



# State Network Communications

## TO WHOM ■ WHAT ■ HOW

### State Network Operating Model Standards:

- Communicate quarterly to all members.
- Develop a follow-up system of communication to local network leaders after Orientation.
- Develop a system of communication between State Officers and Local Network Officers with similar positions.
- Develop a method for facilitating sharing and collaboration between local network leaders.

### Communication with All Members

The State Network should produce and distribute a branded quarterly electronic communication to all Women's Council members in the State with meaningful news and information for the general member.

Suggestions for content include:

- Volunteer/leadership opportunities
- Key activities and accomplishments at the State level that bring bottom-line value to members
- Promotion of State Network, State REALTORS® Association and National Women's Council events that members should attend with links to registration
- Highlight of key member benefits
- Spotlight on State Network award recipients, new State Network officers, etc.
- Business tips and links to industry/business trends or practice information

### Communication with Local Network Leaders

The primary purpose of a State Network is to support the success of Local Networks and their leaders. When, what and how a State Network communicates with Local Network leaders is a critical part of this support. Developing *systems* to ensure this communication is developed and distributed on a regular basis is essential to success. Here are some suggestions to guide your development of effective communication with Local Network leaders.

#### System for Communication between State and Local Network Leaders in Similar Positions

- Set up regular calls (phone or video conference) to establish ongoing connection and support between State Network and Local Network officer positions, along the following lines:
  - State President and State Liaison conduct calls with Local Presidents
  - State President-elect conducts calls with Local Presidents-elect
  - State First Vice President conducts calls with Local Secretaries
  - State Treasurer conducts calls with Local Treasurers
- The goal of these calls is to open lines of communication between State and Local leaders, coach and develop leaders and support Local Network leader success in fulfilling job duties. The sense if 'we are going through this journey at the same time'.
- Calls can start out being scheduled quarterly, but each group can decide if they need more or fewer calls

- In large states (with 8 or more local networks), District Vice Presidents can join the calls as well, or, at a minimum, report to the State President before the call any pertinent information on emerging issues, local network successes, etc. that can inform the call.
- The focus of these calls should include:
  - Reminder of any imminent deadlines for local network leaders
  - Identification of challenges local networks are experiencing (related to the particular position) and problem-solving/sharing of ideas to support success
  - Highlight of tips or best practices appropriate for the position
- *Important Consideration:* be very aware about the appearance of one-way communication between the State and Local Networks. These calls should be a *dialog*, between State and Local leaders, *and* between Local leaders ... all in the spirit of supporting success for the individual leader and for the local network.

### System of Follow-up with Local Network Leaders: From Orientation to Transition

Local Network support is the major responsibility of the State Liaison and/or the District Vice Presidents in states with 8 or more local networks. Part of effectively supporting Local Network leaders is meaningful contact and guidance at the right time in a local leader's year. It is a misperception to think that a good orientation is all that is needed for a local leader to have a successful term in office. In truth, a local leader's year moves through a predictable rhythm, starting with orientation, with different needs for support at different times. The following charts, at a high level, the different phases of a leader's term in office and when contact by the State Liaison and/or District Vice President could be particularly helpful.

*Note:* it is important to remember that support for local leaders is needed at each point of contact in *two different ways*:

- 1) care and support for the leader *personally* in their growth as a leader and their experience in the position they hold, and
- 2) care and support for the *network's effectiveness* in operating smoothly, delivering value to members, engaging members, and meeting the minimum standards of the local network operating model.

### *Minimum Touch Points for Contact with Local Network President/Leadership Team*

Timing	Phase of Leadership/Network Year	Focus of Contact
FALL	<b>Orientation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding the organization, and my roles, responsibilities and expectations</li> <li>• bonding with my peers and the State</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relationship building; building trust</li> <li>• clarifying, answer questions, filling in the gaps in knowledge (e.g., you need insurance!)</li> <li>• sharing excitement</li> </ul>
LATE FALL/ EARLY WINTER	<b>Getting Organized</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building my team</li> <li>• setting a tone for the year</li> <li>• developing goals and a plan</li> <li>• building a volunteer base, project teams</li> <li>• getting members excited about the year</li> <li>• securing strategic partners or sponsors for special events</li> <li>• installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• network planning support</li> <li>• sharing resources available</li> <li>• clarifying network model operating standards</li> <li>• signing the affiliation agreement</li> </ul>
SPRING	<b>Fine Tuning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementing plan/adjusting plan based on experience and progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• troubleshooting</li> <li>• sharing best practices, tips and ideas</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective communication with members and external audiences/groups</li> <li>• motivating/supporting the team</li> </ul>	
SUMMER	<p><b>Mid-Point Check</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review/adjust plans for remainder of the year (want to ‘finish strong’)</li> <li>• cultivation/support of emerging leaders</li> <li>• taking care of yourself and your team – stay motivated, strong, positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on leader’s personal experience and effectiveness in the position</li> <li>• support as needed to ensure a positive experience, continued growth opportunities</li> <li>• troubleshooting</li> <li>• review plans for remainder of year, guide as needed</li> <li>• elections</li> </ul>
FALL	<p><b>Starting Transition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support President-elect in organizing and planning for year</li> <li>• effecting a smooth transition</li> <li>• evaluating the year and passing experience on to improve next year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting a smooth transition</li> </ul>

## Communication between Local Network Leaders

Support, coaching and mentoring does not only occur between State and Local leaders, but between Local Network leaders as well (peer-to-peer). Part of the State Network’s role and opportunity is to facilitate this type of networking and support. This can happen in many ways, including:

- Intentional sessions at State Network meetings where Local Network leaders can share, address common issues, etc. (e.g., Topical Roundtable sessions).
- Facilitating calls between Local Network leaders in certain positions (see above).
- Pairing up more experienced Local Networks with other Local Networks to provide support, guidance, ideas, etc.
- Encouraging Local Networks in close proximity to collaborate on events, networking activities, etc.
- Recognizing and spotlighting the success of Local Networks at events, in communications, etc.

*Related tools:*

Calendar of key activities, deadlines