

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.
Affiliate Chapter Relations Committee

Affiliate Chapter Handbook
Third Edition
Section 10

The Affiliate with Local Chapters: See How They Run

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The Affiliate with Local Chapters

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID), as we know it, is composed of 58 affiliate chapters. These chapters come from within the United States, Canada, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico and have met requirements as set forth by RID. There is great diversity in how the affiliate chapters are structured. A few states have multiple affiliate chapters; however, most states have only one. (Note: In September of 2002 the Board of Directors passed motion 2001.36, which recommends that there be one affiliate chapter per state. States with multiple chapters were not asked to change.)

Recognizing that there are other formats for serving the diverse geographic and membership make-up of chapters, some affiliate chapters have elected to divide the state into local chapters. These local chapters may follow geographical areas, urban areas, education boundaries, or population numbers. While some affiliate chapters also name them sub-chapters, regions, zones, districts, etc., RID encourages that they be called local chapters.

There are numerous reasons why some affiliate chapters decide to utilize this local chapter structure:

- It parallels the structure of another organization in their state, so it is something with which they are familiar. (Local colleges, Department of Education, other Deaf or Deafness related organizations)
- It provides more direct contact with their members.
- It is easier to provide more frequent workshops for a smaller locale and it reduces the miles members have to travel to attend workshops.
- It begins the development of leadership skills in incremental steps. Someone who is not willing or perhaps ready to be an officer for the affiliate chapter might be willing or ready to be an officer for a local chapter. This parallels the development of many of our national officers who have served at the affiliate chapter level, then the regional level, and finally the national level.
- It helps assure that members do not fall through the cracks.
- It is a comfortable first step for a member to join and know most of the other members.
- It is a great way to recruit students who are in interpreter education programs.
- It responds to unique needs of local groups.

Chapters which use RID's tax exemption and have a local chapter structure need to understand the following points:

- Affiliate chapters can be incorporated and fall under RID's tax exemption. Incorporation and taxation are two separate matters.
- If the affiliate chapter is using RID's tax exemption, it is important to understand that the exemption comes down only one layer from RID to the affiliate chapter. It does not cover the next layer, which would be the local chapter.
- Therefore, it is important that fiscal records and fundraising efforts are set so as not to compromise this issue. For example, if a local chapter decided to sell candy as a fundraiser, it would be important that all expenses and receipts go through the affiliate chapter's treasury and that the local chapter not set up its own bank account to handle the income and expenditures of the fundraiser. It is suggested that affiliate chapter treasuries set up line item accounts so that each local chapter's monies are kept separate and not commingled with affiliate chapter funds (for more information, see www.irs.gov).
- It is also important to understand that if the affiliate chapter is under RID's tax umbrella/group exemption and the local chapter has its own bank account the leadership of the local chapter is individually liable since they did not use the affiliate chapter's tax ID number to establish the account. In essence they are operating as their own entity and not under the group exemption.
- Another issue arises when donations are given to local chapters who believe they are under RID's group exemption. Since the exemption comes down only one layer, only the affiliate chapter as a whole is covered. Therefore, agencies giving a donation to the local chapter cannot legally claim the deduction since the local chapter is not under RID's group exemption number and therefore not an exempt group.
- Finally, affiliate chapters are advised to check their articles of incorporation to confirm that nothing in the local chapter structure or fiscal record keeping is in conflict with the articles of incorporation.

In a similar vein it is important that bylaws and the policy and procedures manual of the affiliate chapter clearly outline who is the voice for the affiliate when it comes to legislative matters, educational matters, or dealing with governmental agencies. It can be confusing and embarrassing for an official to think he or she is dealing with the right person and then find out that the president is really the local chapter president and cannot speak on behalf of the affiliate chapter. This gives officials a bad impression of both the affiliate chapter and RID. The lines of communication need to be clear at all times.

A list of affiliate chapters that utilize the local chapter structure can be found on RID's web page. If your affiliate chapter is considering using this structure, you are encouraged to contact the affiliate chapters directly to discuss the pros and cons of utilizing this structure.

Reference:

U.S. Department of the Treasury. *Tax-exempt status for your organization* (Publication No. 557). Retrieved April 26, 2003, from the Internal Revenue Service Online via: <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/o,,id=96103,00.html>