

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS

SECTION OF FORENSIC MEDICINE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The Section of Forensic Medicine is chartered by the Board of Directors (“the Board”) of the American College of Emergency Physicians (College) to provide a forum in which members of the College with special interests in forensic medicine can develop a knowledge base, share information, receive and give counsel, and serve as a resource to others interested in this area of emergency medicine.

Because sections are considered a subcategory of College membership, sections will not have separate bylaws or formal incorporation documents, and their existence and operations shall be subject to the terms and conditions stated in the Policy on Sections of Membership, as adopted and/or amended by the Board.

These operational guidelines have been drawn up to facilitate operation of the section. They shall conform to the Bylaws of the College, and the activities of the section to the decisions of the Board. Projects in the areas of education, internal governance, legislation, or public relations shall be undertaken only with the advice and consent of the Board. The activities of the section shall be intimately coordinated with those of the College.

1 Name

The name of this section shall be the Section of Forensic Medicine.

2 Purpose

To provide a forum within the College (ACEP) for members with a special interest or expertise in forensic medicine. To collaboratively share resources domestically and internationally in order to markedly improve patient care and to expand the knowledge base and resources of the fields of emergency and forensic medicine.

3 Objectives

In addition to the general objectives of the College as set forth in the Bylaws, the objectives of this section shall be:

- 3.1 Subspecialty development - To promote the worldwide development of the subspecialty of forensic medicine within the larger field and practice of emergency medicine.
- 3.2 Networking - To promote collegiality and cooperation among the physicians who practice both forensic and emergency medicine. To provide an opportunity for them to meet and interact both socially and professionally.
- 3.3 Communication – To provide methods of data transmission which are technologically advanced enough to increase the rate and quality of information exchange. Thereby increasing work productivity which will result in greater advances in the field of forensic medicine. The triad of newsletters, web page, and E-server comprise the minimum communication network the section shall provide to its members.
- 3.4 Research - To stimulate the quality and quantity of primary research within the field of forensic medicine. Those areas of forensic medicine which will be of particular interest will be those which interface with the larger study and practice of emergency medicine as a whole.
- 3.5 Education – To create and compile a specialized knowledge base which can be used as an authoritative source of information to meet the needs of a variety of target audiences.
- 3.6 Internal resource - To serve as a resource to the College president, Board of Directors, College committees, and ACEP members on issues relating to forensic medicine.

- 3.7 External resource - To liaison with other organizations involved in forensic medicine at the invitation of those organizations, ACEP members, the College president and/or Board of Directors.
- 3.8 Political - To advance and publicize legislative issues related to forensic medicine.
- 3.9 Leadership development - To provide a pathway for professional leadership development within the College.

4 Membership

- 4.1 The membership of the Section of Forensic Medicine shall consist of physicians who are interested in forensic medicine, who are interested in contributing toward the objectives of the section, and who fulfill membership requirements as defined in the College Bylaws. Section members who are in good standing with both ACEP and the section, may participate in and vote on section matters as well as be elected or appointed to section offices. .

5 Section External Governance

- 5.1 The Section of Forensic Medicine is a subcategory of College membership. It is not a separate legal entity, nor does it have the authority or autonomy from ACEP to function as such. All section activities and operations will be subject to the terms and conditions of all applicable College Policies, and Board decisions. The section will respond to no other outside influence.

6 Section Internal Governance

- 6.1 The internal governing body of the section shall be the executive committee. It shall include; one chair or two co-chairs, one vice chair, the immediate past chair or past co-chair(s), one secretary, one newsletter editor, one councillor and one alternate councillor. Each member has a vote which is equal to that of all the other committee members.
- 6.2 Nominees running for section office must be section members. Nominations will be accepted by ACEP section staff liaison via registered U.S. mail or by accepted electronic means no later than 45 days prior to elections. They will forward these to the chair of the section's nominating committee. The list of nominees will be presented to the section membership through its newsletter, web page, e-list, other electronic means, or the U.S mail at least 30 days prior to the section's annual general membership meeting, which will be held in conjunction with the College's annual *Scientific Assembly*. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted during the annual meeting.
- 6.3 The election cycle of the section's officers will be every two years, and will coincide with the dates of the *Scientific Assembly*. In addition, at the request of any section member, a vote maybe initiated at any annual meetings even those held during non-election years. The vote may encompass any or all of the elected positions and will be used to accomplish one of three goals. To affirm the present leadership, to remove unproductive or contentious leadership, or to fill leadership vacancies created by illness, death, resignation, and the like, during the preceding section year.
- 6.4 The election of officers shall be by a majority vote of the section members present and voting at the annual section general membership meeting. The section will elect a chair or two co-chairs, one vice chair, one secretary, one newsletter editor, one councillor, and at least one alternate councillor.
- 6.5 The steering committee is a standing committee which can be used at the discretion of the Executive committee to provide them with more input on important matters. It shall be composed of the chair or two co-chairs, immediate past-chair or past co-chair(s), vice chair, secretary, councillor, alternate councillor(s), newsletter editor, webmaster, and the Board liaison. It may

also include representatives from any section ad hoc, special, or standing committees, work groups, or task forces as well as any individual section members the executive committee deem to be necessary. Each member has a vote which is equal to that of all the other committee members.

