

American Wine Society® Policies and Practices

(Revised Feb.16, 2016)

The American Wine Society (Society) is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation founded in October 1967 in Hammondsport, New York, and was incorporated November 13, 1973 in the State of Michigan.

The purposes of the Society are to promote the appreciation of wine, especially American wine, to foster the knowledge of oenology, to promote the responsible use of wine, and to educate wine tasters, winemakers, wine-grape growers, and the wine-consuming public.

A Board of Directors (BOD) governs the affairs of the Society. The BOD shall have the powers and duties necessary or appropriate for the administration of the affairs of this Society and may do all acts and things that are not prohibited by law or by the Articles of Incorporation or the Society's Bylaws. A description of board-adopted policies and practices follows.

The name "American Wine Society®" is a registered trademark of the American Wine Society in the US Patent and Trademark Office.

The most recent version of the AWS Bylaws and Policies & Procedures should be posted on the AWS website in the "members only" area.

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1. Membership Dues

- If a person joins as a **new member** between July 1 and November 1, they may pay half-year dues and receive all publications issued from that day forward.

- If they join and pay for the conference, they may pay full membership and receive membership through the following calendar year, or they may pay half-year dues and apply only to the end of the current calendar year.
- If they join as new members after November 1, they may pay full year dues and receive membership through the end of the following calendar year.
- In order to qualify as renewing a membership, dues must be paid no later than March 1. After this date, the membership will have lapsed and will not be able to renew through the AWS website. To renew their membership after March 1, they will have to contact the National Office.
- If a member is renewing (whether before or after March 1), they must pay full dues for the current calendar year. If renewing December 1 or later, dues may be applied to the following calendar year.
- The National Office has some discretion to make exceptions to these guidelines if they feel it is in the best interest of providing good service to an AWS member.
- Student memberships are available to full time college students ages 21- 30 in order to let them learn about AWS at a reduced dues rate. If asked, the student should provide a copy of their student ID as verification of enrollment. A person may stay as a Student member for a maximum of three (3) years. Student members must agree to receive the AWS Wine Journal by e-mail rather than a paper copy. Student members may have a second person at the same address on the membership with them.

2. Refunds

- **Dues** are normally non-refundable. In unique situations, the Executive Director is allowed to make a dues refund with the reason documented in the member's record.
- **Conference fees** for registration, outside events, etc, are normally fully refundable up to a specified date, 80% refundable up to a second specified date (usually 2 weeks prior to conference). No refund should be made after the final refund cutoff date except in the case of illness or death of the participant or someone in the immediate family. In this case, a note from a doctor or a copy of an obituary should be provided as proof for a full refund.

3. Expense Reimbursement

- An expense reimbursement form should be completed for each expense reimbursement request. This form and accompanying instructions may be updated as needed by the Treasurer to reflect current reimbursement policy. This form may be used by AWS officers, employees, standing committees, national committee chairs, and Regional Vice Presidents and other AWS members in special situations.
- Regional Vice Presidents and other official Executive Advisory Board Members may request up to \$100 in reimbursement for actual expenses incurred for travel to the mid-year (spring) EAB meeting. Reimbursement for attending the fall EAB meeting is not permitted because it is held at the time of the annual conference.
- All reimbursement forms must be submitted to the President and Treasurer for approval prior to payment.

4. Additional Officer Duties

- Past President usually serves as the chair of the nominating committee for the slate of officers running for election in the two years following his/her Presidency. He/she must assemble a committee composed of at least two additional representatives from different states and provinces.
- President serves as a voting member of the American Wine Society Educational Foundation.

- Vice President serves as the Board liaison to the Regional Vice Presidents, communicating with them and offering assistance in the development of new chapters.
- Vice President serves as the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee.

5. Website Links Policy

- As general practice, AWS will not place advertising or links on the website unless the company is an AWS sponsor or Professional Member.
- All advertising and/or website links (banner, commercial, etc) posted on the AWS website shall be approved by the Executive Director and President for appropriateness and content. In addition, the Executive Director shall notify the Board of Directors of the intention to post an ad or link at least (2) weeks prior to it being put on the website.
- Charges for advertising and website links shall be determined by the Executive Director and President each year and submitted to the Board of Directors at the spring board meeting for approval.
- These policies apply only to links for cross-promotion or paid advertising purposes. Links offered as a benefit of Professional Membership are not included.

