

**Black Commissioned Officers  
Advisory Group (BCOAG)  
Bylaws**

**Supplement to the BCOAG Charter**

## **FOREWORD**

The Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG) was established in 1990 as an advisory group to the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) to represent the interests and concerns of African American officers within the US Public Health Service. BCOAG provides advice and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) and the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) on issues relating to the professional practice and the personnel activities of civil service and Commissioned Corps personnel. BCOAG provides similar advisory assistance, upon request, to Agency and/or Program Heads of the Public Health Service (PHS) and to non-PHS programs that routinely utilize PHS personnel.

This is the first version of the BCOAG Bylaws. The purpose of this document is to supplement the BCOAG Charter and to further clarify and define the general operational responsibilities of BCOAG Executive and Committee members. This document also defines and governs the role and function of the advisory group. The Bylaws will be updated and revised according to the future requirements of the BCOAG executive committee and voting members.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

BCOAG members prepared this document noting its development and maintenance is a continuous process.

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## BCOAG Bylaws

### **I. General**

The Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG) Charter states that BCOAG provides advice and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) and the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) on issues related to the professional practice and the personnel activities of African-American civil service and Commissioned Corps personnel. BCOAG provides similar advisory assistance, upon request, to Agency and/or Program Heads of the Public Health Service (PHS) and to non-PHS programs that routinely use PHS personnel. In an effort to better clarify the BCOAG Charter, this document provides general guidance on the operation of BCOAG.

#### **A. Governing Body**

The Executive Committee (EC) is the governing body of BCOAG and consists of the following officers: Chair, Chair-Elect, Executive Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Two MOLC Representatives, COF Liaison and Immediate Past Chair.

The Committees, established under the EC, are responsible for managing and carrying out specific functions and duties.

#### **B. Operating Year**

The operating year corresponds to the calendar year that begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December of the year.

#### **C. Election**

The election of the Executive Committee officers and standing Committee Chairs is held in the month of October each year.

### **II. Membership**

#### **A. Voting Members**

1. Nomination of voting members begins in May of each year and ends no later than July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The official term for voting members begins on January 1 of the next year. The number of active voting members is limited to twenty (20).
2. The selection of new voting members is finalized by September 1<sup>st</sup>. A final list of nominees will be sent by the Chair to the Surgeon General for selection and approval. The final nomination package for new voting members is submitted to the Surgeon General by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. The US Surgeon General appoints voting members for a three-year term with the possibility of serving no more than a total of two terms.
4. Voting members are formally introduced to the general body during the first meeting of the operating year.

5. Voting members are expected to serve in the following manner:
  - 5.1 Dedicate the necessary time to attend meetings and perform duties related to BCOAG
  - 5.2 Actively participate in discussions with a willingness to listen to and respect other viewpoints
  - 5.3 Consider the welfare of the group over personal interests
  - 5.4 Accept and follow through on assignments
  - 5.5 Actively participate in at least one project annually
  - 5.6 Actively participate in meeting discussions and provide input to BCOAG leadership in a timely manner
6. Voting members are expected to serve on the BCOAG EC and Standing Committees and to assist BCOAG activities.
  - 6.1 Each voting member shall be a contributing, active participant in at least one BCOAG committee, but may serve on as many committees as they wish.
  - 6.2 If voting members do not sign up for any positions in BCOAG, the officers will be assigned by the Chair/Chair-Elect/Chair of the Membership Committee to any unfilled position upon approval from the EC.
7. Voting members are expected to attend all official BCOAG meetings.
  - 7.1 If a voting member is unable to attend, it is the voting member's responsibility to appoint an alternate.
  - 7.2 To encourage the participation of BCOAG general members, the alternate should be a non-voting member who is familiar with the voting member's responsibilities in BCOAG.
  - 7.3 While acting on behalf of the voting member, the alternate has the full rights and privileges of the voting member.
  - 7.4 If an alternate is unable to attend for the voting member, an excused absence may be requested from the Chair prior to the meeting.
8. If a member has two or more unexcused absences in a given year, his/her voting member status and privileges may be revoked by collective decision of the voting members.

