should be maintained along with the impact of their contributions on the overall outcome when applicable.
  2. Each Committee should only submit one letter per qualified officer, even if an officer was involved in multiple Subcommittees/Workgroups within the Committee.  
*Note: An officer’s involvement on multiple subcommittees within a committee should be consolidated into one letter; multiple letters should not be written in recognition of*

- accomplishments within one committee. Additionally, participation in activities of shorter duration or impact (e.g., attending a community service event or volunteering at the uniform inspection booth at the Symposium) would not by themselves make an officer eligible for this recognition. Instead, officers may be recognized in an alternative manner; refer to the JOAG Membership Committee SOP for more information on alternative methods of recognition and their use.*
3. Eligibility for this letter, to include verification that attendance criteria were met, will be determined at the end of the operational year by the committee Chair (exceptions to maintaining the minimum standards for Participants may be made on a case-by-case basis).
  4. All letters of appreciation should be forwarded in one packet/email to the JOAG Chair for signature.
- B. Approval to list role with the JOAG Committee on official CV as Participant

Participants shall be differentiated from Observers in attendance rosters and in correspondence with the JOAG Chair and Executive Committee for the purposes of acknowledging their contributions to JOAG. The Participant roster will be provided to the JOAG Chair and Executive Committee when requested.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### GENERAL OPERATIONS

#### ***Section 1.***     JOAG Funds

- A. *Requesting Funds.* Committee participants may request reimbursement for expenses that are incurred in support of JOAG related activities with prior approval of the Committee Chair and the JOAG Financial Liaison.
1. Committee members must first complete and submit the Funding Request Form (FRF) (See [Appendix 2](#)) via email, through the requesting Committee Chair, to the JOAG Financial Liaison.
  2. Funding requests will be reviewed by the Financial Liaison, and the JOAG Executive Committee if necessary, to determine appropriateness of the request.
  3. The Committee Chair and member will be notified by email if the request was approved or declined.

To guarantee payment, it is advised that purchases are not made until **after** notification of approval by the JOAG Financial Liaison is received. Approved requests will be sent to the Commissioned Officer Foundation (COF) administrative assistant for payment. COF will mail reimbursement checks to the name and address on the FRF. To allow ample time for processing, please submit all request(s) for funding at least two to three (2-3) weeks before the payment is needed. Although not required to be submitted with the

FRF, you will need to submit a cost estimate (e.g., invoice from vendor) or a receipt before payment can be sent.

B. *Collecting & Depositing Funds.* The EC SOP covers the collection and deposit of funds by the JOAG Financial Liaison. JOAG Voting Members other than the JOAG Financial Liaison may collect funds at activities during which COF-JOAG merchandise is sold (e.g., Officer Basic Course (OBC), career fairs, and the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium). Assuming the JOAG Financial Liaison is not available, procedures for submitting money earned for JOAG are as follows:

1. **Checks.** Ensure that checks are **NOT** made out to JOAG. **Checks should be made out to COF with “JOAG” in the memo.**

*Note: If you receive a check made out to JOAG, please contact the check writer and request that she/he submit (by mail or in-person) a new check written to COF and return to her/him the original check written to JOAG.*

**Cash.** Keep the cash and write a personal check for the amount of any cash received less the costs of sending the check with delivery verification through UPS, FedEx or USPS, if you are unable send it through your office.

**Checks should be made out to COF with “JOAG” in the memo.**

*Note: If unable to write a check, please contact the JOAG Financial Liaison.*

2. Make a copy of the check(s) and email it to the JOAG Financial Liaison.
3. Mail the check(s) with delivery verification to:

Junior Officer Advisory Group  
c/o Commissioned Officers Foundation  
8201 Corporate Drive, Suite 200  
Landover MD 20785

4. Email the JOAG Financial Liaison to notify him/her:
  - a. Check(s) was sent
  - b. Date of mailing
  - c. Number of checks
  - d. Total amount of the checks

## **Section 2. Conducting Surveys**

With prior approval from the Committee Chair, committee members may conduct surveys via MAX Survey on MAX.gov (or, if necessary functionality is unavailable, through SurveyMonkey) for the collection of information from JOAG general members and other interested parties. To request and conduct a survey, committees should follow these steps:

- A. Committee Chair should submit a short summary of the intended purpose of the survey, via email, to their JOAG Executive Liaison to request access.
- B. The summary should be limited to two pages and should include: the name of the host committee, a list of those officers who will be responsible for implementing the survey, an outline of the project, timeframe, target audience and expected outcomes.
- C. The request should be accompanied by an outline of the survey, including questions to be asked.
- D. A new request must be submitted for each survey to be conducted.  
After approval by the EC, the Executive Secretary will grant access to the committee and inform the Committee Chair of the approval. Access to the account will be limited to those identified in the request. *Note: Beta testing may be conducted by allowing committee members to test the survey; however full-launch of the survey shall not occur without EC review and approval.*
- E. Prior to launching the survey, the Committee Chair will inform the EC via email that the survey is ready for launch.
- F. The EC will then review the final survey and send an invitation to take the survey either via the JOAG listserv or to the appropriate audience.