6. Bulk Publication Sales Rates

The Executive Director shall keep a list of purchase prices for all books, Journals, and other AWS publications. This list shall be submitted to the Board of Directors each year at the spring board meeting for approval.

7. Data Release from Amateur and Commercial Wine Competitions

The American Wine Society will not release the names of wineries and wines that do not receive awards at wine competitions sponsored by the national American Wine Society. Releasing names of non-winners may generate negative publicity and may discourage their entry in future competitions.

8. Chapter Certification

Article VIII, Section 5 of the AWS Bylaws lists these qualifications to be considered a chapter of the American Wine Society.

Section 5. Qualifications. In order to be considered a Chapter of the American Wine Society, the Chapter must meet the following minimum requirements. Any chapter not meeting these requirements may be deactivated by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

- a) The activities of each Chapter will be in furtherance of the purposes for which the American Wine Society is formed and exists.
- b) The Chapter shall have a minimum of eight (8) members according to the records of the National Office.
- c) The Chapter shall be actively conducting events for its members
- d) The Chapter shall have a designated Chapter Chairman or Co-Chapter Chairmen who is/are the primary communication point for the National Office
- e) The Chapter shall enforce the guest policy as described in Section 3

Section 3. Guests. A member may bring one or more guests to any Chapter or Regional Meeting. No individual shall be a guest of the Society on more than three occasions.

Additional qualification: Chapters shall be operated for the benefit of members and not the profit of any individual or entity.

The National Office and Director of Member Services shall monitor chapter membership quarterly and the Executive Director shall contact any chapter that does not meet the qualifications as well as the RVP for that Region. The RVP should work with the chapter and the chapter shall have sixty (60) days to correct the situation.

The Executive Director shall inform the BOD of any chapters that do not meet the qualifications and the BOD may vote to deactivate the chapter and remove them from the website menu and chapter directory. The President has the option to personally contact that chapter prior to BOD vote to deactivate the chapter

New chapters may be added to the website menu and/or chapter directory prior to meeting all qualifications in order to assist them in attracting new members and shall be monitored for completion of qualifications with in a three month period.

A list of dues-paid members for the chapter is usually provided to chapter chairs by the National Office at the beginning of each month.

Each year, the Vice-president will send a letter to all current chapter chairs and regional vice presidents explaining this aspect of the AWS Bylaws.

Non-members may attend up to three AWS events before membership becomes mandatory to continue attending. Chapters are strongly encouraged to provide a sign in sheet at each event to assist in monitoring membership.

9. Professional Membership Benefits

- All benefits of regular membership plus...
- Professional member plaque, with annual plates mailed for each subsequent year of membership
- Listing in *AWS NEWS* at least once per year
- Listing in the Professional Member Directory which shall be available to all on the AWS website and e-mailed to all AWS members twice per year
- Posting of logo, website link and short description of business on AWS website for all viewers, as long as membership is active
- Preferential treatment on AWS social media platforms
- 10% discount on advertising placed in the *AWS Wine Journal* or *AWS NEWS* and on conference exhibits.

10. AWS Board's Authority to Encumber Future Boards

The Board of Directors are not empowered to enter into contracts which bind the society for a period greater than one year without providing for approval of the contract in each succeeding year by the current Board. Excluded from this policy are those contracts that concern the business management of the Society such as purchase of equipment, services, or technology, contracts to secure future conference venues, or contracts necessary for the efficient administration of the Society that will cause the Society to be bound longer than a one year

11. Membership Mailing List for Sale

The addresses (street or e-mail addresses) of AWS members are generally not available for sale or use by another individual, organization or company. However, subject to the discretion of the Executive Director, and with Board approval, the list may be provided to an individual, organization or company for specific one-time or multiple-time use in exchange for monetary or in-kind benefits that the Executive Director feels are in the best interest of AWS and do not violate our responsibility to provide a reasonable level of privacy for AWS members.

(Agreement form to be used for buyers to agree to one-time use includes wording that "if used again, buyer agrees to be billed for each subsequent use." A "dummy" address should be inserted to the database to track such mailings.)

