

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

NSMA BOARD MEMBERS

NSMA BOD “NEWBIE” ORIENTATION

Congratulations, you're on the NSMA BOD. Chances are you have been a member for some time, observing and interacting from the sidelines. After considering the pros and cons you've stepped up and committed to contributing as an ACTIVE member! In your excitement, please note that you were not asked to “join” the Board, but to “serve” on the Board and that includes commitment. Be prepared to make contributions of your time and energy.

Being a part of the Board does not elevate you to a leadership title without any work. Your first assignment is to read and become familiar with the NSMA Procedure Manual. Next, your officer or committee position should have a Procedure Notebook that will help provide a roadmap with detailed how-to information. Read it.

Review and become familiar with strategic documents like the NSMA Bylaws and Standing Rules, financial policies, and NSMA operating budgetary guidelines. Know the purpose and goals of NSMA. Understand membership qualifications and categories, the role of all elected officers, and the duties of all standing committees. Review and follow the NSMA Calendar.

As you transition into your new role, take the initiative to introduce yourself to other BOD leaders. Ask questions, as many as you have. Keep asking questions until you get answers. Be proactive and do your homework. Before each meeting, review the BOD monthly calendar, the meeting agenda and all materials to be presented. Be prepared to share your perspectives and knowledge. Board meetings focus on clarifying and implementing NSMA mission-based strategic plans.

Your involvement with NSMA is a professional role and you are expected to demonstrate professional standards. The general membership will judge the entire BOD based on their interactions with you. As a member of this Board, you represent NSMA leadership and become one of its most visible “cheerleaders”. Your interactions with the membership should always reflect professionalism. Develop a passion for NSMA and share it with current and prospective members. Learn a one-minute response that answers what NSMA is all about and why everyone should be a part of it. Ignite interest in yourself, peers, co-workers, and employers.

Enthusiasm aside, appreciate the responsibility of your commitment to the NSMA Board. Do great work with great people and have great fun doing it. Thank you for being willing to serve as a steward for the goals and future of NSMA.

**Be smart. Carry your weight. Be prepared. Be good. Help others. Have fun.
Work hard. Welcome Aboard!**

INFORMATION & FACTS FOR BOD MEMBERS

PROFESSIONALISM:

Individual members of the NSMA BOD are expected to meet standards of personal and professional conduct on behalf of the Society. These standards include honesty, loyalty, professionalism, accountability, and integrity. BOD members are the leaders of NSMA.

There will be occasions when information discussed at an NSMA BOD meeting should not be disclosed. BOD members are expected to maintain confidentiality in these circumstances.

Board members should avoid acting or speaking for the entire Board or NSMA unless authorized to do so. Board members are to interact with others responsibly knowing that their words tend to be perceived as the Board’s voice. Board members as individuals are not the authority in this Society. Decisions are made as a collective governing body, a team.

Each member of the Board is bound to accept as final, and abide by, the decisions of the majority

vote or tender a resignation. Board members should understand that while communicating diverse opinions is encouraged and expected as a function of the decision-making process, the key to a strong functional Board is to leave differences of opinion at the Board meeting. All Board members should feel confident in speaking with one voice, even if final decisions are contrary to the individuals' opinions. Board members who operate as "lone rangers" preempt authority belonging to others and undermine the board's authority.

Many challenges that face NSMA are interrelated. We cannot narrow our focus to one area or we lose the "big picture" and our efforts become fragmented. Promoting membership without addressing public relations will have a limited impact. NSMA concerns require more than one opinion and are too diverse to be addressed by one committee alone. Teamwork is defined as – a cooperative relationship between parties for the benefit of both and the greater good. Think about it, teamwork between officers and committees alike is a vital element required for the success of NSMA.

Officers and committee chairs may have more than one job assigned to them depending on the duties defined in the Bylaws and the requirements of NSMA. Individuals need to be aware of these additional responsibilities. Members of the Board may be asked to undertake a special assignment, chair a task force, speak at a meeting, act as an ambassador for NSMA, or participate in fundraising activities.

Any officer or committee chair who is unable to fulfill their assignment on an ongoing basis should immediately submit a written resignation to the President so the vacancy can be filled without delay. If you are ever unsure of your duties, ASK! If you need help to accomplish a task or reach a goal, ASK! "No one ever told me" Is not an excuse for nonperformance.

At gatherings of the membership, BOD members should always wear a name tag denoting their position on the Board to give members a chance to recognize and talk to NSMA leaders.