7 Officers

The officers of the section shall be at a minimum the chair or two co-chairs, the vice chair, the immediate past-chair or past co-chair(s), secretary, newsletter editor, councillor, and alternate councillor(s). The officers shall be members of the section and serve for a term of two years. Following the chair or two co-chair's term of two years, there will be an additional two-year term designated as immediate past-chair or past co-chair(s). Officers may not serve more than two consecutive terms in any one position. There is no lifetime limit to the total number of terms a section member may serve in any or all positions.

7.1 Duties of the chair or co-chair(s) of the section:

- 7.1.1 May be appointed by the College president to serve as a voting member(s) of a related College committee if one exists.
- 7.1.2 May attend ACEP Board of Directors meetings at his/her own expense.
- 7.1.3 From time-to-time, section leaders may be asked by the President to attend the Board meetings of other entities. In this case, their expenses will be paid by the College.
- 7.1.4 Shall keep the Board of Directors and executive director informed of section activities by giving copies of correspondence, agenda, minutes of meetings, and the like, to the Board liaison and the ACEP section staff liaison.
- 7.1.5 Shall submit an annual report to the College president, the executive director, and the Board of Directors which shall consist of a summary of the section's achievements, and activities of the past year, as well as a thorough analysis of where they fell short of their goals and the reasons why. The report will also state the goals and objectives of the section for the coming year and will disclose any anticipated fiscal developments.
- 7.1.6 Shall serve as an officer(s) of the section. In the event that there are two co-chairs and one is unable to fulfill their duties, the other co-chair will function as the chair until either their term is up or the other co-chair becomes able to resume their duties as a co-chair.
- 7.1.7 The chair or one or both of the co-chairs shall preside at all section meetings. If the chair or both co-chairs are absent the vice chair will assume the functions of the chair or co-chairs.
- 7.1.8 Shall appoint chairs, co-chairs, and members to any ad hoc, special, or standing committees, work groups, or task forces of the section to carry out section activities.
- 7.1.9 Shall have the privilege of recommending to the College president the appointment of section members to committees of the College, or section members who could properly represent the interests of the College to external organizations.
- 7.1.10 Shall be an ex officio member(s) of all ad hoc, special or standing committees, work groups or task forces of the section with the exception noted in 7.1.12.
- 7.1.11 Shall review all section grant proposals developed by their section members. Those developed section grant proposals that are determined to be appropriate for submission are then signed and submitted to the appropriate committee or task force assigned to manage the section grant program.

- 7.1.12 Shall be voting member(s) of the executive and steering committees.
- 7.2 Duties of the vice chair:
 - 7.2.1 Shall serve as an officer of the section.
 - 7.2.2 Shall assist the chair or co-chair(s) in section duties as designated by the chair or co-chair(s).
 - 7.2.3 Shall serve as chair in the absence, resignation, or death of the chair or both co-chair(s).
 - 7.2.4 Shall be a voting member of the executive and steering committees.
- 7.3 Duties of the immediate past-chair or past co-chair(s):
 - 7.3.1 Shall serve as an officer(s) of the section.
 - 7.3.2 Shall serve as chair or co-chair(s) of the Section Nominating Committee.
 - 7.3.3 Shall assist the chair or co-chair(s) in section duties as designated by the chair or co-chair(s).
 - 7.3.4 Shall be a voting member of the nominating, executive, and steering committees.
- 7.4 Duties of the secretary:
 - 7.4.1 Shall take the minutes of the annual section general membership meeting and submit them to the executive committee, the Board liaison, and the ACEP section staff liaison for their approval and subsequent distribution to members.
 - 7.4.2 Shall provide the Board of Directors with the names of the elected section officers.
 - 7.4.3 Shall assist the section chair or co-chair(s) in their preparation for the annual section general membership meeting and the chair or co-chair's of other committees of the section, as requested.
 - 7.4.4 Shall distribute to the membership via the section newsletter, web page or other accepted electronic means.
 - 7.4.4.1 The minutes of all annual general membership meetings, all executive or steering committee meetings whether held in person, by internet, or conference call, all other official section meetings.
 - 7.4.4.2 The section annual report which is submitted to the College president, the executive director, and the Board.
 - 7.4.4.3 Such information as shall from time to time be of interest to members of the section.
 - 7.4.5 Shall notify members regarding their appointment to any committees of the section and shall send copies of such notification to the executive director of the College via the ACEP section staff liaison.