### **B. General Members**

General members do not have voting privileges. This type of membership is open to all individuals who are supportive of the mission of BCOAG and interested in assisting BCOAG in achieving its objectives. Non-voting members may serve as Committee co-chairs and Committee members, and may participate in any activities.

### **C. Ex-Officio**

This membership consists of former BCOAG Chairs who serve in an advisory capacity to assist new EC officers.

### **III. Term of Appointment for Members**

#### **A. Initial Term**

The term of appointment for a voting member shall be three years.

#### **B. Reappointment**

A member completing his/her term on the BCOAG is eligible for reappointment for one additional three-year term, not to exceed six years of service. Those seeking reappointment must reapply.

#### **C. Alternates**

Each voting member shall appoint a single individual who shall serve as his/her Alternate. The alternate must be identified at the beginning of the operational year and their name should be forwarded to the Chair and Executive Secretary. The alternate shall serve as an active non-voting member of BCOAG and be in compliance with OFRD standards for Basic Readiness. If an officer is unable to find an alternate, the BCOAG Chair shall assist in identifying a qualified alternate among active non-voting members.

#### **D. Attendance & Absenteeism**

Any voting member who misses two meetings in a year without justified cause may, at the discretion of the BCOAG, be officially warned or asked to resign voluntarily; the voting member shall be considered "inactive" and not eligible for inclusion on the website's roster including the Committee's end-of-year Letter of Appreciation.

1. Voting members who are absent and have arranged for an alternate to attend a meeting in their place shall have "absent with alternate", or AWA noted on their attendance record.
2. Members who do not make arrangements shall have an unexcused absence levied against their attendance record ("unapproved absence" or absent).
3. Officers who, due to unforeseen circumstances or emergencies, are unable to contact the Chair prior to an BCOAG meeting may have their absence excused after discussing the situation with the Chair.

#### **E. Removal**

BCOAG shall have the option to initiate a request to the Surgeon General to terminate membership. The officer's supervisor will be notified of the officer's dismissal or resignation from BCOAG. Notification of removal will be submitted to the officer's eOPF.

#### **F. Resignation**

A voting member who intends to resign from his/her term will be required to complete the following procedures:

1. Submit a formal letter to the BCOAG Chair and the OSG for resignation from an

- BCOAG position.
2. Give a two-week advance notice in order to allow BCOAG to find a replacement.

### **G. Replacement of a BCOAG Voting Member or Committee Chair Vacancy**

1. In the event of a permanent, in-term BCOAG vacancy, as a result of resignation or other unforeseen circumstances, the Chair may appoint an alternate voting member to ensure that the duties of the vacant position are achieved.
2. In the event of a short-term vacancy as a result of medical or maternity leave, work detail, deployment, or other reason:
  - 2.1 The position may remain vacant until the EC member or Committee chair is available to return to his or her duties; or
  - 2.2 The Chair or the Committee Chair may appoint an interim alternate for the period of time necessary to ensure that the duties of the vacant position are achieved. Any interim alternate appointments will expire when the original EC member or Committee chair is available to return to his or her duties or when the term of the original EC member or Committee Chair expires.

## **IV. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee (EC), as the governing body, manages the daily operations of BCOAG. The EC members may be expected to devote extra time and effort in addition to attending to the minimum core duties and responsibilities stated below.

### **A. Election and Term of Appointment**

#### **1. Chair**

The BCOAG Chair shall be elected as the Chair-Elect in the year prior to serving as Chair. If the Chair-Elect is unable to progress to Chair, the BCOAG may choose to elect a Chair without serving first as Chair-Elect. Alternately, the BCOAG may choose to re-elect an incumbent Chair if the Chair-Elect is unwilling or unable to progress to Chair in the subsequent year. Under no circumstances will any officer be allowed to serve more than two years as BCOAG Chair. At the expiration of the Chair's membership term, the Chair may serve an additional year as a member of the EC.