Note: Per the AAMA Certifying Board policy, the CMA (AAMA) lapel pin is a professional pin and should be treated as such. It should be worn over the left chest or on the left collar. The CMA (AAMA) pin should not be changed in any manner or combined with other pins, nor should the pin be converted into a charm or worn as a tie tack.

Each BOD member should plan for the future of NSMA which includes the future composition of the NSMA Board of Directors. Every BOD member should identify potential leaders who will move into leadership roles on the NSMA Board. **THIS MEANS YOU MUST PLAN FOR AND MENTOR YOUR REPLACEMENT.**

COMMUNICATION:

BOD members should be easily accessible to other BOD members. Professional written and verbal communication should be always utilized. Leaders demonstrate effectiveness through their ability to organize, communicate, motivate, and delegate. Leaders must use effective communication skills to set goals and establish visions that will help sustain the NSMA mission

into the future.

All BOD members should keep in close communication with the President and Vice President regarding all organizational activities. Emails and phone calls in between scheduled meetings are often necessary and encouraged to keep the flow of business moving.

BOD members should carefully study the correspondence and reports passed on from the preceding years. The experience and suggestions from previous leaders will be very valuable in planning and executing duties. Each officer and committee chair should keep an ongoing month-by-month planning calendar filed in their respective Procedure Notebook. This calendar indicates due dates for projects, specific duties, work assignments, and responsibilities.

Board members should promptly answer, or direct an answer to, all communications. Timely attention to all assignments will make work less demanding for all. It is important to follow a timeline and meet project deadlines.

All correspondence sent on behalf of NSMA is to be sent on official NSMA letterhead. Copies of all official correspondence should be sent to the President and Vice President. Keep in mind that form, sentence structure, and spelling are a direct reflection of NSMA. Personal comments should not be included in business letters written on behalf of NSMA.

EMAIL: Communication between Board members is best accomplished by using the NSMA Gmail account assigned to each Board member. Passwords are updated each term. Utilizing the NSMA account will allow documents to be stored for future reference including from term to term. When responding to an email sent to the entire BOD it is best to respond “to all” especially when an opinion or vote is requested. This process will assist in making sure that all information reaches all Board members.

If a BOD member chooses to publish their email address, they must accept the responsibility of monitoring their account regularly. Email responses are generally expected within a twenty-four (24) hour period. If this is not feasible, it is best to avoid providing a personal email address as a means of communication.

Up-to-date and useful information can be found on the AAMA website (www.aama-ntl.org). Nebraska and other State Societies have websites that are linked to the AAMA website. BOD members are encouraged to consult these sites periodically for information that NSMA can tap into.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The goal of the NSMA BOD is to make well-informed decisions on behalf of the membership that will have a beneficial impact on the performance and future of NSMA. The BOD provides oversight, counsel, and final decision-making focusing on NSMA strategic development, NSMA policy formation, committee program development, and execution.

All officers and chairs are expected to study the policies of NSMA and help carry them out. They

should become familiar with the basic principles of parliamentary procedures, the Bylaws, and Standing Rules of NSMA. They should be committed to reinforcing the Society's goal of self-improvement through education and the improvement of professional standards for all medical assistants. This commitment means more than merely showing up for a meeting.

A term of office shall begin at the close of the annual General Assembly meeting at which elections take place. The length for each term is defined in the Bylaws or when a replacement is found. No one should run for any position or accept an appointment including delegate/alternate if unable to complete all responsibilities or serve during the appointed term.

Leaders should keep goals high but achievable; keep tasks reasonable and "doable". Don't assume that you will have more volunteers or more money in the future than you have now. Always have a job available for every volunteer that matches their ability to succeed. Focus on accomplishments; make people feel good about what they have done, not guilty about what they have not.

All materials related to the office/committee should be filed in the Procedure Notebook which is the property of NSMA. These notebooks are to be turned over to the successor at the end of the term. HINT: To help preserve and recognize documents that are to be permanently kept as part of the Procedure Notebook from year to year, file them in plastic sheet protectors.

EXPENSES: To defray the financial burden of performing volunteer work, most expenses related to officer and committee duties are covered in the NSMA operating budget. Funds are available to reimburse expenses for photocopies, phone calls, postage, office supplies, etc. Refer to the NSMA Financial Policies for more details.

Each BOD member should ascertain the amount budgeted for their position and keep an accurate account of all expenses incurred. Submit expenses to the Treasurer on the NSMA General Expense Voucher or NSMA Travel Expense Voucher forms with original receipts attached. NSMA voucher forms can be obtained from the Treasurer. Every effort should be made to submit expenses regularly (preferably within 30 days from when the expense occurred) at NSMA Board meetings or mailed directly to the Treasurer. Over-budgeted items must be presented to the BOD for approval/denial before spending excess funds.

All expenses submitted for reimbursement by the delegates/alternates will be reviewed by a team consisting of the Treasurer, Immediate Past President, and the Budget & Finance Chair. A report will be relayed to the NSMA BOD at the next scheduled meeting.

AAMA Conference financial allocations for delegates/alternates will be reviewed annually by the Budget and Finance Chair with recommendations for monetary allowances presented to the BOD at the summer or fall meeting. The NSMA audit report will direct this decision. The amount allocated for delegates/alternates must be included in the proposed annual NSMA operating budget.

All BOD members will have access to the NSMA Procedure Manual and accept the responsibility of keeping the manual updated. Each BOD member should periodically review

their respective section(s) of the NSMA Procedure Manual and bring to the attention of the Procedure Manual Committee Chair any missing or outdated information. To keep all manuals and notebooks as up-to-date as possible, internal and photocopied external documents and forms should contain a footnote date for reference.

Officers and chairs should have their Procedure Notebooks and materials in order and ready to turn them over to their successor no later than 30 days after the NSMA General Assembly and preferably at the post-conference BOD meeting. If possible, the newly installed President, working with the Vice President and Archive Chair, should review officer and committee Procedure Notebooks to ensure that they are in order and distribute to the incoming officer/chair if the transfer cannot be directly coordinated between the current and outgoing officer or chair.

Whenever possible, the NSMA website should be utilized by officers and committee chairs to help educate and keep the general membership informed and updated.

MEETINGS:

The NSMA BOD meetings are open to all members of the Nebraska Society and special guests approved by the Board.

NSMA Board meetings are typically held post-conference (April/May), Summer (August), Fall (October), Winter (January), Spring (March) and pre-conference (April/May).

All officers and committee chairs are expected to attend all BOD meetings (refer to the NSMA Bylaws and Standing Rules). Non-attendance produces silence and gives automatic consent to those who show up to make decisions in your absence. Active participation on the Board guarantees the member a voice and a vote in the decisions that govern policy and procedures for NSMA. It is a privilege and a responsibility the entire membership has entrusted to the NSMA elected and appointed Board members.

All BOD members are expected to attend the annual NSMA General Assembly and be available to answer questions that may be brought up regarding the year-end reports printed in the NSMA Delegate Packet. Each BOD member should submit in writing to the Speaker a final comprehensive year-end report of activities that occurred during the term year. These reports will be printed in the annual General Assembly packet. See the Annual Year-end BOD Report Format section of this manual for the appropriate form and content of reports.

Board members are expected to be active participants during meetings, show up well-prepared, ask strategic questions, listen, and respect diverse opinions. All BOD members are expected to be reasonably informed about the activities of all standing committees. Members should avoid distracting side conversations during meetings and socialize only at the appropriate times.

Meeting attendees are to listen to and respect the views of all present. One should seek out the facts, understand the problem, keep an open mind, and offer solutions when able. Final decisions should be made after listening to and understanding multiple viewpoints. The Board should

review adequate information rather than relying on just one opinion to reach an informed decision.

When negotiating is needed, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to reach all people. However, positive attitudes facilitate both active participation and a willingness to accept change. Negative attitudes can be improved through better understanding and by the exchanging of ideas. Personality differences exist but can be overcome.

All BOD members are expected to prepare a written or verbal report to be presented at each Board meeting whether they attend or not. The report should provide a description of the way the committee is handling ongoing projects, reflect on accomplishments, and provide a review of the status of process assignments. For the official record, a Board member may report status as “currently working on assigned responsibilities” but a more detailed report should follow at the next scheduled meeting.

In an emergency, Standing Committee Chairs have the authority to appoint another active member from their same committee to attend a BOD meeting in their absence and have the same voting power. In this situation, to ensure voting privileges for the substitute, a note from the Chair must be sent to the NSMA President in advance with the name of the replacement member.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

The term “co-chair” implies that two individuals share equal responsibility which can cause communication confusion. Only one person should have the responsibility of directing the activities of a committee and use the title of Chair. Therefore, it is recommended that any committee having a second leader should be designated as a “vice-chair” or simply a committee member.

To create a new permanent NSMA standing committee or delete a currently functioning standing committee requires a Bylaws proposal and vote.

The continued growth and progress of NSMA depend largely on the appointment of dedicated and competent committee chairs and committee members. These appointments must be offered to members who are willing to devote the time and effort necessary to complete responsibilities. A non-functioning chair impairs the committees’ progress and ultimately NSMA.

Standing committee chairs are selected by the Vice President with BOD approval requested at the post-conference BOD meeting. The chair of a committee is responsible for setting and accomplishing the goals of that committee. However, it may be best to form a small committee rather than a single “chairmanship”. The appointed chair should be encouraged to recruit and select as many team members as needed to accomplish goals. This will also mentor future leaders.

The Chair may assign committee projects and delegate tasks as needed to committee members but will remain available for guidance and regularly monitor progress. It is important to be open and receptive to the opinions of all committee members and work together as a unified team.

Committees who meet on their own may follow an agenda and record their minutes separately. The Chair will remain the spokesperson communicating directly with the NSMA BOD.

NSMA accomplishes its objectives through the dedicated work of standing committees. Committee volunteers are involved in planning, organizing, executing programs, and performing many key tasks. It is important to show up for all meetings fully prepared and ready to participate. Review the agenda in advance. Do not use the meeting time for discussion to begin committee work. Instead, reveal plans in progress and results of tasks.

CMA (AAMA) CREDENTIAL:

When documenting a name, include the person's credentials. It is incorrect to list "MA" as a credential. The medical assistant is a job title that denotes a graduate of a medical assisting program who has not passed a national credentialing examination. The AAMA credential for the medical assisting profession is denoted by; CMA (AAMA). There is no official abbreviation or acronym to denote a student medical assistant.

The CMA (AAMA) represents only those medical assistants who have passed the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Exam offered by the AAMA Certifying Board and who have kept their CMA (AAMA) credential current through recertification. Use "medical assistant" or "medical assisting" when referring to a person working in the field or when referring to the profession itself. Use "CMA (AAMA)" only when referring to a medical assistant who has been certified by the AAMA Certifying Board and has maintained currency.

OUR PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION:

AAMA has divided the United States into five regions in determining the regional areas for hosting the AAMA annual conference. Nebraska is in the Midwest Region whose boundaries include:

Illinois	Missouri	Indiana	Nebraska	Iowa
Ohio	Kansas	Oklahoma	Michigan	Wisconsin

The Nebraska Society Charter was issued on 10-11-63. The original charter is no longer available.

NSMA is a nonprofit organization, however, is not tax-exempt. The NSMA Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN) is 51-0161835. This is also known as the Employer Identification Number (EIN). NSMA is "incorporated" indicating it is recognized by the State of Nebraska as a formal legal entity and is registered as the "Nebraska Society of Medical Assistants, Inc."

The NSMA Board of Directors (BOD) consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Speaker, Vice Speaker, Immediate Past President, and all standing committee chairs. The AAMA is a tri-level organization comprising national, state, and local levels. However,

Nebraska is a bi-level state society. The national association maintains the Executive Office in Chicago, Illinois. The Executive Office is comprised of several departments: Membership, Certification, Continuing Education, Certification, MarCom (Marketing and Communications), and Conference. Departments consist of a combination of volunteer members and paid staff.

The executive office: American Association of Medical Assistants, Inc.
20 N Wacker Drive Suite 3720
Chicago, ILL 60606-2903
1-800-228-2262 (1-800-ACT-AAMA)
312-899-1500
www.aama-ntl.org

State societies are chartered by and affiliated with the national association. Local chapters are chartered by and directly affiliated with their state society. Members are required to belong to all three levels unless there is no local chapter or state society available.

The national AAMA BOT consists of elected officers and is composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Speaker of the House, Vice Speaker of the House, Immediate Past President, and up to seven Trustees. The BOT is responsible for overseeing the financial affairs of the association, conducting business between annual meetings of the AAMA House of Delegates, and appointing members to boards, strategy teams, task forces, and committees.

AAMA has two educational boards. It is the responsibility of the AAMA Certifying Board (CB) to prepare, administer, and evaluate the credentialing examination for certification and recertification and to oversee the certification/recertify process. The AAMA Continuing Education Board (CEB) administers the continuing education program, which includes AAMA-approved continuing education articles, the CEU approval process, national conference educational sessions, self-study products, and participation in leadership training.

The AAMA Medical Assistant Education Review Board (MAERB) is responsible for the accreditation process of post-secondary medical assisting programs. This includes training surveyors and medical assisting program site visits.

The AAMA Endowment is a separate nonprofit organization established as a public foundation devoted to charitable and educational purposes. It has jurisdiction over the Maxine Williams Scholarship Fund.

ACTIVE BOD MEMBER BENEFITS:

A Board member contributes a great deal of extra time and work for the good of the Society. Serving as a member of the BOD also comes with a variety of perks. These may include reserved seating at special functions, expense reimbursement following established guidelines, paid AAMA dues, paid NSMA conference registration fee plus privileged knowledge of confidential business. However, a Board member is expected to earn these benefits by fulfilling all duties and responsibilities associated with the position they hold.

