

Membership Recruitment Commission Program

Approved by NAECE – May 5, 2019

Approved by ACEC Membership Committee – May 6, 2019

Approved by ACEC ExCom in August 2019

Summary:

ACEC strives for membership growth by attracting new members and retaining existing members at the state and national level. This membership effort is a partnership between the state Member Organizations (MOs) and the ACEC National membership team. The pipeline for membership is through the MOs. ACEC needs to ensure all MOs have the resources necessary to grow and diversify membership, thus impacting program participation, PAC involvement, advocacy engagement and more.

ACEC National has recently implemented several new membership focused initiatives to assist MOs in this effort, including the NAECE Executive Toolkit, a refreshed Value Proposition, and New Members Onboarding campaign. Additional materials and resources are planned in the coming months.

Background:

The Recruitment Commission Program was established in 1996 to increase member recruitment. The plan requires the MO to hire a full time membership recruiter. ACEC National pays a commission to the MO for each new member firm. The commission structure is as follows: 40% of nationals dues for year one, 20% in year two, and 10% in year three. It has historically been utilized by a very few number of larger MOs over the years. It is currently only used by CA, IL and NY. The criticism of the program has been that it is unfair to MOs who cannot afford to hire a full time recruiter.

In October 2016, ExCom authorized a taskforce to examine the issue of membership recruitment commissions. The taskforce met three times and made a recommendation to ExCom in January 2017 for “broadening the current ‘recruitment commissions’ program and making it available to all MOs regardless of their staffing situation...”.

In January 2017 ExCom voted to sunset the Recruitment Commission Program over the coming three years. In March 2017, the three participating MOs (CA, IL, NY) sent a formal request to ExCom to reinstate the program. ExCom agreed in April 2017 to put the decision on hold and await a new recommendation from a NAECE AdHoc committee.

In July 2018, the NAECE AdHoc Committee formalized a recommendation to the Membership Committee for a four-tier program. That recommendation was put on hold, pending review of the plan, benefits and financial analysis, by the new incoming ACEC CEO. A self-funded line item of \$250,000 is currently contemplated in the proposed FY2020-2022 budget for this program, as requested by the AdHoc Committee.

Recommendation:

During the NAECE Winter meeting in November 2018, it was requested that ACEC National membership staff review the four-tier program, as well as conduct an analysis of the MO membership statistics for the past several years, and make a recommendation for a new structure during the NAECE spring meeting. This recommendation has been vetted with the NAECE President and President-Elect, as well as the leadership of the current participating MOs and those involved in drafting the four-tier plan.

The recommended plan is built on the following principles:

- Objectives of the Plan: Member growth, Simplistic, Equitable
- Propose one year plan for FY20 to be reviewed and evaluated July 2020 for adjustments/continuation
- Align plan to ACEC's Strategic Goal of 2% year-over-year firm growth
- Commission based on net growth (added firms less dropped firms) beyond the 2% goal
- No membership staff requirement (recruitment can be done by staff and/or volunteers)
- New Member Firms are define as firms that have not been a member for the past two years

Member Organizations must exceed 2% net member firm growth to be eligible. MOs will receive \$695 for each net growth firm, including branch offices of existing Pay Direct Member Firms. This one-time commission will be paid the year the firm joins. Commissions will be paid annually at the close of the ACEC Fiscal Year (June 30), following receipt and verification of the MO's Fourth Quarter Dues Report.