

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEAF

“Deaf Business Advocates” Section Guideline

Mission

In line with NAD’s Mission, Deaf Business Advocate will advocate for and promote the development of deaf-owned businesses.

Vision

The languages, cultures, and heritage of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing business owners will be acknowledged and respected in the pursuit of life, liberty and equality. DBA's vision is to:

- SERVE as a community voice for deaf-owned businesses
- ADVOCATE for the creation of a firm economic base supporting deaf-owned businesses
- CREATE financial opportunities for the growth and stability of deaf-owned businesses
- PROMOTE development and support of minority businesses through greater access to market opportunities and capital
- FOSTER entrepreneurial development through workshops and trainings
- COLLABORATE with coalitions supporting public recognition and political influence among deaf business owners.
- WORK with NAD and its State Associations and Affiliates to support business development among Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals.
- MONITOR pending legislation that may affect business ownership, business growth, and business activities.

Deaf Business Advocates is a Special Interest Group (SIG) operating as a Section under National Association of Deaf. NAD Bylaws, DBA Section Mission & Vision Statement and the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall provide the primary framework for Deaf Business Advocate Section. The chairperson of this Section shall be elected to a two-year term by a majority of DBA members who have voted. Elections of the Section Chair should occur within four months after the end of the Biennial NAD Conference. The chairperson may be removed at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the DBA members who have voted. The chairperson or a designee is eligible to attend the Biennial NAD Conference, and any other NAD events requiring representation of section, as a delegate representing the positions of the DBA members. The NAD President shall appoint one of the board members to serve as a liaison between DBA and NAD board with the CEO of NAD serving as ex officio member to facilitate communications.

For this guideline, DBA Section is using "deaf" in an all-inclusive manner, to include people who may identify as Deaf, deaf, deafblind, deaf-disabled, hard of hearing, or late-deafened. DBA has chosen to use one term "deaf" with the goal of recognizing experiences that are shared by all members of our diverse communities while also honoring all our differences. DBA shall strive to be inclusive of all deaf members to enable them to fully participate in this Section by providing,

with assistance from NAD if needed, any accommodations for members who makes such request for accommodation.

The DBA has the following responsibilities:

1. **Develop** programs, including mentoring, to aid in the education of and to provide support for business community within the deaf community on a national basis.
2. **Advocate** for deaf-owned businesses acting as a support base and voice for its membership, fighting for legislation that promotes small business growth and policies addressing the challenges of deaf-owned business owners on a national basis.
3. **Collaborate** with state associations with developing programs related to starting a business or supporting business owners in their state and local community; collaborate with state association in their efforts at the state and local level; and also collaborate with government entities and organizations serving the deaf community with similar aim or mission on a national basis
4. **Evaluating and determining** issues with any legislative and rule-making matters, which affects deaf businesses on a national basis, which will be researched with possible recommendations to the NAD Board.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

DBA Section has established the following framework for how business matters presented before this Section will be introduced, discerned and acted upon with specific guidelines for DBA Member participation. Given the importance of advocacy to the NAD and its members, the critical and sensitive nature of issues discussed, and the process for developing NAD official positions, a determination has been made that Participation Guidelines are beneficial.

Deaf Business Advocate members may recruit, welcome and support members, communicate member benefits, and facilitate development of professional relationships. The DBA Section shall have an Ambassador Committee in which members may volunteer as Ambassadors to help the Section engage new members by sending a "Welcome to the Deaf Business Advocacy Section" email to every new member who joins the NAD DBA. In each of those emails, two to three Deaf Business Advocate Section members residing in same local areas as the new member are introduced to the new member to welcome the new member via phone or in-person meeting to review the following:

- Member introductions
- Opportunities for the new member to become more involved with the DBA through programs and advocacy
- Member benefits
- Unique programs within the new member's area/state association
- Events of interest to the new member

Participation Guidelines

1. "Membership" in the Deaf Business Advocates Section can entail different levels of involvement. NAD desires to have an active membership, encourage Members to join DBA Section and have diverse representation of its membership. There are three types of membership within this Section a member can choose:
 - **Core Member**, who volunteers to become part of the decision-making group of members to provide direction and execution of decisions and programs established by DBA.
 - **Participating Member**, who attends regular meetings and votes on matters important to the Section but chooses not to be part of Core Member group.
 - **Supporting Member**, who chooses to support the Section and its mission and vision with no active participation.

