

Checklist for Starting a Local Council

#	Action	Date Completed
	PRE APPROVAL ACTIONS & EVENTS	
	Always pray before every meeting & before doing any work for the Council. It has given us strength, guidance & assurance that God really wanted us to start a Council and be there for our nursing peers. Nurses are always supporting others and this is a way to support them. Mary Pellizzari R.N. & Eula Sforza, RN on “How to start a Diocesan Council of Nurses” in <i>The Fall River Diocesan Council News</i> ; 28March 2009.	
	Initial Planning Group. Form a small group for initial planning 2-5 Catholic nurses who are committed to NACN-USA’s mission.	
	NACN-USA Regional Director. Involve the NACN-USA Regional Director from the beginning. Contact the NACN-USA Regional Director for information. (S)he can facilitate sending a message to potential members via MailChimp	
	Geographic Area. Decide the expanse of your council. Will the council be within one parish, one community, a whole diocese, or a multistate regional council (e.g. Memphis, Tennessee); Know the boundaries and circumstances of your diocese.	
	Ecclesial Permission. Contact your bishop through the diocesan chancery office. Obtain permission to form the Council and comply with any guidance or direction given by your bishop.	
	Interest Meeting. Plan and conduct an interest meeting (e.g. Meet & Greet), inviting friends, co-workers and other interested nurses. Location: Parish, Hospital, other location. Possible format: 1) Priest welcomes group and opens meeting with formal prayer 2) Purpose: acquaint Catholic Nurses with the concept of a diocesan council & the importance & benefits of having a council – (e.g. Provide nurses with spiritual support, information about difficult medical & legal ethics that many are encountering today) 3) Gather names, addresses and phone numbers of those interested 4) Questionnaire regarding issues, concerns and ideas they may have (optional) 5) Seek volunteers to serve as: President, Vice President, Secretary & Treasurer 6) Give nurses opportunity to donate seed money for initial costs and postage	
	Follow-up with the Bishop as required from initial meeting. Let him know how the interest meeting went and how many nurses were interested. Ask the bishop to: 1) Permission to form the diocesan council (must provide bishop’s letter to NACN-USA) 2) Appoint a Spiritual Director who might be a hospital chaplain or priest with legal or medical background.	
	NACN-USA Regional Director. Contact the NACN-USA Regional Director for information. (S)he can facilitate sending a message to potential members via MailChimp	
	FORMATION MEETINGS	
	Formation Meetings – Acting Officers hold formation meetings and complete the following:	
	Review Resources on NACN-USA website to include NACN Bylaws and sample local council bylaws, brochures etc. https://nacn-usa.org/about-us/local-councils/	
	Name the Council, Choose a Patron Saint, A Motto, and a Logo.	
	Write Bylaws – that are in concert with the NACN-USA national by-laws. National and sample local council by-laws are available on the local council site	
	Dues. Establish dues structure	
	Address. Obtain a post office box or stable address	
	Design a membership application. 1) Include statement that members join the national organization: NACN-USA separately as “constituent members” and pay dues directly online. Membership in NACN-USA also includes membership in CICIAMS (the International Catholic Committee of Nurses and	

Medical Social Assistants). A constituent members is one who belongs both the NACN-USA and a Local or Regional Council. The Council is reimbursed \$10/each constituent member. 2) May want to include the disclaimer Disclosure: By providing my contact information I understand that this information may be shared internally with the local council Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and members for the purpose of networking and collaborating within and growing our organization and for mutual support. Members are advised NOT to share contact information externally.	
Obtain an EIN or utilize one from the Diocesan Office	
Consider whether you need to establish 501C3 status. Some local councils are under their Diocese. Other are separate 501C3.	
Determine whether you need to open a bank account	
Determine if insurance is needed or if covered by parish/diocese.	
Plan your first program (The Vice President is a great asset to plan programs). First program can be spiritual or educational. One organization had a psychologist present on burnout at the president's hospital. God will send you the help and talent you need.	
Advertise your existence in: Diocesan newspaper, all parish bulletins, hospitals, nursing homes etc.	
Ask your diocese for permission to obtain the names of nurses registered in the Diocese and send them a personal invitation (This is what the Mid-South Area Association of Catholic Nurses Council in the Diocese of Memphis did).	
Establish a routine time to meet. Some meet on 1 st Fridays and also hold a 1 st Friday devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Some meet on 1 st Saturdays and hold a 1 st Saturday devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Some meet quarterly and semi-annually host a speaker and the other two meets are planning, sharing and praying session. The format and timing reflects the needs of the membership. Some councils join with other local councils in events. Others band together and include the NACN-USA national meeting as one of the meetings.	
Complete Council in formation information sheet deciding 1) Who will be the point of contact for the new local/regional council. 2) Do you wish your email to be placed on the NACN-USA website Local Councils OR do you prefer to receive email via the generic NACN-USA email catholicnurses@nacn-usa and have these forwarded to you.	
Determine if additional officers or committees desired. (e.g. parish representative, hospital or school of nursing representative, newsletter etc.)	
Consider publishing a newsletter sent out at least twice a year.	
Submit documents describing Council Mission, By-Laws, Governance, and Financial Structure to NACN-USA Board of Directors for approval prior to being recognized as a an affiliated entity of NACN- USA. (NACN-USA Bylaws, Article XVII, Section 2, 1)	
Provide NACN-USA Treasurer a list of Constituent Members (Local council members who have also paid the \$50 NACN-USA dues). Treasurer will verify membership and return to the local council \$10/constituent member. CatholicNurses@nacn-usa.org	
COUNCILS IN ACTION	
Share meetings / program information with Regional Director and notify him/her if you would like the information shared through MailChimp and/or the newsletter	
Share information nationally through the NACN-USA newsletter, Facebook, MailChimp and providing to your Regional Director for their monthly board report.	
Plan for succession of officers so local council continues after initial forming committee has served.	
Continue to invite new members by contacting hospitals, parishes, school of nursing etc.	
Distribute NACN-USA national newsletter to members.	
Advertise NACN-USA national meeting to members. Consider funding attendance should funds or parish budget allow.	
Advertise CICIAMS meeting to members.	
Provide 1-2 page annual report to Bishop as indicated	

Resources are available at: <https://nacn-usa.org/about-us/local-councils/>

- 1) [Reasons to Start a Council](#)
- 2) [How to Start a Council](#)
- 3) [Pope Pius XI Call to Establish Catholic Nursing Organizations](#)
- 4) [NACN-USA Brochure](#)
- 5) [NACN-USA Flier](#)
- 6) [Sample Newsletter – Winter 2016](#)
- 7) [NACN Bylaws-Revised & Approved 2016](#)
- 8) [2016-Conference Registration Brochure](#)
- 9) [2014-Conference Postcard/Bulletin Announcement](#)
- 10) [2017-Conference Save-the-Date Postcard](#)
- 11) Article by Brother Perkins – [Explains the importance of developing moral communities of clinicians](#), p10-12.
- 12) [Open Letter to Bishops & For Networking](#)

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