NSMA STANDING COMMITTEES IN ACTION

All committee chairs should establish yearly goals and objectives that develop programs for the future direction of NSMA. Creativity is the root of NSMA's ability to provide new and better services in a new and better way. To make progress, committee chairs should annually evaluate and define an issue or problem to address. Committees should research and design a clear and reasonable strategic plan that meets the current and future needs of NSMA.

Creativity without direction can end up as wasted energy. Ideas must be channeled towards productive ends and can be accomplished by developing clear and specific strategies. The committee chair is responsible for identifying and prioritizing key strategies.

Once a key issue is identified, the chair should prepare a written plan that details strategies, goals, objectives, and deadlines. Flexibility should be part of the plan so the committee is prepared for unanticipated events and receptive to revisions mid-course. The plan may involve enlisting other members to help. Large projects should utilize a team approach. The chair should make specific assignments using all available resources. There should be periodic reviews to measure progress. Implementing a plan is as important as designing one. The chair must facilitate turning concepts into realities. Strategies must move from the meeting room to committee action; from talk to action and follow through.

It may be sensible for a committee to focus on achieving one smaller goal at a time but remember to always move forward. All standing committees should be an active viable working component of NSMA. Each chair should leave their position with a successful advancement for the next chair to build on. No part of NSMA should be inactive or idle.

INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOKS For NSMA Officers & Committees

Permanent individual BOD **Notebooks** are expected to be maintained for each NSMA Board position. This comprehensive Notebook should provide the reader with a road map documenting in detail the duties and responsibilities of the position. An electronic copy of the Notebook should be updated and kept current. It is much more efficient for an organization to grow and move forward if it can build on the labor of those who have already served. Documenting actions enable NSMA to produce valuable and practical guidelines that will assist moving forward.

A properly developed Notebook will record a series of steps to follow and lay out an approach to accomplish routine tasks. It is an invaluable communication tool for bridging the gap between different committees and from term to term. Documentation of specific protocols will provide a systematic approach to implementing new and existing plans. It provides an organized series of steps, instructions, and samples to follow, ensuring consistent practices. A monthly officer/chair calendar is an important document to be included.

It is important not to overlook the need to keep these written procedural documents updated with current information. If actual duties change, the procedure statement should be updated to reflect

this change. At the end of each term, the officer/chair must edit and refresh all guidelines, forms, and procedures to ensure optimum operation. Master copies of all forms, letters, samples, etc. should be kept in plastic sheet protectors and filed in the BOD Notebook.

In addition to the individual Notebook, all BOD members will have access to a copy of the NSMA Procedure Manual to utilize as another information resource.

To help differentiate between the two guides, it is recommended that officers and chairs use a red binder for the BOD Notebook. The NSMA Procedure Manual is filed in a black binder and available electronically on the NSMA website.

After passing on the BOD Notebook, all retiring officers and committee chairs are to act as a resource and be available for assistance to incoming replacements facilitating a smooth transfer of responsibilities. Members retiring from a position should leave personal demographic information in the BOD Notebook to be available for mentoring.

Individual BOD Notebooks generally include the following information:

1. A current “NSMA Fact Sheet”, maintained in the Procedure Manual, that includes a description of term length, a listing of the requirements necessary to qualify for the position, and a list of the main responsibilities. The Fact Sheet should reflect if there are any mandatory assignments to other committees. There may be a list of benefits that are part of serving in the stated position. Recommendations are listed for the minimum required Notebook contents.
2. Each BOD Notebook should have an individualized month-by-month calendar for that position listing specifically what tasks need to be completed and in what time frame.
3. The notebook should include a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of people or groups likely to be contacted in the line of position duties. Include AAMA contacts and a current NSMA BOD roster.
4. Notebooks should have an adequate supply of NSMA stationery and envelopes for official NSMA business correspondence.
5. Preserve the previous year’s annual reports as well as copies of pertinent information and correspondence received or sent during the term as defined by the NSMA Fact Sheet and the Archive Committee. File a copy of the current year-end report in the Notebook before passing it on. Retain year-end reports for seven years.
6. Document whatever is necessary to prevent the next officer/chair from having to “reinvent the wheel”. Processes that don’t work are as important to record as those that do.
7. Retain current copies of forms necessary to perform and complete duties plus samples of standard letters.
8. Keep a current copy of the NSMA Bylaws and Standing Rules and the AAMA Bylaws.