- 7.4.6 Shall give due notice of all the general membership meetings of the section and meetings of the executive and steering committees to the section membership and the Board of Directors of the College via the ACEP section staff liaison and the Board liaison.
- 7.4.7 Shall carry out such other duties as are assigned by the chair or co-chairs of the section and the Board of Directors of the College.
- 7.4.8 Shall serve as an officer of the section and a voting member of the executive and steering committees.
- 7.5 Duties of the newsletter editor:
 - 7.5.1 Shall coordinate the activities necessary to produce two to four newsletters a year. This shall be an elected position.
 - 7.5.2 Shall present the final draft of each newsletter to the section executive committee and the Board liaison. They must give their approval prior to submitting it to the ACEP section staff liaison for formatting and distribution.
 - 7.5.3 Shall have the authority to create and fill positions which they believe are necessary to fulfill their duties. These will be disclosed to the executive committee for their final approval.
 - 7.5.4 Shall be a voting member of the steering committee.
- 7.6 Duties of the webmaster:
 - 7.6.1 Shall be the liaison designated by the section leadership to work with ACEP staff and information technology products and/or services when the implementation of section objectives can best be achieved through multimedia interfaces.
 - 7.6.2 Shall be responsible for presenting plans to, and initiating discussions with, the executive committee to help them further the goals of the section by utilizing the most effective communication and education technology available.
 - 7.6.3 Shall be appointed to this position yearly by the executive committee. There is no limit, either consecutively or lifetime, to the number of terms a member may serve in this position.
 - 7.6.4 Shall have the authority to create and fill positions which they believe are necessary to fulfill their duties. These will be disclosed to the executive committee for their final approval.
 - 7.6.5 Shall be a voting member of the steering committee.

8 Councillor

- 8.1 The section shall elect a councillor and alternate councillor(s) to represent the section to the Council of the College (Council). Elections will be held at the annual section general membership meeting. Term of office is two years, with the alternate councillor(s) becoming the councillor at the end of his/her two-year term. If he/she cannot serve as councillor, the section shall elect a member to fill both positions and resume the normal progression from alternate councillor(s) to councillor. If there is more than one alternate councillor who wishes to transition into the councillor position then a section vote will be held during the annual elections to determine who

shall do so. The office of councillor and alternate councillor(s) may be held individually for no more than two consecutive terms. There is no limit to the number of terms a member may serve in either of these positions during their lifetime.

8.2 Duties of the councillor and alternate councillor(s):

8.2.1 Shall represent the section at all Council meetings.

8.2.2 Shall have duties, obligations, and privileges as designated by the Bylaws and procedures adopted by the Council.

8.2.3 Shall keep the section informed of all pertinent Council activities before, during, and between Council sessions and shall report these matters to the section via its newsletter, web page, or other accepted electronic means.

8.2.4 Shall bring any resolutions that are developed by the section to the Council.

8.2.5 Shall serve as officers of the section.

8.2.6 Shall be voting members of the steering committee.

9 Standing and Special Committees

9.1 The chair or co-chairs shall appoint a nominating committee as a standing committee and shall designate the immediate past-chair or co-chairs to serve as the chair or co-chair(s) of that committee. In addition to the immediate past-chair or past co-chair(s), the nominating committee shall consist of at least three other section members. See sections 6, 7, 8 and 14 of this document for further information on the nomination/election process.

9.2 The section chair or co-chairs shall appoint ad hoc, special or standing committees, work groups or task forces when indicated. They may discontinue or change the structure of any committee as long as those changes are in accordance with the section's Operational Guidelines. If they desire to make changes which the guidelines do not grant them the authority to make, they must amend the Operational Guidelines in the manner described in section 15 of this document.

9.3 The steering committee shall be a standing committee whose composition and function is described in section 6.5.

9.4 The standing committees of Research, Pediatrics, Adult/Adolescent Sexual Assault, and Education/Communication will report at least annually to the executive committee.

9.5 The executive committee is responsible for conducting an annual review of the structure, function, and usefulness of all section committees.

10 Meetings

The annual general membership meeting of the section will be held during the annual *Scientific Assembly* of the College and may consist of two portions:

10.1 A professional program open to all members of the College, professionals, paraprofessionals, and guests invited by the section.

10.2 A business meeting open to all members of the College with voting limited to section members.

10.3 At their own expense, sections may hold special meetings at other ACEP functions.

10.4 Sections may seek outside funding support for their meeting as long as it is not in conflict with the College's fund raising activities associated with Scientific Assembly.

11 Dues

The dues for the section are established by the Board of Directors of the College.

12 Additional Funding for Activities

12.1 To increase its funds, the section may apply for: 1) An allocation of 15% of its total dues collected during the previous year; or 2) A one-time per project voluntary special assessment.

