



2018
CHAPTER
HANDBOOK

Revised March 2018

INTRODUCTION

As a Chapter Chair or Vice Chair, you have been selected by your peers as a leader in the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (CSMFO). This job is an important one, with certain responsibilities.

Chapters of CSMFO were established to provide an opportunity for members in various regions of the state to meet on a regular basis and exchange ideas, discuss professional problems and participate in technical presentations on specific areas of the profession. Each Chair is responsible to the Board of Directors for the leadership necessary to conduct an effective program in accord with the policies and procedures of CSMFO. This handbook has been prepared to assist in accomplishing that objective.

As you use the handbook in conducting your own work program, please make a note of any improvements that would make the handbook more useful. *The handbook should be considered a living document maintained and improved for transmittal to the next chapter leaders.* Please send any suggestions you may have for improvements to the handbook to the CSMFO office.

Chapters play an important role in the CSMFO organization. The regular meetings of each Chapter provide our membership with opportunities for personal and professional development that can only be accomplished at the local level. The Chapter leadership helps create an environment that allows the membership to grow and learn from others.

The state organization has an obligation to support each Chapter in this effort. The CSMFO Past President, with the assistance of the six North and South Board members, will be the liaison in working with local Chapter leaders in all aspects of membership development and in the improvement of grassroots organizational growth. Feel free to call on your designated Board Director or the Past President for assistance with Chapter issues.

The CSMFO Board of Directors meets regularly each year. As a Chair, you are encouraged to attend any or all Board meetings and to participate in the discussion of issues facing our organization. The in-person meetings are held in conjunction with the Annual Conference and at the Board retreat in September/October. In addition, the CSMFO Board typically meets monthly via teleconference. Contact CSMFO staff for more information on exact meeting times and locations. Key contacts are Executive Director Melissa Dixon, melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org, and Meetings & Membership Assistant Amanda Smith, amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org. The Past President will schedule conference calls with Chapter leaders and Board members to discuss issues and ideas to enhance CSMFO Chapter meetings. With your support of CSMFO at the state and local level, we can continue to strengthen our organization.

If you need support during the year, the Past President and the Board of Directors are available to provide assistance. Please feel free to use the resources we have available.

MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS - PLANNING PROCEDURE

Programs should be planned well enough in advance to permit sufficient time to arrange for a meeting location, well qualified speakers and proper publicity. Topics and speakers should be chosen carefully. The five major elements, which contribute to successful and well-attended meetings, are as follows:

- Topics and speakers that are interesting
- A pleasant environment
- A current mailing list/advance notification
- Consistency in place and day of meeting
- Good food at a reasonable cost

Meeting Schedules

The Bylaws provide that Chapter meeting schedules shall be determined by the Chapter membership. A regular schedule of meetings throughout the year should be adopted. Please be sure that your Chapter meetings do not conflict with other CSMFO activities. ***Always consult the CSMFO website (www.csmfo.org) and other related publications for up-to-date listings.***

Selecting the Program and Speakers

Topics and speakers should be chosen carefully. Select speakers who have imagination, originality, and the ability to get an idea across. To assure well-balanced programs over the course of the year, assign topics to speakers rather than allowing them to select their own. It will be the responsibility of your designated Board Director to attend at least one of your Chapter meetings and be available to discuss CSMFO, its programs, and the benefits of membership.

One of the first things you should do is put the other Chapter Chairs on your mailing and/or email list. If you use email, the Chapter Chair group email will reach all Chapter Chairs: chapterchairs@csmfo.org. This will provide a forum for exchanging ideas for topics for future meetings. You should also make sure that you are on the mailing and/or email list for the other Chapters.

In panel presentations, if the main speaker is to present an unbiased, informative explanation of the topic, the panel members should be selected so as to balance each other's opinions--pro and con.