The Chair must be a voting member.

#### **2. Chair-Elect**

The BCOAG Chair-Elect shall be elected from among the voting membership. The Chair-Elect serves a three-year term (first year as Chair-Elect, the second as Chair and third as Immediate Past Chair); there is no re-election of the Chair-Elect position. There will be an annual election for Chair-Elect.

The Chair-Elect must be a voting member.

### **3. All Executive Committee Members**

All Executive Committee members, excluding the Chair and the Immediate Past Chair, are elected from among the voting members by a simple majority vote. Nominations begin in September of each year, and elections are held in October of each year. appointments are one-year terms with the possibility of serving one additional consecutive term in the same position, with the exception of the Chair-Elect.

## **B. Duties and Responsibilities**

### **1. Chair**

The Chair shall:

- 1.1 Carry out and implement the mission, goals, objectives, and functions of the BCOAG Charter and bylaws
- 1.2 Work closely with the Immediate Past Chair, ex-officio members and any prior BCOAG Chairs to ensure a smooth transition and proper continuation of BCOAG business
- 1.3 Submit BCOAG annual business plan and coordinate all BCOAG activities
- 1.4 Submit a list of voting member nominees to the OSG for approval
- 1.5 Submit the Special Assignment Award and Recognition Certificate for qualified BCOAG voting members to the OSG for approval
- 1.6 Lead BCOAG general meetings
- 1.7 Ensure Committee members follow-up on assigned tasks or projects
- 1.8 Assume responsibilities for representing BCOAG to all government agencies and media
- 1.9 Generate an annual report, one to two pages in length, of the BCOAG activities during his/her term
  - 1.9.1. The content of the report shall be prepared from summaries of activities provided by various sub-committee chairs.
  - 1.9.2. The annual report shall be distributed to the BCOAG as an addendum to the meeting minutes no later than the second meeting following the conclusion of his/her term.

The Chair must be a voting member.

### **2. Chair-Elect**

The Chair-Elect shall:

- 2.1 Assist the Chair with the responsibilities and duties listed above
- 2.2 Assist the Chair in the implementation of action items, activities and other deliverables of all Committees
- 2.3 Work closely with the Chair to learn the policies and procedures required to Chair BCOAG

- 2.4 Exercise all the rights and responsibilities granted to the Chair by the BCOAG Charter and Bylaws in the absence of the Chair
- 2.5 Assume the responsibilities of the Chair in the event that the Chair is unavailable
- 2.6 The Chair-Elect is a one-year appointment only

The Chair-Elect must be a voting member.

### **3. Executive Secretary**

The Executive Secretary shall:

- 3.1 Assist Chair in preparing meeting agenda
- 3.2 Record all meeting discussions and prepare meeting minutes
- 3.3 Maintain permanent files containing the BCOAG minutes, reports and all other BCOAG correspondence
- 3.4 Keep attendance of all meetings and notify the Chair and Chair-Elect if a member has missed two BCOAG meetings
- 3.5 Monitor the attendance of voting membership to ensure proper organizational representation
- 3.6 Determine if a quorum of voting members is present in order to conduct BCOAG business; a quorum is defined as a minimum of fifty percent (50%) attendance by voting members.
- 3.7 Exercise all the rights and responsibilities granted to the Chair by the BCOAG Charter and Bylaws in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair
- 3.8 The Executive Secretary must have a working knowledge of Robert's Rule of Order
- 3.9 Assume the responsibilities of the Vice-Chair in the event that the Vice-Chair is unavailable

The Executive Secretary must be a voting member.

