



Volunteer Handbook

850 Mt. Pleasant Ave

Ann Arbor, MI 48103

(360) 466-2080

meacschools.org

info@meacschools.org

Welcome to MEAC

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to MEAC! We are honored and delighted that you have chosen to volunteer some of your precious time with us.

Our agency depends on volunteers like you to ensure that we operate efficiently and successfully. Volunteers at MEAC participate in discussions, peer reviews and decision making as board members, accreditation review committee members, or as continuing education reviewers. In short, MEAC could not operate without dedicated volunteers like you.

~~The~~ OUR Volunteer Handbook provides answers to many of the questions you may have about the volunteer positions we offer. It covers policies and procedures, and our mutual responsibilities. You are responsible for reading and understanding the Volunteer Handbook, and for adhering to MEAC's policies and procedures.

If anything is unclear, please discuss the matter with the Executive Director.

Again, on behalf of our staff and everyone at MEAC, we welcome you to our team. Thank you for taking time to help us support high quality midwifery education.

Sincerely,

Trixi Packmohr
Executive Director

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Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook has been produced to help you become an effective and productive MEAC volunteer in our commitment to women's empowerment and midwifery education. This book will share with you a little of our history, philosophy, practices, and policies as well as all the benefits we will provide to you as a valued volunteer.

No volunteer handbook can answer all the questions you might have so we will ask you to participate in our volunteer orientation. That we can better get to know each other, express our views, and work together in a harmonious relationship. Also, please do not hesitate to ask questions whenever they arise. Our volunteer team, staff and board members will gladly answer them.

We believe you will enjoy your work with MEAC and your fellow MEAC volunteers.

We depend on you – your success is our success.

Mission and Midwives Model of Care & History

Mission Statement

MEAC's mission is to promote excellent education in midwifery through accreditation. Its standards and criteria for the education of midwives incorporate the nationally recognized core competencies and guiding principles of the Midwives Alliance of North America and the requirements for national certification by North American Registry of Midwives.

MEAC's accreditation criteria for midwifery education programs reflect the unique components and philosophy of the Midwives Model of Care™.

Midwives Model of Care

The Midwives Model of Care™ is based on the fact that pregnancy and birth are normal life events. It includes:

- * monitoring the physical, psychological, and social well-being of the mother throughout the childbearing cycle

- * providing the mother individualized education, counseling, and prenatal care, continuous hands-on assistance during labor and delivery, and postpartum support, -- all while minimizing technological interventions

- * and identifying and referring women who require obstetrical attention.

The application of this woman-centered model has proven to reduce the incidence of birth injury, trauma, and cesarean section.

Midwives are committed to improving women's health care and pregnancy outcomes, promoting sound nutrition and breastfeeding, and providing respectful, competent care. The efficacy of midwifery has been well documented. In the five European countries that have the lowest infant mortality rates, midwives attend more than 70 percent of all births. (SADLY, since 1954, the United States' infant mortality rate has hovered between 17th and 24th in the world.) Increasing access to midwives could contribute to the improvement of maternal/infant wellness. MEAC stands for midwifery education that is held to the highest national and international standards to ensure that midwives are well prepared for the important work they do.

History

Midwifery in North America was seriously diminished throughout the early 1000s. In the 1970s and 1980s, direct-entry midwifery experienced a spontaneous renaissance of differing styles and philosophies of training and care provision. Out of that patchwork, leaders in the midwifery community came to recognize that more organized midwifery education was important and that methodical direct-entry midwifery education programs needed to be developed. Attaining nationally recognized accreditation for direct-entry midwifery schools and programs became the driving mission of a group of midwifery leaders throughout the United States.

The Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) was formed in 1991 by the National Coalition of Midwifery Educators as a not-for-profit organization. MEAC's standards for accreditation were developed by expert midwifery educators from a variety of midwifery educational programs in the United States. MEAC was incorporated in July 1991 and earned its 501-c-3 in 1993. In January 2001, the United States Secretary of Education recognized MEAC as a national accrediting agency for direct-entry midwifery.