Topics for Consideration

- Current and Pending Legislative Action
- Banking
- Generally Accepted Accounting Practices
- Compliance w/Federal and State Regulations
- Ethics
- Long-range Planning
- Disaster Recovery Planning
- CSMFO Programs/benefits of membership
- Budgeting
- Economic Forecasts
- Financing Capital Projects
- Inter-Agency Relations
- Hiring Employees
- Management Information Systems
- Technology and Public Finance
- Investments

Suggested Sources of Speakers

- Finance Officers
- Attorneys
- Certified Public Accountants
- County Assessors, Tax Collectors, etc.
- College/University Professors
- Elected Officials/Legislators--State and Local
- CSMFO Board and Committee Members
- Economists
- Interesting CEOs
- City Managers
- Bankers
- Bond Counsel
- Financial Consultants
- Electronic and Print Media
- Chambers of Commerce
- City Professional Staff
- Strategic Planners
- Federal Reserve Officials

Please see the Chapter Chair Resource Room on the CSMFO website at www.csmfo.org for potential topics and speakers.

CAVEAT: There must be **NO SALES PITCH**. As Chair, your responsibility is to make sure the presentation is informational and generic in nature. **NO COMMERCIALS!**

All meeting details should be confirmed with the speaker in writing in advance of the meeting. Provide the speaker with an idea of the type of meeting and the attendance to be expected. Ask for biographical material prior to the meeting. An outline of the speaker's presentation and/or a copy of handout material for your review prior to the meeting are also helpful.

Some Chapters have a tradition of presenting speakers with gifts to acknowledge their efforts. While this practice is not mandatory, CSMFO would like to encourage this practice.

Sponsorship Guidelines

CSMFO acknowledges that commercial vendors are key partners in the success of our organization. The annual conference would not be possible without commercial sponsorships, and individual chapters may wish to seek commercial sponsorships to defray costs of special meetings from time to time. As such, CSMFO wishes to clarify the procedures for obtaining commercial sponsors for chapter meetings.

- 1) Chapters may request multiple sponsorships for special chapter meetings, but should limit the sponsorships received from any one sponsor to no more than 50% of the estimated costs for any individual meeting.
- 2) Chapters can only seek sponsorship from each commercial entity once per calendar year.
- 3) Providing gift cards or other items to be raffled to the attendees of a chapter meeting is not considered sponsorship for the purpose of these guidelines. Raffle prizes should be less than \$50, but will allow discretion by Chapter Chair as they can work with Commercial members and sponsors of events for special purposes with advance notice.
- 4) Chapter speakers should be selected based on the value they present to the governmental members. At no times should a sponsorship be used to "pay" for the right to present at a meeting. As such, to avoid the appearance of impropriety, commercial sponsorships shall not be obtained from any company providing a speaker at that same meeting.
- 5) A short introduction and description of services performed is not considered speaking for the purposes of these guidelines.

Financial Assistance from CSMFO

Each year, CSMFO sets aside funds in the operational budget to assist with chapter expenses. A minimum of \$500 per chapter should be budgeted annually. Requests can be emailed and sent to the Executive Director and Past President. Requests in excess of \$500 for any one chapter in any given year will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for review and possible approval. Chapters should utilize their existing chapter funds for the majority of their expenses, and request assistance from CSMFO only in the case of a fund balance shortfall.

CPE Credit Requirements

In order to qualify as continuing education, presentations must meet specific standards set by the California Board of Accountancy. Please refer to Article 12, Section 88 on the following webpage for detailed requirements: http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/laws_and_rules/regs.shtml

Essentially, a 50-minute presentation is equal to 1 CPE credit.

Meeting Registration

Chapter meeting registration is run through the CSMFO office. Meetings will be posted as events in the CSMFO database and on the CSMFO website, allowing for online registration. When you schedule a chapter meeting, please notify Amanda Smith, amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org. It is best to do this at least six (6) weeks in advance of your meeting, to allow ample online pre-registration time. Your event will be posted to the CSMFO website within 1-2 days. You will be sent the link to the online registration upon posting, for use in promoting the meeting. You will also be given a link to allow you to check registration counts directly.

In general, registration lists are not available to commercial attendees. If a chapter event is being sponsored, the Chapter Chair may at their discretion share the listing with the commercial sponsor(s).

Chapter chairs and vice chairs may receive complimentary registration to their respective chapter's meetings, in recognition of their time and effort. Presenters will receive complimentary registration for the meetings at which they speak. Chapters may provide complimentary registrations to host venues or those otherwise providing support for the meeting (up to two (2) per meeting).

