

RPNC Membership Guidelines

A. Categories of Membership

Eligibility:

To qualify for membership, organizations must:

- Be incorporated as a nonprofit in Arkansas and qualify under 26 U.S.C. §501(c)(3), or be a local chapter of a national nonprofit with an Arkansas office.
- Remain in good standing with the Arkansas Secretary of State.
- Align with and actively support RPNC's mission and objectives.
- Operate statewide or demonstrate a significant impact within Arkansas.

Membership Tiers:

1. Pillar Members (Established Organizations)

- Eligibility: At least 2 years in operation.
- Initial Certification: Must hold at least a Silver Candid rating at application.
- Advancement Requirement: Work to achieve Gold or Platinum Candid rating within the first year of membership.
- Ongoing Commitment: Pursue higher Candid certifications continuously to maintain transparency and accountability.

2. Pathfinder Members (Emerging Organizations)

- Eligibility: Fewer than 2 years in operation.
- Initial Certification: Must hold at least a Bronze Candid rating at application.
- Advancement Requirement: Work to achieve Silver or Gold Candid rating within the first year.
- Ongoing Commitment: Continue advancing to higher certification levels as the organization grows.

3. Provisional Members (501(c)(3) Applicants)

- Eligibility: Organizations that have applied for 501(c)(3) status but have not yet received IRS approval.
- Membership Status: Temporary, pending IRS determination.
- Post-Approval Expectation: Obtain at least a Bronze Candid rating within the first year after IRS approval.

- **Restriction:** Membership confers no ownership interest or financial benefit prior to IRS approval.

4. Candidate Members (Non-501(c)(3) Applicants)

- **Eligibility:** Operational organizations that have not applied for 501(c)(3) status.
- **Application Requirement:** Commit to submitting a 501(c)(3) application within six months of acceptance.
- **Transparency & Standards:** Adhere to all RPNC standards, including Bronze-level transparency measures.
- **Membership Status:** Temporary; reclassified as Provisional upon IRS submission.
- **Restriction:** Membership confers no private financial benefit.

5. Affiliate Members

- **Eligibility:** 501(c)(3) organizations whose work complements RPNC's mission (e.g., mental health, homelessness, career services).
- **Initial Certification:** Must demonstrate direct impact and hold at least a Silver Candid rating.
- **Advancement Requirement:** Pursue Gold or Platinum Candid rating as part of continuous improvement.
- **Ongoing Commitment:** Maintain transparency and accountability standards aligned with RPNC's mission.

6. Supporting Partners

- **Eligibility:** Entities that support RPNC's mission through funding, resources, or advocacy, including:
 - **Governmental Partners:** Local, state, or federal agencies.
 - **Corporate Partners:** Businesses contributing sponsorships, services, or in-kind donations.
 - **Wellness Partners:** Providers addressing mental, physical, or emotional health for military, veterans, first responders, and affiliated communities.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** All Supporting Partners must enter a board-approved MOU outlining mission-aligned partnership terms.

- **Restrictions:** Supporting Partners do not receive any ownership interest, profit participation, or private benefit. All partnerships advance RPNC's exempt charitable and educational purposes exclusively.

B. Selection, Rights, and Tenure

- **Voting Rights:**
 - Pillar, Pathfinder, Provisional, and Affiliate Members have voting rights on RPNC governance matters.
 - Candidate Members and Supporting Partners are non-voting participants.
- **Membership Tenure:**
 - Membership continues until voluntarily terminated, suspended, or removed per Section F.
- **Access to Resources:**
 - All members may access RPNC programs, trainings, and resources in support of charitable purposes.
- **Tier Adjustment for Non-Compliance:**
 - Organizations failing to maintain the required Candid certification may be reclassified to a lower tier until compliance is achieved. Elevation is contingent upon meeting transparency standards.

C. Conditions and Responsibilities of Membership

Members must:

- Follow RPNC's Code of Ethics, mission, and foundational policies.
- Contribute financial or in-kind support to advance RPNC's charitable and educational objectives.
- Designate both a primary and alternate representative for communications and voting.
- Provide annual updates on organizational status and leadership.
- Pay annual dues as determined by the Board (see Section E).
- Participate in at least one RPNC committee yearly.

- Attend required regular, special, and emergency meetings.

Restriction: All activities must support RPNC's charitable and educational purposes and must not result in private benefit to any individual or organization.

D. Membership Application Procedures

- Submit a completed application and required fee.
- RPNC Leadership reviews applications for compliance with eligibility, mission alignment, and transparency standards.
- Determinations are made within seven business days.
- Restriction: Decisions are based solely on compliance and mission alignment, not commercial or private benefit considerations.

E. Dues

- Annual dues are payable within one calendar year of joining.
- Dues support administrative expenses, member resources, capacity-building, and coordination for charitable and educational purposes.
- Membership dues are non-refundable and do not confer financial or ownership benefits.

F. Termination of Membership

Membership may end through:

1. Voluntary Resignation: Written notice to the Board.
2. Board Action: Two-thirds (2/3) vote for:
 - Repeated failure to meet membership requirements.
 - Actions contrary to RPNC's mission or policies.
3. Non-Response: Automatic termination for failing to respond to compliance inquiries within 30 days.

G. Meeting Attendance

- Each member organization must send a representative to all required meetings.
- Non-attendance without prior notice may affect membership standing or tier classification.

H. IRS Compliance Statement

RPNC operates exclusively for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Membership in RPNC confers no private financial benefit, ownership interest, or profit-sharing to members, officers, directors, or supporting partners. All activities, dues, and partnerships are conducted to advance exempt purposes only.