### **4. Correspondence Secretary**

The Correspondence Secretary shall:

- 4.1 Disseminate BCOAG meeting agenda and gather appropriate background information
- 4.2 Secure a room for meetings and set up teleconference calls
- 4.3 Disseminate all correspondence to BCOAG members in a timely manner as appropriate
- 4.4 Assist the BCOAG Chair in the management of the BCOAG listserv
- 4.5 Assist BCOAG Chair in preparing the End-of-Term Summary Report
- 4.6 Maintain the Standard Operating Procedure
- 4.7 The Corresponding Secretary will serve as the Chair of the Communications and Public Relations Committee
- 4.8 Assume the responsibilities of the Executive Secretary in the event that the Executive Secretary is unavailable

The Correspondence Secretary must be a voting member.

## **5. Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) Representatives (2)**

The MOLC Representatives shall:

- 5.1 Represent BCOAG at all MOLC meetings
- 5.2 Fulfill the rotational responsibilities within the MOLC
- 5.3 Report to BCOAG voting members the pertinent information from the MOLC and Chief Professional Officer (CPO)/Surgeon General Professional Advisory Committee (SGPAC) meetings
- 5.4 One of the MOLC representatives shall be the Immediate Past Chair, the other MOLC representative will be appointed by the EC

The MOLC representative does not have to be a voting member.

## **6. COF Liaison**

The COF Liaison shall:

- 6.1 Maintain a record of all financial transactions
- 6.2 Prepare a monthly financial report for the BCOAG Chair
- 6.3 Provide monthly updates to the BCOAG members during monthly BCOAG meetings
- 6.4 Prepare a budget plan for the new operating year

The COF Liaison must be a voting member.

## **7. Immediate Past Chair**

Following a term as Chair, the individual may serve a one-year term as Immediate Past Chair, regardless of his/her membership status. The Immediate Past Chair will provide advice and assistance to BCOAG and its Executive Board. The Immediate Past Chair will serve as one of the MOLC representatives.

The Immediate Past Chair does not have to be a voting member.

## **V. Committees**

Committees are created to better serve the mission of BCOAG. A committee may be either a standing one, in response to on-going assignments or an *ad hoc* one/working group(s), in response to specific (or short-term) assignments.

### **A. Term of Appointment**

The standing committee chairs are elected from among the voting members by a simple majority vote. Nominations begin in September of each year. The election is

held in October of every year. Chair serves a one-year term with the option of serving one additional term. All *ad hoc* committees chairs are selected from the pool of voting members by the Chair of BCOAG, in concurrence with the EC. All Committee Co-Chairs are determined by each relevant Committee Chair and should be familiar with the duties of the Chair and act in the Chair's absence. The Co-chair shall exercise all the rights and responsibilities that are granted to the committee Chair by the BCOAG Charter and Bylaws in the absence of the Chair. Committee Co-Chair and Committee members can be non-voting members.

## **B. Duties and Responsibilities**

The following are descriptions of standing committees within the BCOAG. Committee Chairs provide leadership and direction to committee members in order to meet specific goals and objectives (see below). Committee Chairs are responsible for keeping records of resources and accomplishments and providing necessary information for the BCOAG Chair's End-of-Term Summary Report. *Ad hoc* Committees/working groups created in response to specific (or short-term) assignments are not listed in these by-laws, but their function and accomplishments will be described in the End-of-Term Summary Report of BCOAG activities and accomplishments.

## **C. Standing Committees**

### **1. Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee shall:

- 1.1 Prepare the BCOAG award nomination package and submit to the Chair who shall forward them to the OSG for final approval
- 1.2 Prepare any other ad hoc award nominations on behalf of BCOAG
- 1.3 Prepare the Special Assignment Award nomination package and submit to Chair who shall forward it to MOLC for final approval
- 1.4 Draft memoranda recognizing outgoing BCOAG members and the Chair upon the expiration of appointments
- 1.5 Develop other recognition strategies

### **2. Career and Professional Development Committee**

The Career and Professional Development Committee shall:

- 2.1 Provide guidance and support to all BCOAG members in career development.
- 2.2 Organize the BCOAG training sections
- 2.3 Update and monitor the BCOAG mentor/mentee program
- 2.4 Monitor issues and concerns in career development/advancement

### **3. Communications and Public Relations Committee**

The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall:

- 3.1 Evaluate and Maintain the BCOAG website to ensure that a useful format and structure of the website content is established and maintained
- 3.2 Maintain BCOAG Listserv

- 3.3 Enhance BCOAG visibility in Commissioned Corps, as well as in the general public by ensuring that useful and up-to-date information of interest to BCOAG is readily available
- 3.4 Work in conjunction with other Committee members in the development and updating of website content such as posting BCOAG meeting minutes and BCOAG related pictures on time
- 3.5 Assist the BCOAG Chair in communication with other agencies and media
- 3.6 The Correspondence Secretary will automatically chair this committee
- 3.7 Monitor public information on African American affairs
- 3.8 Plan for Black History Month Celebration Activities
- 3.9 Review and update periodically the BCOAG brochure
- 3.10 Maintain and update the BCOAG poster
- 3.11 Identify and organize at least one committee project per year to enhance the visibility of the BCOAG by interacting with the PACs, CPOs, OSO, minority communities, and other agencies and the media

#### **4. Health Disparities Committee**

The Health Disparities Committee shall:

- 4.1 Increase awareness about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity for the prevention of chronic disease
- 4.2 Educate about the warning signs, symptoms and risk factors of chronic disease through early detection and screening
- 4.3 Provide resources and educational materials to empower the African American community to take charge of their overall health and well-being
- 4.4 Develop culturally-appropriate informational tools, using existing resources from various government and/or private entities. These tools will focus on diseases that disproportionately affect the African American community; in addition, the tools will be disseminated via community events and other venues (i.e., churches, health fairs, county health departments, community centers, sororities/fraternities, and family reunions); the committee will also develop additional health-related informational tools as needed
- 4.5 Identify opportunities to partner with the BCOAG Outreach Committee to expand our efforts and increase awareness of health promotion behaviors
- 4.6 Create evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of outreach activities

#### **5. Community Outreach Committee**

The Community Outreach Committee shall:

- 5.1 Develop and coordinate opportunities for BCOAG members to actively engage in activities that protect, promote, and advance the health, safety, and wellness of African-American and other minority communities where we live and work
- 5.2 Increase the visibility of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and BCOAG by participating in community outreach activities
- 5.3 Serve as an advocate for minority communities by offering our expertise on innovative ways to decrease racial and ethnic health disparities and related issues among Blacks and African-Americans

5.4 Provide guidance to the Office of the Surgeon General and the BCOAG general body on public health issues related to Blacks and African-American and minority communities

## **6. Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee shall:

- 6.1 Coordinate all activities related to the nomination of voting members to the BCOAG
- 6.2 Solicit support and interest from the general BCOAG members in recruiting activities
- 6.3 Prepare the Membership Packet for nominated voting members and submit to BCOAG Chair who shall forward it to the OSG by October 30th of each year
- 6.4 Work with Communications and Public Relations and Nomination and Membership Committees in recruiting Black and African-American Officers to the PHS or BCOAG
- 6.5 Identify and organize at least one BCOAG driven recruiting project per year
- 6.6 Work with the Career Development/Advancement and Awards/Recognition Committees for retention of officers to the PHS or BCOAG
- 6.7 Obtain a statistical report from the Office of Commissioned Corps Operation (OCCO) on the number of Black and African-American Officers serving in the PHS, by Categories and by Agencies at least annually

## **D. Ad Hoc Committees**

### **1. Charter and Bylaws Committee**

The Charter and Bylaws Committee shall:

- 1.1 Review and revise the Charter every five years, and Bylaws every three years
- 1.2 Ensure approval of all changes to the existing Charter, Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures by the voting members
- 1.3 Prepare all member-approved changes in BCOAG Charter and submit to the BCOAG Chair to forward to the Surgeon General for final approval

### **2. Social Committee**

The Social Committee shall:

- 2.1 Provide an avenue for members to network and build sustained relationships outside the work setting
- 2.2 Coordinate BCOAG sponsored events for PHS members and their families to foster interaction through activities in a social setting in their local areas
- 2.3 Host an annual social event encouraging participation from all BCOAG members within the USPHS

## **VI. Operation**

### **A. Chain of Command**

1. The Chair shall convey any information or idea to the Executive Committee (EC).
2. The Chair shall seek input from the EC and relevant Committee chairs as needed.

3. EC members shall vote and the majority rules (51% or above). Voting will be performed only after complete and meaningful discussions have taken place. If there is a dispute among EC members and/or tie in voting, then it should be brought up to the voting members for a vote.
4. The Chair shall announce the decision to general voting members, regardless of the outcome of the vote. If a majority of all voting members agree that further discussions of the decision are necessary, then such discussions will take place.
5. The Chair shall ask the MOLC representative(s) to share the final decision with MOLC.

## **B. Committee Projects**

All Committee projects should be related to the mission and goals commonly agreed on by the Committee and BCOAG governing body. Each Committee should follow the steps outlined below for each project as a guide and make sure to keep BCOAG leadership apprised of the current status of each project through the Committee monthly report.

1. Identify specific projects through collective Committee member brainstorming, conferring with other PHS officers and BCOAG leadership
2. Gather additional information as needed
3. Review the Committee's need for outside assistance
4. Determine what assistance BCOAG or other junior officers can provide, including whether other Committees or general members may be of assistance
5. Create an action plan with timeline
6. Identify a project lead
7. Identify and assign specific tasks
8. Establish a reasonable timeline to complete tasks and discuss results
9. Evaluate results and assign new tasks, if appropriate
10. Keep appropriate BCOAG leadership apprised of project status
11. Ensure appropriate and timely record keeping for each of task
12. Repeat the above steps as needed, until the project is completed
13. Ensure acknowledgement of project completion and project team members to BCOAG leadership and other authorities as appropriate

## **C. Transitioning**

### **New Member Orientation**

1. Each EC member and Committee Chair should conduct an orientation for new EC members and Committee Chairs. This orientation should include the roles and responsibilities as outlined above and the minimum criteria for maintenance of good standing as an BCOAG Voting Member. The following areas should be emphasized during the orientation:

- 1.1 Importance of the position (Committee members will look for ideas, leadership, and support from the Committee Chair)
- 1.2 All duties and responsibilities of the EC member or Committee Chair
- 1.3 Mission and objectives of the EC position and the Committee
- 1.4 The bounds of Committee activity and authority
- 1.5 BCOAG Bylaws, policy, practices, and procedures

- 1.6 Past accomplishments and current work of the Committee
- 1.7 Assignments of Committee members
- 1.8 Criteria used for accepting new Committee members

2. Outgoing EC members and Committee chairs shall provide a written description of all duties; functions performed and related resource/tools to the incoming members that are replacing him/her. This is to be done prior to the first meeting of the new member's term which is the second Thursday of January of each year.

## **VII. Meetings**

BCOAG general meetings are to be held monthly. All voting members are required to attend all official or scheduled meetings. If a voting member is unable to attend, it is that voting member's responsibility to appoint an alternate. To encourage the participation of BCOAG general members, the alternate should be a non-voting member who is familiar with the voting member's responsibilities in BCOAG. While acting on behalf of the voting member, the alternate has the full rights and privileges of the voting member. If an alternate cannot be found to attend for the voting member, an excused absence may be requested from the Chair prior to the meeting. Voting member's membership and privileges may be revoked if there are two or more unexcused absences in one fiscal year.

BCOAG voting membership meetings are to be held at least quarterly. Meeting dates and times will be determined by the BCOAG Chair.

## **VIII. Awards and Certificates**

### **A. Special Assignment Award**

A voting member who has contributed significantly (met the requirement of 30-days of cumulative activities) may qualify to receive this award once per three-year term.

### **B. BCOAG Awards**

BCOAG offers two awards annually that are presented at the annual PHS COF Symposium: the *Hildrus A. Poindexter Award*, and the *Annual George I. Lythcott Award*.