12. Logo Use

The Executive Director may authorize the use of the AWS logo by individuals or other entities, AWS members or otherwise, in circumstances where it is beneficial to AWS. The logo may not be altered in any way, and may not be placed on items to be sold by anyone except AWS without written permission. The ED should consult the BOD if the request is unusual. AWS should know in what context the logo is going to be used and it should be approved for that purpose. The ED may send a letter authorizing use of the logo as requested, making clear that any other use will require clearance from the Executive Director.

13. Regional Vice-Presidents (RVP)

In addition to the guidelines provided in the by-laws and the position description for RVP's, the following guidelines apply:

- A region can be designated and a RVP appointed by the President with concurrence of the BOD as needed
- A region may be smaller than a state, the exact boundaries of a state, or a group of contiguous states.
- The AWS Vice President is responsible for communicating with the Regional Vice Presidents regarding all aspects of their duties, clarifying as needed and supporting the RVP's efforts. The RVP may work with the Director of Member Services and the President to designate a region as needed.

14. Ballot Counting Procedure

From Bylaws: The President shall annually appoint a committee of vote tellers who shall be responsible for the issuing, counting and certifying the results of a mail ballot of the membership.

In accordance with the Bylaws, voting methods other than mailed paper ballots may be used. In this case, the items below may be revised to match the voting process used.

- Appointed vote tellers should not be related to, be close friends with or reside in the same state as any of the candidates.
- Two or more appointed vote tellers should count ballots independently and compare tallies for any discrepancy.
- One of these vote tellers should check names of the voters against the membership roster provided by the National Office to confirm that all votes come from current members. Tellers should then mark the list to indicate the member voted in order to ensure each member only votes once.
- Tellers will separate the name section from the vote section of the ballots prior to counting and will not disclose the identity of any member casting votes nor individual members' votes.

- Vote tellers shall mail a signed report to the Board of Directors within two weeks following the postmark deadline to include: certification of election winners, number of qualified votes for each candidate, number of total ballots received, number of ballots disqualified.
- Disqualified ballots should not be separated and should not be counted toward election results.
- The AWS National Office should keep the ballots until the annual meeting of the membership when election results are confirmed. If there are no challenges to the election results by the end of the annual meeting, the ballots are to be destroyed.

Ballots must be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

1. Ballot is not signed by voter(s) as listed in the ballot instructions
2. Voter name(s) not legible on ballot
3. Candidate of choice is not clearly indicated (too many boxes marked, etc.)
4. Ballot is not postmarked or submitted on or before the publicized deadline
5. Official ballot form is not used
6. Voter's name does not appear on the list of AWS members provided by the Executive Director

15. Awards Selection & Notification Procedure

AWS gives two awards each year: *Outstanding Member Award*, and *Award of Merit*; under special circumstances, AWS may give other awards for journalism or other achievements.

Outstanding Member

The general criterion for this award, which is given to an AWS member, is a consistent record of valuable service to the American Wine Society. It is, of course, possible that a shorter record of unusually valuable service could justify the award. In the past this general criterion has been met by long and very valuable service as a national officer or committee chairman or a long and constructive record of contributions to the *AWS Wine Journal* and other publications, or by combinations of these.

Award of Merit

The basic criterion for the Award of Merit is substantial and meritorious achievement in at least one phase of wine activity, such as viticulture, enology, education, journalism, or merchandising. For each nominee, consideration should be given to his (her) actual accomplishments in comparison with others in the same field, and their impact on improving the quality of wine, increasing or extending the consumption or appreciation of wine, etc., and the sum total of the accomplishments over a period of time. A sensational achievement in one or two years may be outweighed by a long *sustained* record of valuable service with widespread impact.

Procedure:

1. Award Nominations Committee Chair announces to the general membership via AWS News a call for nominations with deadline for *Outstanding Member* and *Award of Merit*
2. Awards Committee reviews and prioritizes nominations and submits recommendations to Executive Advisory Board (EAB) via Executive Director
3. EAB members vote at November EAB meeting on the awards to be given the following year Executive Director notifies award recipients in writing and invites them to the conference to accept their awards. In general, they must be available to attend the conference in order to receive the award.
4. Executive Director notifies the Award Nominations Committee Chair of the selections and the chair in turn notifies the committee members.
5. The selections may be announced to the general membership by the President at a date determined by the President

6. Executive Director coordinates the production of the plaques to be presented at the awards banquet during the annual conference, often asking the nominating member to assist with the text for the award plaques.
7. The AWS President presents the awards at the conference awards banquet. The Award of Merit recipient generally speaks for several minutes upon accepting the award.