Online registration will generally close one week prior to the meeting; you may request a different date if desired. Once online registration is closed, you may pull a registration list, complete with whether not payment has been received, through the admin link previously provided. A CPE certificate template for your meeting will be forwarded to you by SMA staff upon request.

After the meeting, send to the CSMFO office any checks received onsite at the meeting, along with contact information (such as a business card) for any who signed up onsite. Please make sure to note which checks are for which attendees. *NOTE: The CSMFO office cannot accept cash.*

Meeting Arrangements

At least two months prior to the meeting, you should arrange the meeting place. You will need to know the following from each location:

- ✓ The room capacity
- ✓ Whether a separate room will be provided for the meal
- ✓ The price of the meal, tax and gratuity
- ✓ Room charge (if any)
- ✓ Your requirements for morning and/or afternoon refreshments
- ✓ No-host bar requirements
- ✓ Facilities for golf, tennis, racquetball or other sports if such activity is to be provided in the afternoon
- ✓ Seating arrangements (including speaker's table)
- ✓ Arrangements for slides, laptops, overhead projector, DVD/VCRs and any other audio/visual needs required by your speakers
- ✓ Registration table at door
- ✓ Percent of meals provided by restaurant in excess of the number guaranteed (usually 5%)

When selecting a non-traditional meeting site, please use proper discretion. *The CSMFO Board prohibits the use of CSMFO letterhead to advertise events at places that may give the perception of unethical conduct (e.g., racetracks, gambling establishments, etc.).*

The Board recognizes there are a few Chapters that have traditionally met once a year at such places. The Board does not want to and disallow such meetings nor do they want to dictate exactly what is or is not appropriate. However, the Board feels strongly enough about the issue that CSMFO will not officially endorse such meetings by use of its letterhead. The Board, therefore, encourages each Chapter Chair to use his or her own best judgment in making decisions regarding meeting places. If you feel you need further clarification or direction, please call your designated Board Director.

After the meeting place has been selected, get a written confirmation from the facility of the date and time of the meeting, menus, cost, room capacity and, in general, all the items you have discussed with them by phone. They will usually require a deposit. The meal price will be an important factor. It should be neither too high nor too low.

Consideration should be given to rotating scheduled Chapter meetings to various host agencies within the chapter. The host agency would schedule the program and speaker as well as coordinate the meeting location. This practice would reduce the workload of the Chapter leadership.

Registration Fees

In order to determine the registration fee, you should add up the total costs listed below and divide by your anticipated attendance.

Include the following:

Lunch	_____
Tax	_____
Tip	_____
Morning and/or afternoon refreshments	_____
Room charge	_____
Minimum bar guarantee (if applicable)	_____
Postage and copy cost	_____
Speaker gift	_____
Total	_____
Anticipated paying attendance (Speakers are not charged)	_____
Fee per participant	_____

Your goal is to break even; however, you will be over in some cases and short in others depending on the final attendance and the guarantee that you must provide. You may consider charging non-member or commercial attendees a slightly higher fee for attending your meetings. When making your guarantee, bear in mind that attendance is normally 85-90% of the total reserved. (Some who reserve may not attend, and some who do not reserve may attend.) If you are collecting sufficient funds at your meetings, you may be building an excess of funds. You are not encouraged to build a significant balance of funds for your Chapter, however you can use those to pay for a speaker for a future meeting or to have a reduced or free meeting to encourage greater attendance.

Refunds

After the meetings, some individuals request refunds because they were unable to attend. If you have a good registration sheet, you can probably verify this. Also, you may receive refund requests prior to the meeting from people who will be unable to attend. It is a good practice to state in the meeting notice that refunds will be given only to those individuals who advise you two to three days in advance that they will be unable to attend. You have guaranteed attendance at the meeting and you are depending on the members who made reservations when you submit your final attendance figures. You may have to pay the facility for your guarantee. Accordingly, you may have to refuse refunds to those people who have not given you adequate notice. However, if there are sufficient funds available, you may refund.

Event Book

At the back of this handbook are event sheets. As Chair, you should fill out a sheet for each meeting you hold. Record the date, location, topic, speaker, attendance, cost and fees collected. A notice of the meeting should be attached. *At the end of your term, pass this book on to your successor.* Maintenance of the event sheets for those who come after you is one of the most important things you can do for CSMFO.