12.2 The section may raise funds from outside entities such as corporations. All such fundraising must be approved in advance by the College and meet the criteria established by the College.

12.3 The section may apply for a section grant. Projects can be funded which benefit individual sections as well as advance emergency medicine and educate the public.

13 Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary authority for all proceedings of the section shall be the parliamentary authority approved for use for proceedings of the College. However, should conflicts or inconsistencies arise between the parliamentary authority and this instrument, this instrument shall govern.

14 Voting

14.1 Voting on any issue, except amendments to these Operational Guidelines and the election of officers, may be accomplished either during the annual section general membership meeting, or via a mail ballot. Mail ballots can be by electronic means and/or via the U. S. mail. The chair shall determine which method is appropriate for each item coming before the Section.

14.2 For electronic and U.S. mail ballots, the voting membership will be defined as that portion of the section membership which is in good standing on the date the ballot is sent. The quorum for a vote will be the number of section members who had the interest and motivation to respond to the multiple solicitations to vote. A simple majority vote of that quorum will be considered the will of the section. A minimum of 10% of the section members must vote for the quorum to be valid. It is the responsibility of members to make certain that their electronic and U.S. mail address information is both accurately registered with ACEP, and that they have no compatibility issues on their end which might interfere with their ability to fully participate in all section activities.

14.2.1 Voting or data acquisition by electronic means Either Snap Survey software will be used to mail the ballot/survey electronically and to tally the results or section members will be notified of a hyperlink through which they may vote or express their opinions.

Notice of a proposed vote/survey followed by a discussion of the issues at hand will occur at least 30 days prior to the actual vote/survey. The initial notice will be sent by electronic means to all eligible section members. A second notice, accompanied by a summary of the discussions which ensued since the first notice, will be sent by electronic means 14 days after the first. The ballot/survey will then be created by the executive committee and be submitted to the ACEP section staff liaison and the section Board liaison for approval. After approval it will be submitted for electronic formatting by the Snap Survey software. After this is completed a third electronic notice will be sent to section members. It will contain information about, how to vote or to complete the survey, the date and time the vote/survey will commence and conclude, and the estimated date by which the results will be tallied. Section members shall be allowed a minimum of 10 days during which to vote or to complete the survey.

14.2.2 Voting or data acquisition by U.S. Mail

Notice of a proposed vote/survey followed by a discussion of the issues at hand will occur at least 30 days prior to the actual vote/survey. The initial notice will be sent by U.S. mail to all eligible section members. A second notice, accompanied by a summary of the discussions which ensued since the first notice, will be sent by U.S. mail 14 days after the first. The ballot/survey will then be created by the executive committee and be submitted to the ACEP section staff liaison and the section Board liaison for approval. After approval a third notice which contains the actual ballot/survey will be sent to section members by U.S. mail. It will also contain information about, how to complete the ballot/survey, the date and time the vote/survey will commence and conclude, and the estimated date by which the results will be tallied. Executed mail ballots/surveys will be forwarded by U.S. mail to the ACEP section staff liaison for official tabulation.

14.2.3 Voting or data acquisition in person

In person discussions and voting can occur during any official gathering of the section leadership or the general membership. However the election of officers and amendments to the Operational Guidelines shall only take place during the annual section general membership meeting. The number of eligible section members present will be the quorum. A motion shall pass if a simple majority of that quorum votes to approve it. The only exception to this will be the higher standard used when voting on amendments to the guidelines as described in section 15 of this document.

14.2.4 Voting or data acquisition by other methods

The section acknowledges that communication methods are increasing so rapidly that the Operational Guidelines can't be written in a manner which will cover every contingency. If the College approves an applied technology which based on these guidelines is not yet approved for section use. The section executive committee is authorized to utilize those instruments or vehicles when conducting section business until such time as a formal amendment to the section guidelines can be written and voted on.

15 Amendments

Any member of the section membership may originate a proposed change in these section Operational Guidelines. Proposed amendments to the Operational Guidelines must be submitted in writing via accepted electronic means or registered U.S. mail to the chair or co-chairs in care of the ACEP section staff liaison at least ninety (90) days prior to the scheduled annual meeting.

Proposed amendments will be published in the section newsletter, posted on the section web page, or distributed via other accepted electronic means or by U.S. mail immediately preceding the annual meeting of the section, and will be placed on the meeting agenda. Any proposed amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the eligible section members present and voting during the annual section general membership meeting. No amendment shall be officially adopted until it receives Board approval.

After the vote, the section executive committee and the Board of Directors of the College will review any amendments adopted by the section. Amendments approved by the Board of Directors of the College will be published in the next available section newsletter or the news of their approval will be released to section members via an approved alternate means of communication.