16. Investment Policy

One of the duties key to the administration of the Society is oversight of its finances. At any given time the Society may have excess funds that are not needed for the day-to-day operation of the corporation. The purpose of this investment policy is to provide direction to the Board with regard to investing any excess funds.

All funds entrusted to the Society are to be managed according to the AWS By-laws with reasonable prudence. Our conservative portfolio objective is to provide a steady total return, with no loss of principal. To ensure financial stability, a goal of \$200,000 in long term (Reserve) funds should be held in a money market or similar fund accessible by the President, Vice President and Treasurer. These funds will be held in an account separate from daily operating funds but available for transfer on an emergency basis to the daily operating account. A 2/3 agreement of the account signors is required for withdrawal or transfer of funds. Funds in excess of the Reserve may be invested in money market account, certificates of deposit, or similar investments.

The BOD in its sole discretion will determine the amount of funds to be invested at any time and will use all financial information available to it to make that determination.

The American Wine Society BOD will be responsible for a minimum annual review of the Society's investments.

The BOD may at any time, by a 2/3 majority vote, amend these guidelines and, by doing so, incorporate those changes into this Investment Policy.

17. Compensatory (Comp) Conferences & Rooms at Conference Policy

General Policies

- Wineries, speakers and Conference Committee members should receive notification prior to or with their conference registration materials that tells them how much of a comp they are due. "Full" is the value of the full cost of the conference registration fee and "half" is either the value of half of the cost of the conference registration fee or the value of one day of conference attendance.
- All Comps with the exception of Wineries Donating Wine are non-transferable.
- The conference budget should list all people who were awarded a comp in order to support the difference between "Paid Attendees" and "Total Attendees".

Speakers

Speakers receive a half conference comp for each session up to one full conference comp. This is non-transferable. If two or more speakers co-present, they must share the value of the half comp or only one of them may claim it. This policy may be occasionally modified by the Conference Chairperson as appropriate.

Wineries Donating Wine

- A Winery donating wine may receive one full conference comp for every six cases (or less, as determined by the Conference Chairperson based on conference needs) of wine

donated for the conference. The wine may be designated for use at meals, showcase, or other receptions.

- Wineries that are presenting a session at the conference and donating at least three cases of wine for meals, Showcase or other receptions may be awarded an additional half conference comp.
- These guidelines may be modified each year depending on the attendance level expected at the conference. Any modifications must be approved by the Board of Directors.

AWS National Board Designated Comps

(This list indicates the conference fee comps that should not be charged to the conference budget and it may only be adjusted from time to time with approval by the current board.)

- 1 - Editor – Wine Journal
- 1 - Editor – News
- Up to 2 - Amateur Wine Competition Chair - registration to be paid by the AWC Budget
- Up to 2 - Award of Merit and Guest
- Up to 2 - Outstanding Member(s)
- Up to 2 Commercial Wine Competition Chair - registrations are paid by CWC Budget
- 1 – for each current BOD Member

Conference Committee

Conference Committee Chairs (national and local (if needed) should evaluate the amount of effort that will be needed from each committee member and consider whether it warrants having a formal committee position. The names of Committee Members that will be awarded comps should be listed in the conference budget submitted to the AWS Board of Directors for approval at the spring meeting.

The Conference Chairperson(s) shall determine the number of committee positions needed each year and the number of comps to be awarded. The list below is an example of the conference fee comps that should be charged to the conference budget and it may be modified as necessary. This list and any recommended changes, with the exception of the National Chairpersons, must be submitted to the Board at the Spring Board meeting for approval.