THE MEETING

Before the Meeting

Arrive at the facility early to make sure all is in order. You will need to set up a registration table. You will need to take the following supplies with you:

- The nametags for those who pre-registered (if you're doing nametags).
- Blank nametags and felt pens for use on the nametags (if you're doing nametags, for those not pre-registered)
- Change fund
- A list of the pre-registered individuals and whether they have prepaid or not
- CSMFO membership brochures and volunteer flyers
- Receipts for those that may request one
- If your session qualifies, CPE certificates for attendees

At the Meeting

You will Chair the meeting. You may find yourself a “rover” or “gofer” while at the meeting, taking care of last-minute details. If possible, delegate this to someone else.

The Agenda

A neatly typed, well-spaced agenda will serve as an aid in keeping the meeting events orderly, and it will be useful from the standpoint of timing. Besides serving as a guide to the order of business or events, an agenda may include the Chair's notes, in appropriate order, with reference to comments about the speaker and introductions. This meeting should be used to report important activities and events of CSMFO.

Introductions

An introduction should be short. It should be interesting, appropriate and adequate, but still short. A good speech introduction might include: Why this speaker--at this time--to this audience?

Adjournment

Close the meeting with an announcement of the next meeting; an expression of appreciation to all those who have been present; a hope that they have enjoyed themselves; a summary in which thanks are offered the speakers and participants, and, if elections are to be held at the next meeting, announce them.

After the Meeting

The facility operator will ask you to sign the bill at the time of the meeting (even though you may be able to pay it at a later date by check). Verify the number of people attending, the unit price, the extensions and the additions on this ticket before you sign it. You may wish to count the number of people at the luncheon after they are seated.

You may set up payment for the venue through the CSMFO office, or you may handle it personally. If you handle it personally, please submit your reimbursement request to the CSMFO office after the meeting, complete with receipt and information to whom to make the check payable, within sixty (60) days of the event.

CHAPTER ACCOUNTING

The CSMFO office is responsible for handling all Chapter accounting. Registration income comes in to the CSMFO office, and is coded to reflect that it is for your Chapter. Likewise all Chapter expenses should be run through the CSMFO office. To request a check or credit card payment from CSMFO, please email Melissa Dixon (melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org). Please allow a 3-week turnaround on all check requests.

Chapter financial reports will be included in each packet disseminated for CSMFO Board of Directors meetings. This will be a profit & loss report specific to each Chapter. The Statement of Net Assets will show your Chapter's fund balance; this is updated annually, at the first of the year. To determine your Chapter's fund balance at any given time, simply add the net income from your Chapter's profit & loss report to the fund balance as listed on the Statement of Net Assets.

YOUR SUCCESSOR

Each Chapter should have a Chair and a Vice Chair. Terms are one year, and concurrent with the CSMFO Board terms (term begins and ends with the Annual Conference). There are no term limits for Chapter Chairs, but it is expected when the Chair steps down the Vice Chair will take his or her place. The Chair/Vice Chair structure was implemented by the Board of Directors as a means of easing a successor into the role of Chair.

Chapters are encouraged to hold elections annually for the position of Chair. It is recommended that elections take place at the last meeting of the calendar year. Elections may be held in whichever manner each Chapter deems most feasible (i.e., electronic, written ballot, show of hands, etc.). If a Chapter does not conduct an election, the Chapter Liaison/Past President may appoint a Chair. Vice Chair are appointed by the Chair.

Certain Chapters have experienced difficulty in developing a potential replacement. Experience has shown that many are willing to serve, yet are reluctant to volunteer. One of the primary responsibilities of a Chapter Chair is to nurture a successor. In order to maintain a vibrant organization, it is important to identify up-and-coming talent. Don't underestimate the power of the ask.

When you do step down as Chair and a new Chair/Vice Chair are appointed, please notify the CSMFO Secretary so that updates can be made to all applicable CSMFO documents. Please do not step down without first identifying your successor.

GROUP E-MAILS FOR CHAPTERS

There is a group email just for Chapter leaders and a group email for each of the individual Chapters. Chapter leaders are encouraged to use these groups to keep each other and their Chapters up-to-date on the latest happenings.

The address for the Chapter Group is *chapterchairs@csmf.org*.