MEAC is a membership organization comprised of institutions and programs accredited by MEAC. The first school to attain accreditation was in 1991 and was soon followed by other educational institutions that prized the validation of recognition by the United States Department of Education (USDE). As of 2020, MEAC has 11 accredited institutions and programs, with two more schools working toward achieving full accreditation.

Philosophy and Vision on Midwifery and Midwifery Education

The Midwifery Education Accreditation Council is an accrediting body for direct-entry midwifery educational programs, recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Accreditation plays an essential role in high quality midwifery training and practice by requiring educators to follow a path of continual growth and quality improvement. MEAC embraces our crucial role in the accountability of the midwifery profession.

We acknowledge that there is an inherent tension between upholding objective standards and maintaining a rich variety of options for students and for the childbearing public. MEAC accepts the challenge of weaving those threads into the framework of our core mission, documents, and standards.

We believe that the Midwives Model of Care (Copyright (c) 1996-2008, Midwifery Task Force, Inc.), within which MEAC standards are based, can be a positive influence in healthcare through collaboration with all professions working in the maternity care system. MEAC utilizes the Midwives Model of Care as a source of ideals for educating up-and-coming midwives, and as a map for MEAC's work as accreditors, through respectful, fair, individualized, responsive, and transparent interactions.

- MEAC standards form a blueprint for steady growth and upgrading of educational programs that are built on current best-practice research and evidence, utilizing various educational routes including conventional classroom learning, distance learning, and clinical placement
- MEAC encourages broad student and faculty input into designing innovative programs that address the needs of the many communities' midwives come from and serve.
- MEAC values and cultivates competency-based educational programs that are not defined by the length of time spent in school but by meeting internationally recognized standards of core competency.
- MEAC promotes the training of midwives who will provide care for culturally, socially, and economically diverse families.
- MEAC strives for inclusivity, in the composition of our board and in the education, we oversee, for those of differing gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, marital status, creed, age, and ability/disability.

MEAC believes that accreditation has the power to effect positive change in the maternity care system AND IN OUR WORLD. This accountability can raise the standing of skilled midwives as primary providers in healthcare for childbearing families by furthering training programs that integrate the Midwives Model of Care, embrace diversity, and incorporate innovations in knowledge and provision of care.

Volunteer Expectations

What You Can Expect from MEAC

- Respectfulness of your commitment, time & confidentiality
- The satisfaction of being part of an effective team
- Ongoing support from everyone on the MEAC Staff
- An inclusive, welcoming culture
- Recognition and appreciation for your work
- The right to say no to projects and tasks that make you uncomfortable
- Five contact hours of continuing education hours toward your recertification if you are a midwife

MEAC is an inclusive, supportive organization where volunteers can expect to be treated with respect. We are grateful for your valuable time and commitment to our program and will safeguard your right to confidentiality as a volunteer.

What MEAC Expects from You

- Honor your commitment to our program
- Cooperate with the MEAC staff and fellow volunteers
- Be prompt and reliable
- Notify us of any changes to your commitment as a volunteer
- Keep all communications with or concerning our schools and volunteers confidential
- Maintain a respectful relationship with other volunteers and staff

The Orientation Process

1. Complete [Volunteer Application Form](#) (separate applications can be found for accreditation review committee membership (ARC) or Board of directors membership, or continuing education unit (CEU) reviewer)
2. Complete and sign [Ethics, Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Form](#) statement
3. Start self-training part of orientation
4. Participate in one-on-one training with staff
5. Call on other volunteers as and mentors as needed
6. When you are ready to take on a position as an ARC member or CEU reviewer MEAC staff will assign volunteer projects to you.
7. If you wish to join the MEAC Board of Directors (BOD) and are elected to a board member position you will start participating in board meetings once you have been elected by MEAC Member Schools and once you will have completed training with MEAC staff. You will then be part of all board meetings, tasks and decisions. Board members commit to three-year terms and can apply for reelection if they wish to continue board work.

Volunteer Positions, Responsibilities, Qualifications and Time Commitment

Positions

There are a variety of opportunities to volunteer your time and skills at MEAC. Accreditation Review Committee (ARC), Continuing Education Reviewers and Board Members.

CEU Reviewer:

The MEAC receives approximately 80-100 continuing education unit (CEU) applications per year. The applications come in electronic format and follow specific guidelines. MEAC CEU reviewers receive access to the pertinent Dropbox folder in order to access the application and a review form to complete; evaluation results are to be sent back to MEAC within 30 days. CEU Reviewers are asked to access approximately 2-3 applications per month. Some of the applications can be evaluated in an hour, while a large conference could take 5 or more hours. Our reviewers are midwives who maintain an active practice, stay abreast with current best practices, and are interested in the quality of midwifery education.

Volunteer Training: We ask volunteers to review and familiarize themselves with the MEAC CEU guidelines document. Additionally, we request a full CV and a signed ethics agreement/confidentiality document. Once the volunteer has submitted the above information and read through the guidelines document. MEAC will schedule a virtual meeting for a one-hour training session. Volunteers should also familiarize themselves with MEAC'S website and study the online application submission forms. After the training has been completed MEAC will provide access to the pertinent Dropbox folders and begin sending CEU applications to the reviewer.

Accreditation Review Committee (ARC):

1. Self-Evaluation Report (SER): The ARC's role begins shortly after an applicant school submits a comprehensive SER and related documentation. In the SER, the applicant is asked to demonstrate compliance with approximately 80 MEAC benchmarks. ARC members conduct a detailed review OF the applicant's response for each benchmark. This review takes between ten (10) and twenty (20) hours to complete, depending on the size, complexity of the submission, and the ARC member's level of experience.
2. Additional Information Request (AIR): After reviewing the SER, ARC members determine whether additional information is needed before a site visit can be conducted. In collaboration with the MEAC Accreditation Coordinator, the ARC members construct an

additional information request (AIR). The AIR is sent to the applicant school, which has six weeks to respond. ARC members then review AND EVALUATE the applicant's response to the AIR. This review generally takes two (2) to eight (8) hours, depending on the size and complexity of the submission.

3. Communication: Throughout the review process, from SER to AIR to site visit to the final report, ARC members, along with the MEAC Accreditation Coordinators, hold a series of conference calls to discuss their findings and prepare recommendations for the independent board reviewer (IBR). IBRs may spend approximately ten (10) hours engaged in these calls.
4. Site visits: full accreditation site visits are scheduled at the end of the accreditation process and last approximately 3 days, plus up to two days for travel. There can be additional site visits for certain substantive change requests that are generally less than 3 days.
5. Board decision meeting: Once ARC and IBR reports are compared, staff prepare a report of ARC/IBR findings that is presented to the board of directors. ARC members must attend the meeting at which the final report is presented to the board so that the board's final decision is based on the most complete picture.

Board Member:

The MEAC Board of Directors: The board consists of up to 13 members with a diverse set of skills and backgrounds. Board Members are elected to a 3-year term by MEAC member institutions and programs.

Responsibilities:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to the mission and purposes of MEAC as stated in the Articles of Incorporation and the By-laws
2. Attend regular Board meetings and participate in Board and Committee activities in a meaningful way. In the event a Director has two or more unexcused absences from Board and/or Committee meetings, the Executive Committee may request the resignation of the Director.
3. Support the finances of MEAC by assisting with fundraising.
4. Participate in the work of at least one MEAC committee during a given year.
5. Familiarize themselves with pertinent MEAC documents and the accreditation processes utilized by MEAC.
6. Participate in accreditation training and activities, including serving as Independent Board Reviewers (IBR) (see section 6.a.ii of the P&P manual).
7. Engage in making final accreditation decisions.

Training and Time Commitment:

Training involves self-study and one-on-one work with the Director of Accreditation and the Executive Director. Initial training takes about eight (8) hours (a few sessions). All volunteers will be granted access to the member section of the MEAC website which provides additional resources.

Meetings: The board of directors meets every one -to two months via an online platform such as ZOOM and once per year in October for an in-person meeting. One in-person Executive Committee takes place in the spring.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS TIME COMMITMENTS:

One three-day in-person meeting per year

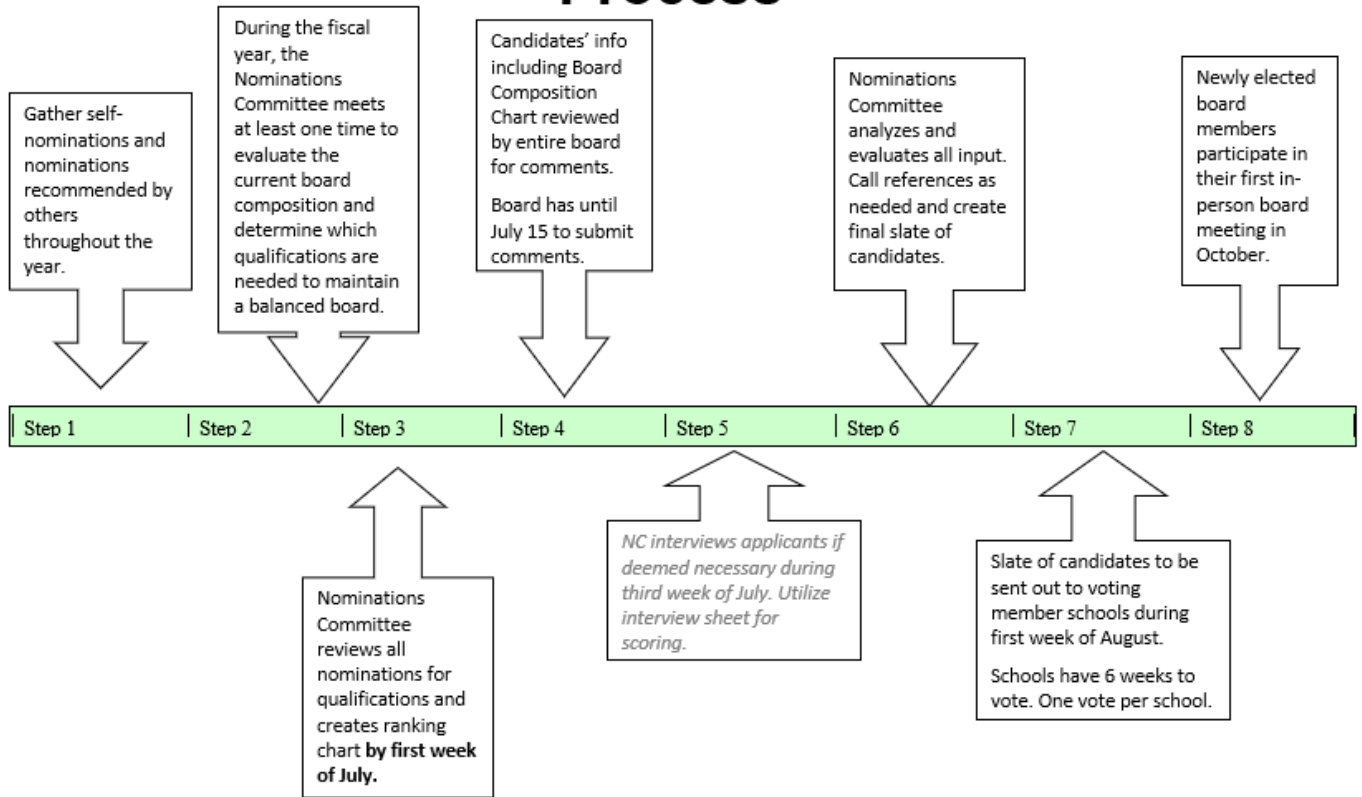
Six TO TEN online two- hour meetings per year for full board of directors (12 – 20 hours annually)

Four to ten one-hour committee meetings (4-10 hours annually)

Meeting Materials review and preparation prior to meetings (60 minutes per meeting)

Committee work including standard revisions, bylaw revisions, policies and procedures revisions, fundraising/development and outreach activities, financial review, equity and access etc. (4-10 hours annually)

MEAC Board Election Process



Volunteer Policies & Procedures

- Volunteers ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF MEAC. WHEN CONDUCTING MEAC WORK, THEY must adhere to the ethics policy of MEAC, which includes revealing any potential conflicts of interest and maintaining confidentiality. All volunteers are required to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality agreement.
- Volunteers must adhere to the Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement of MEAC, which includes revealing any potential conflicts of interest and maintaining confidentiality.
- All volunteers are expected to read MEAC'S core documents and follow MEAC's general philosophy when carrying out volunteer work for MEAC.
- Board members must be committed to peer review and the accreditation process, which requires a commitment of time as well as objectivity, accuracy, attention to detail, evaluative writing, team participation, timeliness, and communication, as well as common sense.
- ⊖ Volunteers are expected to be proficient in using computer and virtual meeting technology (MEAC utilizes Google Hangouts, or Zoom as virtual communication platforms and Dropbox to store all essential documents in order to work remotely successfully).
- Our virtual office stores all documents in Dropbox. Regular day-to-day communication is mostly via e-mail with documents sent as email attachments , or are shared within Dropbox or as google docs.
- Volunteers must not be under investigation for fraud or that have surrendered, either voluntarily or involuntarily, a license or certificate to practice
- MEAC expects all volunteers to be respectful when representing the organization and to adhere to all MEAC's ethics and confidentiality policies.

Travel

MEAC, is a registered non-profit organization ~~and~~ with limited funds. MEAC volunteers may BE REQUIRED TO travel to a site visit, a conference, or an in-person board or executive meeting. MEAC volunteers are expected to seek low cost alternatives for travel expenses including airfare, accommodations, meals, and ground transportation. MEAC also gladly accepts offerings or contributions if a volunteer is able and willing to do so. (example: donate your frequent flyer miles for a flight, pay for gas when you drive, pay for parking at the airport, pay for a meal etc.).

Airfare and Ground Transportation

MEAC offers two options for travel arrangements and payments:

- 1) The volunteer has the option to arrange and pay for ~~their own~~ airfare and be reimbursed by MEAC via check payment, OR
- 2) Alternatively, MEAC will arrange and pay directly for airfare.
- 3) MEAC will assist with ground transportation arrangements as needed.

Accommodations

MEAC will arrange for accommodations at hotels or at venues such as Air B&B. Volunteers can share their hotel room with any person including family, friends, or colleagues. However, when MEAC is staying at a house, apartment or retreat center, rooms cannot be shared with others WHO ARE NOT CONNECTED TO MEAC.

MEAC will pay for the following travel expenses that may occur while doing MEAC business:

- All travel arrangements must be made in collaboration with MEAC administration and staff.
- Airfare, accommodations, ground transportation, and parking. If volunteers use their own car to and from site visits, Executive Committee and/or in-person board of directors meetings, MEAC will reimburse for mileage (at the current year's rate, as determined by the IRS, which in 2019 was 14 cents per mile <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-issues-standard-mileage-rates-for-2019>). MEAC also provides expenses for travel to and from conferences, when attending as MEAC representative, as determined in the approved annual budget. A per diem payment for meals and incidentals (tips) in 2019 is \$66 per day. (<https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/news/2018/sep/irs-per-diem-rates-2018-2019.html>).
- If the budget allows and upon special request MEAC occasionally assists with childcare expenses in order to allow a volunteer to participate in a meeting or site visit.
- During site visits, conferences, and board or executive meetings, a staff member – if present- will use a MEAC credit card to pay for group rides, meals, car rentals etc. If staff is not present, MEAC will reimburse for approved expenses with receipts.

Reimbursement Procedure:

If volunteers make their own arrangements such as airfare and accommodations, they must communicate with staff to receive approval prior to booking. Smaller expenses such as ground transportation, meals, and incidentals are at the discretion of the volunteer. In order to be reimbursed for any expenses, volunteers are required to submit receipts to the MEAC administrator. Receipts should be forwarded to info@meacschools.org.

I have read the volunteer manual and agree to follow MEAC's volunteer policies and procedures.

Volunteer Name (printed)

Volunteer signature and date