- Up to 2 - National Chairperson(s) and Local Chairperson (if needed)
- 1 – Programs Chairperson
- 1 – Logistics Chairperson
- 1 - Outside Activities Chairperson
- 1 - Wine Procurement Chairperson
- 1 – Registration Coordinator
- 1 – Wine Logistics Chairperson
- 1- Exhibits Chairperson
- 1 – Volunteer Coordinator
- 1– Executive Director
- 1 – IT Support

Conference Room Comps

Conference Committee:

- The National Conference Chairperson(s) are allowed up to (8) complimentary nights total.

- The Local Conference Chairperson (if needed) is allowed up to (4) complimentary nights.
- The Executive Director is allowed up to (6) complimentary nights.
- The Registration Coordinator may be awarded up to (5) complimentary nights.
- The committee member responsible for Wine Logistics during the conference may be awarded additional complimentary nights since he/she will be required to be at the conference site early and may not be able to attend many of the conference sessions – this is at the Conference Chairperson(s) discretion.
- The Conference Chairperson(s) have the discretion to award up to (2) complimentary nights to a committee member for extenuating circumstances.
- All Conference Committee comp rooms must be listed in the conference budget that is submitted to the AWS Board of Directors for approval at the Spring meeting and in the final actual vs. budget submitted to the BOD

Room Comps awarded to the Board of Directors and others

- AWS Board of Directors (up to 5 nights each)
- Award of Merit (up to 3 nights)
- Outstanding Member (up to 3 nights)
- Any others to be discussed and approved by the Current Board

The Executive Director shall be responsible for assigning the complimentary upgraded rooms (suites, etc) provided as a part of our contract with the hotel. Once the allocated number of complimentary upgraded rooms is assigned, additional comp rooms for the Committee, the Board, and any other person shall be the standard room available at the lowest conference rate. If anyone entitled to a comp room wishes to upgrade to a larger room, he/she is responsible for any additional cost over the basic conference room rate.

18. AWS Educational Foundation (AWSEF) Exchanges & Arrangements

- AWS will provide a one-year complimentary student membership to AWSEF scholarship recipients.
- AWS provides some space in each issue of the NEWS for the AWSEF report – space to be determined by the AWS BOD and the Editor
- AWS will provide a page on the AWS website for AWSEF
- AWS allows AWSEF to set up a silent auction table at the national conference each. If there is cost, AWSEF shall reimburse AWS for any actual cost for these tables.
- The AWS National Office may assist AWSEF in communicating messages to AWS members as needed and appropriate

19. Archives

By the first board meeting of *each* calendar year, the Secretary from the preceding year shall prepare three complete paper copies of the official minutes, signed, and including copies of all signed contracts in that year, and mail or deliver as follows:

- One complete set to the Executive Director to remain as a record in the national office
- One complete set to Archives at Library at Cornell in Geneva NY (unless they prefer electronic copies)
- One complete set to the President
- One complete set of *electronic* copies to the Executive Director to maintain as an electronic record in the national office

The Executive Director shall maintain this complete set of paper and electronic minutes as archives to remain with the AWS national office.

The National Office is responsible for storage and safekeeping of the official AWS archives with the assistance of the Historian. Paper copies of documents and publications must be kept in containers that protect them from damage. Electronic copies should be kept on the Executive Director's computer for easy access. Back up copies of electronic files must be kept in two locations and one must be a cloud based back up service such as Carbonite.

Archives shall include all AWS publications (Wine Journal, News, books, manuals, etc.). They shall also include meeting minutes as described above, financial reports, tax returns, bylaws, policies & procedures, and any other documents that should be preserved for AWS historical records.

20. Oversight of Budget and Financial Process

The AWS Treasurer has the expressed responsibility to oversee the budget and financial process of AWS activities that have budget responsibility, examples are Amateur and Commercial Wine Competitions, Wine Judge Training Program, Annual Conference. Since all expense payments must go through the National Office, the Executive Director shall review all requests for payment for these activities and inform the Treasurer prior to payment if any are not reasonable or in line with the submitted activity budgets.

21. AWS Liability Insurance

As a benefit of membership, AWS provides a liability insurance policy for AWS functions sponsored by a recognized Chapter. The function must be publicized in advance to all members in the Chapter as an AWS chapter function and the host of the function must be an AWS member. Attendance must be open to AWS members up to the capacity limits of the function or the venue where it will be held.