**Section 3.     Requesting Access to the “Officer Locator Tool”**

Key members of the Membership and Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Committees will need to have access to the “Officer Locator Tool” (OLT). To request access to the OLT, the following process shall be followed:

- A. The Committee Chair shall identify the member of the committee needing access to the OLT. In addition to the committee Chair, only one other committee member, preferably the Lead of the relevant Subcommittee, shall be given access.
- B. The incoming Committee Chair(s) of the Membership and R&R Committees shall begin the request process at the beginning of the JOAG operation year and after the key Subcommittee members have been identified.
- C. The Committee Chair, through the EC Liaison, shall submit the request to the JOAG Chair.
- D. The JOAG Chair (or designee) will review the request. After approval has been received, the JOAG Chair shall send the **User Registration Form (URF)** to the requesting Committee Chair.
- E. After the completed URF has been received by the JOAG Chair (or designee), the JOAG Chair (or designee) shall review and submit the completed URF to the JOAG Senior Advisor for final approval. The JOAG Chair will also submit a request to remove access from those committee members no longer active in said roles.
- F. The JOAG Senior Advisor is responsible for submitting the final URF to the appropriate staff at Commissioned Corps headquarters.
- G. At the beginning of each Operational Year, the list of members with access to the OLT will be reviewed by the Chairs of the Membership and R&R Committees. In the event

that a committee member is no longer active or their role is unknown, the Chairs will confirm the role and necessity of OLT access for the committee member through the member's respective or most recent Committee, or revoke access.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

#### ***Section 1.***     Updates to the JOAG General SOP

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the JOAG General SOP. Updates to the SOP may be initiated as needed by the JOAG Voting Membership. Any Voting Member may request a review of the SOP or suggest a change to the SOP through correspondence with the Executive Committee. If deemed worthy of further review, such a review shall occur with drafting of new proposed language.

#### ***Section 2.***     JOAG General SOP Review

The JOAG Chair-Elect (Policy & Procedures Committee Chair) will initiate the yearly review process. The JOAG General SOP shall be reviewed annually by the EC and the rest of the Voting Membership to ensure the SOP is up-to-date and adequate to meet the needs of JOAG.

#### ***Section 3.***     Approval

Requires a simple majority vote of Voting Membership.

#### ***Section 4.***     Minor Changes

Minor changes to the SOP (i.e., to correct spelling or grammar or to clarify unclear wording) may be made without requiring a vote.

## APPENDIX 1: Glossary of Terms

**Chair:** JOAG Voting Member(s) responsible for leading a JOAG Committee.

**Committee:** The Committees are the organizational groups that make up JOAG. Committees are responsible for ensuring the mission and goals of JOAG are met.

**Co-Secretary:** Term used to refer to two committee members serving in the role of Committee Secretary.

**EC:** The JOAG Executive Committee. The EC is made up of the JOAG Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Executive Secretary, and the Financial Liaison. (*See JOAG Bylaws for EC duties*)

**EC Liaison:** Appointed by the JOAG Chair to serve as the liaison between the EC and the assigned JOAG Committee.

**JOAG Bylaws:** The JOAG Bylaws provide internal guidance for the operations and policies of JOAG. The Bylaws provide specific guidance on matters not addressed by the JOAG Charter.

**JOAG Chair:** The Chair of the Junior Officer Advisory Committee.

**JOAG Charter:** JOAG's Charter is the governing document that establishes JOAG as an entity under the Surgeon General and defines the overall purpose and structure of JOAG.

**JOAG Committee SOPs:** The JOAG Committee SOPs provide specific internal guidance for the operations of each JOAG Committee.

**JOAG General SOP:** The JOAG General SOP provides general guidance on the operations and procedures of the JOAG Committees as related to policies addressed by the JOAG Charter and Bylaws.

**Lead:** A Participant or Voting Member responsible for leading a JOAG Subcommittee or Workgroup.

**Observer:** An officer who maintains awareness of committee issues and is under no obligation or requirement to participate, maintain a minimum level of attendance or other responsibility. (*See [Article VIII, Section 1.B.](#)*)

**Participant:** Member of a Committee or Workgroup who takes an active role in the activities and initiatives of the Committee/Workgroup. (*See [Article VIII, Section 1.A.](#)*)

**SOP:** Standard Operating Procedures

**Subcommittee:** Refers to an organizational group within a JOAG Committee.

**Workgroup:** Refers to an organizational group within a JOAG Subcommittee, or an organizational group created by the Executive Committee for a specific initiative.

**APPENDIX 2: JOAG Funding Request Form (FRF)**

Please complete this form and submit via email, through the requesting Committee Chair, to the JOAG Financial Liaison. The request will then be reviewed by the JOAG Executive Committee (EC) to determine if this is an appropriate use of JOAG funds. The Committee Chair/Member will be notified by email of the EC’s decision. To guarantee payment, it is advised that purchases are not made until **after** notification of approval by the Financial Liaison. Approved requests will then be sent to the Commissioned Officer Foundation (COF) for payment. To allow ample time for processing, please submit all requests for funding at least 2-3 weeks (if possible) before the payment is needed. Although not required to be submitted with the FRF, you will need to submit a cost estimate (e.g., invoice from vendor) or a receipt before payment can be sent.

**Date of Request:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Requesting Committee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Requesting Member (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of Funding Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe how the funding will be used:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment/Mailing Information**

**Check One:** Reimbursement/Payment to Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Payment to Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pay to the Order of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Invoice/Order # (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR JOAG FINANCIAL LIAISON ONLY:**

**Date of Approval/Non-Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Approved/Reimbursed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_