Chapter leaders will be notified of Board meeting and Chapter conference calls using this list. Chapter leaders are encouraged to use the group list to comment on topics and speakers they have used or to request advice and suggestions on Chapter meetings.

The individual Chapter lists may be used to post meeting notices and changes, send inquiries to local members and post updates on local issues. These listservs are for you and your Chapter to use as a valuable communication tool to keep each other informed on regional financial news, reviews and events. Use this listserv in any way you find helpful. You will want members to observe standard e-mail use guidelines as a courtesy to others and to encourage members to join and participate. To make the list most effective, you will want to publicize the group list at your Chapter meetings and in your mailing notices. The more members on the list, the greater the opportunity to share local news.

Now the important part - how to join! Just like the CSMFO general members group list, you may subscribe directly from the CSMFO website. From the home page, click on "Chapters", then click on the Chapter you want to subscribe to, then follow the instructions. It's easy, and will take members less than one minute. All new members are signed up for the listserv of their Chapter upon joining. As Chapter Chair, you may also add individuals to the list manually. In addition, CSMFO will distribute a "New Member" listing for each chapter on a regular basis. Chapter Chairs are encouraged to reach out and invite the new member to the next meeting.

To send a message to your Chapter, address it to the "name of chapter@csmf.org" (for example: central-coast@csmf.org). The Chapter names are listed below:

central-coast	desert-mountain	north-coast	sacramento-valley
central-la	east-bay-sf	northeast-counties	san-diego-county
central-valley	imperial-county	northwest-counties	san-gabriel-valley
channel-counties	inland-empire	orange-county	south-bay
coachella-valley	monterey-bay	peninsula	south-san-joaquin

If you have any questions about the use of the listservs please contact the CSMFO office at (877) 282-9183.

CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS AND THE *MAGAZINE*

The *CSMFO Magazine* is intended to be a grassroots publication for information, input, articles, news clips, job changes, Chapter highlights, etc. coming from members across the state. The Magazine is only as successful as individual members make it. Therefore, we hope you will be proactive in soliciting articles from your Chapter.

The most fundamental aspect of membership in CSMFO is belonging to a Chapter. This is where finance officers and others meet and greet to discuss topics of interest to the finance world. Because you, as a Chapter Chair or Vice Chair, are vital to that aspect, we would like to expand our Chapter awareness using the *Magazine* as its vehicle. Topics: If it interests you, it's going to interest other members. Maybe you could write about a proposition that's getting a lot of attention in your Chapter, or a project you've taken on that's interesting.

When submitting articles, please observe the following: (1) the deadline for submission is the 15th of the month prior to the month of publication (i.e., February 15 for the March issue); (2) all members may submit articles; (3) the *CSMFO Magazine* reserves the right to invoke editorial privileges. Please submit articles via e-mail to Melissa Dixon at melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org.

CHAPTER LISTINGS ON WEBSITE

Each Chapter has a page on the CSMFO web site. The section contains a brief summary of the Chapter and its regular activity, a list of Chapter contacts, and a list of meeting dates and locations. This page is a useful tool to inform Chapter members. There is a Chapter Resource area where the handbook is located. There are also meeting ideas and past presentation information posted by all Chapters. Please review the contents and contact Melissa Dixon at melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org with revisions and updates.

SPECIAL MEMBER AWARDS OR RECOGNITION

On occasion, you may want to verbally recognize certain Chapter members during your Chapter meetings for accomplishments they have made in their own agencies, awards they have received through CSMFO or other associations, or milestones they have reached in their career, such as job promotions or retirement. This recognition is initiated at the Chapter level so try to develop rapport with your members such as you can be informed of these things as they happen.

Special certificates of appreciation are also available to recognize those who have demonstrated long-term commitment to municipal finance and membership in CSMFO (20 years is the suggested benchmark). Such awards are generally given at retirement. The certificates can be obtained by contacting the CSMFO office (877) 282-9183 at least three weeks in advance of the meeting. *Any Chapter Chair wishing to award a certificate of appreciation must first receive approval by the President.*

CHAPTER DUES

No dues may be charged by Chapters. CSMFO membership dues are set by the Board.

CHAPTER CHAIR COORDINATION

In addition to attending the Chapter breakfast at the Annual Conference, