



March 18, 2016

Dear Delegates and Colleagues,

On behalf of the 2017 Delegate Assembly Planning Task Force (DAPTF), I have the privilege of welcoming you to the Delegate Assembly process. As delegates and leaders in the profession, you have the opportunity to participate in the very important work of setting the Association's program priorities for the three-year period FY 2018 – 2021. You will also be participating in the Association's public and professional policy statements development process on substantive issues of concern to social work, social workers, and the populations whom we serve.

The Delegate Assembly Planning Task Force is responsible for developing guidelines for conducting the work of the Assembly. As such, we are happy to continue the precedent started during the 2005 Delegate Assembly process to conduct the planning and implementation of the 2017 Delegate Assembly in a manner that is nearly paperless. Making use of Internet technology to advance and revise policies means that *all* NASW members have the opportunity to participate in parts of the policy-making process, and policy hearing panels are able to spend more time revising and honing the policies so a better product is developed and presented to delegates for review and eventually a final vote.

The final, culminating meeting of the 2017 Delegate Assembly will once again be held in a virtual environment, using state of the art Internet and e-tools developed especially for the NASW Delegate Assembly process. Our National Office will establish up to date Web pages for new and revised policy statements, program priority goals, potential Code of Ethics or Bylaws revisions, as well as virtual meeting spaces for each coalition. We are striving to obtain members' and delegates' participation and input every step of the way. To that end, becoming familiar with, and comfortable using, NASW's Web site and other virtual environments will be key to your participation. Comprehensive training will be provided to delegates to enable full participation in the online/virtual environment for the **August 4, 2017 culminating meeting**.

The DAPTF has a few recommendations regarding delegates' responsibilities for a successful Delegate Assembly. First, orientation and training, especially for new delegates, is very important. We encourage chapters and coalitions to consider training and providing mentors for new delegates early in the process. Second, all delegates should be familiar with NASW's *Social Work Speaks, 10th Ed. (2014)*. The abstracts can be found online at <http://www.socialworkers.org/resources/abstracts/default.asp>, but we encourage delegates to purchase *Social Work Speaks* or to review copies available at

chapter offices. Third, and most importantly, the task force urges you to become familiar with, and use, the NASW Web site for self-learning, training, and for communication and interaction during this process. There is a basic Delegate Assembly tutorial on the Web site at <http://www.socialworkers.org/da/delegate/presentation/default.asp> . Besides the normal activities of chapter delegations and the coalitions, we encourage chapter leaders to offer information to its general membership through newsletters, websites, workshops and annual conferences. It is our hope that this Delegate Assembly has the most participation ever!

At this time I encourage you to review the 2017 Delegate Assembly Timetable posted at the above link. In particular I want to draw your attention to two deadlines:

- April 29, 2016
Notification for intent to propose Bylaws amendments or *Code of Ethics* revisions is due to Chapter Services at the National Office (sjashinsky@naswdc.org).
Templates with required formats will be provided to members who declare an intention to propose amendments.
- June 17, 2016
Submission of the full text for proposed bylaws amendments (regarding the Delegate Assembly or dues split), or Code of Ethics changes is due to Chapter Services at the National Office (sjashinsky@naswdc.org) using set formats.

We look forward to our work together over the next couple of years. We also welcome your thoughts, questions, and ideas as we move through this exciting process together.

Sincerely,

Sandy Runkle, MSW, LSW
Chair, 2017 Delegate Assembly Planning Task Force
NASW Board Region VII Representative