2. "Attendance and Participation" in the Deaf Business Advocate is open only to members of the NAD who chose to join DBA Section with support from the NAD Board and staff. Members are those individuals that, based upon time available, choice of membership type and NAD priorities:
 - A. Agree to the DBA participation guidelines for DBA Section.
 - B. Are committed to attend the DBA meetings as Core or Participating Members.
 - C. Are willing to actively participate in the issues addressed.
 - D. Will volunteer to research background information on specific issues to be addressed as Core or Participating Member.
 - E. Are available to draft and edit newsletter articles submitted by DBA, recommended NAD position papers and letters as Core Member.
 - F. Are open to attend workshops, other Section meetings, meetings with government staff and elected leaders and speak on the record at public hearings on behalf of NAD.
 - G. Are able to consider each item of business, where they have a vote or decision authority.
 - H. Are willing to disclose any and all conflicts of interest to the DBA Chairperson involving any issue being discussed or addressed by the DBA Section and recuse oneself from any deliberations or vote on the matter giving rise to the conflict of interest.

3. The DBA Section will evaluate Federal laws, policies, practices, and regulations that impact the overall ability to manage and operate businesses by our deaf individuals and deaf owned entities, and propose possible recommendations to the NAD Board, including but not limited to the following:
 - Ongoing monitoring, but not recommended for a position
 - Recommend a strategic position of neutrality
 - Recommend a position in support
 - Recommend a position of opposition

- Recommend specific provisions, changes and modifications
4. The DBA will apply the NAD Vision to issues addressed by the Section:
 - A. Accommodations and Barriers
 - B. Economic Growth
 - C. Access to Capital
 - D. Quality Workforce, Job Training, Workforce Development
 - E. Public Private Partnerships
 5. DBA Section Core and Participating Members are expected to attend monthly DBA Meetings at a time and format as agreed to by majority of the DBA Section members. The Section functions with a Chairperson who conducts the meeting. The Chairperson and volunteer DBA member(s) chosen by Chairperson shall develop the Agendas for the meetings. Any DBA Section Member may request consideration of any item. The Chairperson submits reports and any recommendations to the appointed Liaison of NAD who shall communicate with the NAD Board. Whenever there are time sensitive issues, the Chairperson may call additional meetings of the DBA Section as often as necessary to complete business of the DBA. Business of the Section can be conducted via videophone, text, or e-mail, with updates to follow at the regularly scheduled DBA meeting. A summary of the monthly meeting discussion will be emailed to all members. The DBA strives to reach consensus recommendations among the Section Members participating in the meetings.
 6. Pursuant to the NAD's status as a tax-exempt organization pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, the DBA Section will not engage in any political activity nor support any political party. The DBA Section will focus only on advocacy for the best interests of deaf businesses.
 7. The NAD DBA Section serves Deaf owned and managed businesses and will focus on regulatory issues that impact these Deaf owned or managed businesses.
 8. The DBA is committed to open discussion, debate, education on issues and maintaining a welcome environment for divergent opinions and viewpoints. Healthy disagreement, and respect for opposing views is encouraged.
 9. No Participant or Member of the DBA Section should relay or repeat specific conversations or discussions from DBA meetings outside of the Section and NAD. It is inappropriate to attribute specific comments to an individual NAD or DBA Member. The DBA is not a decision-making Section, it is a Section that makes recommendations to the Board for specific issues and is a special interest group which shall follow the mission and value statement of this Section.
 10. Official positions on business regulatory issues are determined by the National Association of Deaf Board. No DBA Participant or Member should make statements on

behalf of the NAD nor represent NAD positions on issues without appropriate authorization. NAD may ask DBA members to speak at public meetings on behalf of the NAD membership.

11. Participants and Members of the DBA should disclose how a particular issue before the Section may impact their business. The preference of the DBA Section is to work on issues that benefit multiple businesses, and core sectors of the economy, rather than individual businesses. NAD and DBA expect each Participant and Member to appropriately disclose any perceived conflict of interest. The goal is for NAD members and Deaf communities to benefit from the advocacy work of the DBA. Broad NAD member advocacy, organizational integrity and professionalism are priorities of the DBA.
12. The Chairperson of DBA or a designee is eligible to attend the NAD Conference as a delegate representing the DBA Section and its members. The DBA's delegate may attend the Conference with the support of the Section's funds. The DBA Section is able to manage its own funds raised from the \$5 dues paid by each NBA Section member as well as any contributions or donations earmarked specifically for DBA, as long as it is in support of the NAD mission and subject to oversight by the NAD pursuant to its obligations as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

This edition of DBA guideline voted upon and adopted by a majority of DBA Members who have voted.

Date: March 12, 2018