Chapter functions should be for active AWS members and a limited number of guests attending primarily to learn more about AWS in order to decide whether to join.

If a Chapter wishes to hold or participate in a function where the venue requires proof of insurance, the Chapter representative should contact the AWS National Office at least two weeks in advance to obtain the form for a Certificate of Insurance listing the venue as an "Additional Insured".

In order to limit AWS's exposure to a claim, insurance coverage generally will not be provided for any events open to the public or where a significant number of non-members will be attending who are not there primarily to learn about AWS in order to decide whether to join.

This coverage and the associated premium are based on the current membership level and our record of never having submitted a claim. Should either of these conditions change to the point where coverage becomes unattainable or cost prohibitive, the AWS Board of Directors reserves the right to modify or suspend this coverage at any time and notify all AWS members of the change.

22. AWS Management Structure

President - Term is 2 years

All appointed committees and their actions thereof are the responsibility of the President and should have direct line of communication. List of committees:

- National Conference
- Government Affairs
- Strategic Planning
- Membership/Chapter Development (when necessary-at President's discretion)

- Historian
- Marketing
- National Tasting Project
- Financial Review
- Governance
- General Counsel
- Award Nomination
- Publisher
- AWS News Editor
- AWS Journal Editor
- Winemaking
- Publicity Person

Should the Vice-president not be able to serve, the President will have the option of remaining in office with BOD approval (max.1year) while an emergency election for VP be held allowing continuity of governance of the society.

Vice President - Elected for 2 years then ascends to President for 2 years. VP cannot be from the same state or province as AWS President. Note: VP duties will include but not be limited to the following:

- Chapter liaison – send letter of greeting to each Chapter Chair and RVP with the VP's contact information and availability to offer assistance.
- Assume responsibility for direct line communication for several committees at the President's direction.
- Serve as chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Maintain awareness of ongoing AWS activities in such a manner that you are able to perform the duties and exercise power of the President, should the need arise.
- During the 2nd year as Vice President, the President will gradually delegate some of the presidential responsibilities as appropriate.

Secretary - Elected for 3 year term, no term limits.

Treasurer - Elected for 3 year term, no term limits.

Directors:

- Director of Educational Services - Elected for 3 year term, no term limits.
- Director of Competitions - Elected for 3 year term, no term limits.
- Director of Member Services - Elected for 3 years, no term limits

Director of Educational Services

- Oversee the Wine Judge Certification Program working with the WJCP Coordinator
- Certified Judges – recertification and maintenance of current status, working with the WJCP Coordinator
- Educational publications, excluding the Newsletter and Wine Journal
- Oversee Winemaking education or certification
- Oversee Wine education or wine appreciation education program
- Coordinate Website educational program –Tasting models/Programs

Director of Competitions

- Commercial Wine Competition
- Amateur Wine Competition
- All regional and local AWS sanctioned wine competitions

- Every AWS Region/Chapter should inform the Director of Competitions of AWS sponsored events. The Director of Competition should compile a complete listing of all events sponsored by AWS chapters/regions with dates and locations.
- The Director of Competitions should provide the Executive Director with a list of all Region/Chapter competitions to be posted on the website after obtaining approval from the respective RVP/Chapter Chair.
- AWS Wine Evaluation Chart

Director of Member Services

- Membership and Chapter growth
- Provide articles for Newsletter publication
- National digital/electronic speakers program bank

Directors cannot hold any other committee positions within the AWS. No board member may appoint themselves to any AWS committee position. National Office personnel may be appointed to a committee at the President's discretion. The President may assume interim committee chair while searching for replacement when necessary.

Directors will be responsible for the adherence to By-Laws and job descriptions of those committees reporting to them. All committees must be held accountable for reporting and other requirements set forth in their job descriptions.

23. AWS Transitional Plan for Officers and Elections

NOTE: Year is the year elected to serve in position. All terms begin January 1 after the year elected.

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
President (Elected as VP - last two years of VP term)						
Vice-President (four year term w/ 2 as pres.)		X		X		X
Secretary (3 year term)			X			X
Treasurer (3 year term)		X			X	
Director of Member Service (3 year term)		X			X	
Director of Competitions (3 year term)	X			X		
Director of Education (3 year term)			X			X