

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

Affiliate Chapter Handbook
Section 32

**Planning A Retreat:
A - Z**

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Written/Compiled by the Affiliate Chapter Relations Committee

Planning a Retreat: A to Z

So it's that time of year again...time to plan the annual retreat. Or perhaps this is the first time someone has made the suggestion. Or perhaps it is a tradition that was forgotten and is now being resurrected. Whatever the reason or whoever made the suggestion, you are charged with planning a retreat. This section will help make your planning easier, and help you not to forget any of the important details.

At least Three Months Before

The first thing that needs to be done is establishing a **planning committee**. This can be the board, general members; or a combined group; there is no right or wrong answer here. The most important component is that those involved are interested, willing to work hard and excited about planning a retreat.

The first thing the committee will need to do is determine the **purpose** of the retreat. Do you want to bring your chapter closer together? Do you need to reenergize the group? Do you need to offer interpreting skills training or leadership development? Once the goal is decided it will be easier to plan the rest of the retreat. Make sure you keep referring back to the purpose of the retreat during the planning sessions, so you can see if you have drifted away or stayed on course.

Next, you will need to think about the **length** of the retreat. Will it be overnight? A whole weekend? Just an afternoon?? And **where** will the retreat take place? A hotel? Someone's home? A retreat Center? These two items need to be figured out all together, for each will have an influence on the other.

Shortly thereafter a **budget** needs to be devised for the retreat. Will the retreat need to be self-sustaining? Will the chapter be able to contribute any money toward the cost of the retreat? How much is reasonable to expect each participant to pay? Will food and snacks be provided as part of the retreat or will each person be responsible for finding food on their own? Again, these components will be influenced by the purpose, length and place the retreat will be held. Decisions about a maximum number of participants, required deposit amount dates of registration and a refund policy should also be determined at this time. Once these things have been determined, smaller committees can be established and the larger group can disseminate and tackle each part of the retreat as a separate venture.

Two Months Before

Next, determine the **format** and develop an **agenda** for the retreat. Contact any outside resources if needed (presenters, entertainment. etc.) and engage their services. Don't

forget to look at your membership base and see if there are any resources you can use. Make sure to leave time in your agenda for informal social interaction.

It is never too early to send a save the date notice. **Publicity** should start as soon as the date and purpose of the retreat has been determined. Sending information (via mail or email) to the membership is important, and so is sending flyers to ITPs, mentorship programs, and other places where Interpreters may frequent. Approximately two months before the date of the retreat, a registration form for the retreat should be sent out to prospective participants. The retreat announcement and registration form should include directions to the site as well as cancellation information (example: snow cancellation policy). Make sure you have one person willing to collect the applications and money, confirm receipt of such, and send out information about accommodations (if applicable) in a timely fashion.

One Month Before

Finalize the agenda by confirming with each presenter or facilitator; make sure to have emergency contact numbers for presenters, and provide them a way to get in touch with you in case of last minute issues. Find out what a/v or copying needs each presenter may need and prepare for each session by securing enough materials for each. Confirm with the retreat site as to meal choices and/or room numbers and technical equipment if they will be providing any. Prepare any welcome packets including copies of the final agenda, participant lists, and any other general materials. Arrange for retreat “staff” to handle logistics during the retreat itself (check-in, moderating presentations, meal coordination, taking pictures, etc).

After the Retreat

At the end of the retreat, provide an evaluation form so the participants can share their experience with the planning committee. Also, have the committee plan at least one meeting after the retreat to review what went right and what should be done differently the next time around. The committee should type up a report to share with the board, including final attendee numbers, what the weekend included, and the final budget.

RETREAT PLANNING GUIDE

Why should your organization have a retreat?

- To set organizational goals
- To provide information and/or workshop sessions
- To increase morale and build team spirit
- To motivate members for the new year
- To evaluate the progress of long-term goals and objectives
- To get to know each other
- To get away and have FUN!

Who should plan the retreat?

- Board
- Planning Committee
- General Members

When should your organization have a retreat?

- At the beginning of the year
- At midyear for an evaluation or a refresher
- Before new officer installation
- Before a major program

Length and time of year of retreat

- One day
- Weekend
- Fall, winter, spring, summer

Ideal Retreat **Environment**

- Resort
- Hotel
- B&B
- Rustic Lodge
- Park
- Private home

Type of **Content** Desired

- Fun team-building programs
- Training workshops
- Planning sessions

Ideal **Number** of Attendees

- Maximum capacity of the facility
- Minimum required to hold retreat
- Ideal number to match goals (i.e. too many people may not be able to be a part of a team-building exercise)
- Presenter preferences as to size of groups

Training **Topics** and **Activities**

- Skill-building
- Leadership development
- Team-building
- Planning

Retreat “staff”

- Committee members
- Board
- ITP students
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Retreat Budget Form

Facility Cost	_____
Room	_____
Food	_____
Equipment	_____
Presenter Cost	
Fee	_____
Travel	_____
Accommodations	_____
Entertainment	_____
Misc:	
Copies	_____
Supplies (folders, pens, nametags, etc.)	_____
Mailing	_____
Total Cost:	_____
Chapter Contributions	_____
Number of participants	_____
Cost per participant	_____