



Forming an FFTA Chapter

What is an FFTA Chapter?

All Chapters are organized around a Basis of Affiliation. The Basis of Affiliation of any Chapter may be the operation of a treatment foster care program in a particular state, province or region. Or, it may be any other commonality held by the Chapter members. **At least four FFTA agency members that share the Basis of Affiliation, and are in good standing, can submit a petition to form a chapter.**

Benefits of Chapter Formation

By bringing together members into an FFTA chapter, individualized FFTA member agencies will reap many benefits such as improved education opportunities, legislative activities and outreach at the local level. *There is strength in numbers.*

If chapters operate effectively they can serve as a major benefit for agency members. For example, due to budget restraints, many individuals can't attend national conferences or training programs held outside of their region. The chapter can provide cost-effective educational opportunities through regional programming.

The chapter is an important vehicle that helps the FFTA to be a member-driven organization. Chapters are a key linkage in the overall FFTA structure. They are the focal point for serving FFTA's members on a local basis. Also, a chapter can be an important resource for providing vital member input into the national organization.

Chapters may not have special requirements as a basis of membership, however, a member of a chapter must be a member of the national association.

The Council of Chapter Chairs

The Council of Chapter Chairs (CCC) is comprised of all FFTA Chapter Chairs. The role of the CCC is to provide support and networking opportunities for chapter chairs and to advise the Board of Directors on strategic issues of the membership. A minimum of two current Chapter Chairs serve on the FFTA Board of Directors. The FFTA Board of Directors strives to have a minimum of five current or former chapter chairs amongst its membership.

The Council elects one of its members as its Chairperson. The CCC Chair is responsible for leading the Council of Chapter Chairs in meeting its goals. In addition, the CCC Chair will be responsible for sharing information between the FFTA Board of Directors and the CCC. He or she will also report on the Council's activities at each Board meeting.

The members of the CCC meet in person at least once a year, generally immediately prior to FFTA's Annual Conference. They also meet by conference call approximately every two months. The CCC may schedule other meetings at other times of the year. CCC meetings are structured to bring necessary chapter information to the Board of Directors or appropriate FFTA committee for the purpose of enhancing FFTA association goals and its mission.

Chapter Officer Job Descriptions

Each chapter is required to elect at a minimum a Chapter Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer (or a combined Secretary/Treasurer). Similar titles such a President, Vice-President, etc. *cannot* be used in lieu of these titles.

It is important that the chapter officers understand their specific responsibilities. The job descriptions below provide a good overview of the volunteer positions; however, an officer may be assigned a special assignment from time-to-time, as designated by the Chapter Chair, Board of Directors or FFTA Administrator.

Chapter Chairperson

The Chapter Chairperson is responsible for:

- Executing the policies and decisions of the Board of Directors and Council on Chapter Chairs.
- Working with the Vice Chair - Programs and Meetings to ensure that meetings are planned in accordance with ARTICLE IX, SECTION IV, Section Three of the FFTA Bylaws.
- Presiding at all chapter meetings. If unable to attend, arrange for the chapter vice-chairperson to chair the meeting.
- Appointing a chair for each committee of the Chapter.
- Ensuring the ongoing planning and organizing of chapter meetings and the posting of chapter meetings on the FFTA website.
- Overseeing the proper administration of the fiscal affairs of the chapter.
- Enforcing the bylaws in chapter operations.
- Representing the Chapter on, and actively participating in, the Council of Chapter Chairs.

Chapter Vice-Chair

It is recommended, but not necessary that the chapter vice-chair be the chairperson-elect. To ensure continuity in chapter leadership, many chapters elect its vice-chair with this in mind. This officer position is responsible for:

- Performing all the duties and responsibilities of the chair, in his or her absence, including attending the meetings of the CCC, if the chair is unable to attend.
- Other duties as may be assigned by the chapter chair

Secretary/Treasurer

In larger Chapters, the duties of Secretary/Treasurer may be divided into two officers - a Secretary and a Treasurer. When combined, the duties of the Secretary/Treasurer are to:

- Maintain accurate minutes of Chapter Board meetings and distribute them to the Chapter Board and the FFTA Administrator.
- Oversee the annual chapter officer elections and verify that they are conducted in accordance with the FFTA Bylaws. This includes implementing chapter elections **by October 15th** of each year.
- Ensure that checks payable to FFTA or the local chapter are sent within 7 days of receipt, to the National office for depositing into the chapter's fund account.

FFTA's Responsibilities to Chapters

The FFTA supports chapters in the following ways:

- Provides on-going consultation to member agencies. From time-to-time, one of the FFTA staff members, the President, or a Board member may be available for participation in chapter meetings.
- Ensures communications between the chapters and Board of Directors through the Council of Chapter Chairs.
- Encourages the formation of chapters through FFTA mailings and other member communications.
- Provides membership recruitment kits and other promotional material.
- Supplies listings of chapter members and if available, local-area prospective members.
- Coordinates mailings and telephone conference calls as requested by the CCC Chair.
- Offers administrative supplies such as chapter letterhead, camera-ready copies of FFTA logos, logos on disk, etc.
- Upon receipt of details from a chapter, promotes chapters' meetings/trainings on the FFTA website.
- Provides administrative and operating guidelines through a chapter handbook.
- Offers event-planning consultation services (i.e.: negotiating facility contracts, recommendations for speakers, etc.)

- Manages the chapters' financial accounts and provides quarterly reports.
- Provides a Chapter web page on the FFTA website.

Chapter Responsibilities to FFTA

Chapters are required to elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer (or a combined secretary/treasurer position), **by October 15th of each year**. The term will run on a calendar year basis.

In accordance with the FFTA Bylaws, “the chapter is subject to abide by all resolutions passed by the board, support all activities of the FFTA, strive to encourage members to meet FFTA standards of practice, and encourage membership. The Board may reverse any action taken by the chapter at any time, that in the opinion of the board, is not in the best interests of FFTA.”

Each Chapter shall keep written minutes of all of its meetings and shall provide copies thereof to the Board of Directors via the FFTA Administrator. Chapters should send their meeting minutes to the FFTA Administrator as soon after the meeting as possible.

In addition, each Chapter is required by the FFTA Bylaws to prepare a written annual report for the inclusion in the FFTA *Annual Report*. The written annual report shall contain narrative describing the activities of the chapter for the indicated period, and financial reports accurately reflecting the financial activities of the chapter for the indicated period.

Chapters are encouraged to provide the FFTA Administrator with details on upcoming chapter meetings/programs for inclusion in the online FFTA Calendar of Professional Events and for the chapter's website page.

If you are interested in helping form a chapter in your area, contact Melissa Cole at the FFTA office at (800) 414-3382, ext. 113; e-mail: ffta@ffta.org