

Section:	NDR-5 Non-Dues Revenue	Approval Date:	9/28/2018
Policy:	NDR-5.5 Conferences and Events	Latest Revision:	2/3/2023

NDR-5.5 Conferences and Events

5.5.1 Purpose

The Association's conferences and events are the premier destination for water industry professionals to learn and connect, providing attendees with educational and informational access to statewide issue forums, town hall discussions, region programs and sessions covering a wide range of topics of vital interest and importance to water industry professionals. The conferences and events provide a valuable opportunity for water industry professionals to receive educational training and certification through the Association's Continuing Legal Education (CLE), Continuing Profession Education (CPE) for CPAs, and Continuing Education Units (CEU) programs. Additionally, conferences are the official venue for holding membership meetings where the members conduct necessary Association business, including the formal nomination and election of the President and Vice President and amendments/revisions to the Bylaws, as well as other committee and region board meetings. In addition to their programmatic value, conferences and events are an essential component of the Association's non-dues revenue program and a significant portion of the overall budget portfolio.

5.5.2 General Criteria

The Association's spring and fall conferences are to last no more than three days, not including related activities, with the typical conference schedule starting on Wednesday and ending on Friday.

As part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen its non-dues revenue portfolio, staff will develop and implement incentive plans to encourage increased participation in the Association's conferences and events.

5.5.3 Registration and Fees

The provisions listed below apply to the registration pricing for the Association's conferences and events.

5.5.3.1 Advantage Pricing

Association members, associates, and affiliates receive advantage pricing for registration at conferences and events. The following qualify for advantage pricing:

- Officer or director of an Association member agency.
- Person directly employed by an Association member agency, affiliate, or associate organization (excluding independent contractors, service providers, and third party vendors).
- Region board and standing committee members of the Association for the current term whose fee is paid by their member agency.
- Duly designated representative attending as representative of designating agency.
- State or federal administrative or legislative personnel in elected, appointed, or staff positions.
- Staff of ACWA JPIA or the Water Education Foundation.
- Individual or honorary life members.

5.5.3.2 Standard Pricing

Non-member agencies and non-support organizations receive standard pricing. Standard pricing for registration at the Association's conferences and events will be one and one-half times higher than advantage pricing.

5.5.3.3 Guest Pricing

The Association provides guest registrations for a minimal fee to a spouse, companion, or guest of a conference/event registrant. Guest registrations are not available to individuals with a professional reason to attend the conference/event for purposes of learning or to conduct business or to any employee of a member agency, associate, or affiliate. The guest registration includes admission to conference programs, receptions, the exhibit hall, and the ability to purchase tickets for the meal functions.

5.5.3.4 Student Pricing

The Association provides complimentary registrations to all students attending the Association's conferences and events with proof of valid student identification. The complimentary student registration includes admission to conference programs, receptions, the exhibit hall, and the ability to purchase tickets for the meal functions.

5.5.3.5 Cancellations

Requests for conference/event registration cancellations must be submitted in writing by the event registration deadline to the Association's Sacramento office. Valid cancellation requests will receive a refund of any paid registration fees, minus the current processing fee. Refunds will be processed back to the form of original payment within 60 days. No refunds will be granted after the registration deadline.

5.5.3.6 Substitutions

Conference/event registrations are transferable from one participant to another within the same organization. There is no fee to transfer an eligible registration.

5.5.3.7 Waivers

The Executive Director has the authority to waive the conference/event registration fee based on special one-time circumstances. Additionally, the Executive Director can waive the processing fee associated with registration cancellations in the event of an emergency situation with a written request to Association staff.

5.5.3.8 Handling Fee

The Association may charge a handling fee for excessive changes to a registration required by a registrant.

5.5.4 Housing

As part of its conference planning process, Association staff negotiates general room block rates with the hotels associated with the conference venues.

5.5.4.1 Advance Room Block

Staff will obtain an advance room block for the Board, ACWA JPIA staff and its Executive Committee members. Staff will make the advance room block available to those persons prior to opening the general reservations to conference attendees.

5.5.4.2 General Room Block

Individuals wishing to make a housing reservation through the Association's general room block must be registered for the correlating Association conference. Registrants will receive the hotel reservation information via email confirmation or U.S. mail. All hotel reservations will be verified against the Association's conference registration list. Any reservation made outside the conference housing policy will be subject to the hotels' regular room rate and availability.

5.5.5 Speakers' Expenses

The Association will arrange for speakers for the various sessions of its conferences and events to result in a varied, informative, and interesting agenda that will provide participants with information and insight of value and importance on issues and matters relative to water district government and delivery of an adequate water supply to the people of California.

The Association will plan and implement the conference and event programs so that the public funds that support them through registration fees are wisely, efficiently, and economically spent to provide the best possible programs at the least possible cost.

5.5.5.1 Criteria for Payment of Speakers' Expenses

Staff involved in arranging for conference/event speakers will observe the criteria listed below.

5.5.5.1.1 Speaker Types not Reimbursed

Representatives of the following types of entities should participate in conference programs without charge or expense to the Association:

1. Member agencies, associates, and affiliates.
2. Commercial enterprises (consultants, suppliers, etc.) whose organizations benefit Association members.
3. State and federal agencies that provide travel expenses and/or per diem allowances.
4. Other associations and related types of organizations with reciprocal relationship with the Association.

The Senior Director of Operations and Member Engagement may authorize reimbursement of the expenses of a speaker from an entity listed above on a one-time, case-by-case scenario if the speaker would otherwise not be able to attend and to ensure robust conference/event program planning is achieved.

5.5.5.1.2 Speaker Types Reimbursed

The Association may pay for the reasonable expenses for travel, meals, and lodging for representatives of other local governments, news media, and other specialized entities where reimbursement may not otherwise be available in order to ensure robust conference/event program planning is achieved. The Senior Director of Operations and Member Engagement must provide prior authorization for the payment of a speaker's expenses from an entity listed above.

5.5.5.1.3 Honorarium

The Association may consider a conference/event speaker's request for payment of an honorarium when said speaker is deemed essential to the success of a conference/event program's content. The Executive Director must provide prior approval for payment of an honorarium.

5.5.5.2 Budgeting

Association staff will include a reasonable amount in each conference/event budget for speakers' expenses, based on the actual experience of preceding conferences/events.

5.5.6 Site Selection

Staff will investigate potential conference/event sites that support the goals and objectives of the Association, and will make recommendations for conference site locations for the Board's approval.

References:

Previous Board Policy D.1. through D.4; Section 115 Guidelines and Application to Proposed Business Development Activities Memorandum from Best Best & Krieger dated April 21, 2015

See Administrative Procedure: *To be determined.*

Revision History:

Revision Date	Description of Changes	Requested By
9/28/2018	Initial Release	ACWA Staff and Governance Workgroup
6/4/2021	Revised Policy 5.5.5.1.1 Speaker Types not Reimbursed to delete reference to Director of Business Development and Events; replace with updated language.	ACWA Staff based on organizational changes approved by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, effective January 2021.
6/4/2021	Revised Policy 5.5.5.1.2 Speaker Types Reimbursed to delete reference to Director of Business Development and Events; replace with updated language.	ACWA Staff based on organizational changes approved by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, effective January 2021.
2/3/2023	Revised Policy 5.5.4.1 Advance Room Block language to provide flexibility with noticing timeframe given registration and communication are now done through electronic means.	ACWA Staff