These awards honor members of the USPHS commissioned corps or equivalent civil service professionals who make significant contributions to the advancement of the nation's health. Current voting members are not eligible for these awards. BCOAG also offers additional annual awards: Retired Officer Recognition Award and the BCOAG Chair Awards.

#### **1. Hildrus A. Poindexter Award**

The candidate must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Demonstrated significant contributions toward improving the health of African Americans and other minorities in the United States and abroad;
- Continually demonstrates exceptional dedication to the mission of the PHS;
- Demonstrated outstanding leadership (academically, administratively, programmatically, and/or internationally);
- Demonstrated excellence in his/her professional field, and;
- Demonstrated significant contributions to the community.
- PHS officer or civil service employee (with a minimum of 7 years service within PHS) for outstanding service contributing to enhancing access to healthcare for underserved populations.

## **2. Annual George I. Lythcott Award**

The candidate must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Contributions to the program and OPDIV objectives have reflected a sustained high quality of work performance;
- Work performance or a single important achievement has been characterized by outstanding leadership initiative and/or the application of unique skills and creativity;
- Overall work performance or a single activity has clearly contributed to the mission of the PHS;
- Participation in activities within or outside PHS has had a positive impact on improving the health status of the Nation's medically underserved populations
- Any Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps officer (Grade 0-2, 0-3, or 0-4) with a minimum of 5 years of service in the Corps

## **3. Retired Officer Recognition Award**

This award recognizes those African-American PHS Commissioned Corps Officers who served with distinction for a decade or more fostering the mission of the PHS. Two individuals will be recognized each year.

## **4. BCOAG Chair Awards (2)**

This award was created to recognize Officers (1 - voting member; 1 - non-voting member) who have provided exemplary support to the Chair for the past year. These Officers have gone above and beyond the call of duty and have exceeded expectations of the Chair by supporting BCOAG's mission, their fellow officers and the community at large. The recipients of the awards are chosen by the Chair and are revealed at BCOAG's annual awards ceremony.

### **C. Certificate of Appreciation**

The Certificate of Appreciation from the BCOAG Executive Committee is presented annually to non-voting members who make significant contributions to BCOAG. This certificate may also be presented, as appropriate, to anyone who has significantly contributed to the mission of BCOAG. The Certificate of Appreciation is prepared by the Award Committee and signed by the Surgeon General or the Surgeon General's alternate. Excluding the voting membership criteria, the Certificates of Appreciation and the Special Assignment Ribbons follow the same nomination process.

### **D. Letter of Appreciation**

The BCOAG Chair may present a letter of appreciation to an BCOAG member who contributes significantly to an BCOAG activity. The intent of a letter of appreciation is to demonstrate BCOAG's gratitude for an individual's effort in contributing to the mission of BCOAG. Such an effort can include a presentation to BCOAG committees, and/or participation in BCOAG events. Members are eligible to receive a letter of appreciation more than once per term.

### **IX. Standard Operating Procedures**

A Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) handbook will be developed to provide detailed instruction on the operation of BCOAG. This SOP provides guidance on matters not addressed by the BCOAG Charter or Bylaws. The Correspondence Secretary is responsible for maintaining these SOP's. All SOPs should be reviewed annually by the respective EC members and Committees. The Charter and Bylaws Committee will provide general guidance and assistance in drafting and revision processes of these documents.

### **X. Bylaws Revision**

BCOAG Bylaws should be reviewed at least once every three years. Revised Bylaws should be submitted by the Charter and Bylaws Committee, approved by a simple majority vote of the voting members, and signed by the Chair. These Bylaws have been ratified by a quorum of the voting membership on December 21, 2010.

### **XI. Version Control**

This is Version: 2010

### **XII. Approval**

Submitted By:

CDR Postelle Birch-Smith, Chair  
Charter and Bylaws Committee



Approved by:

LCDR Ieshia Jones  
Chair, BCOAG

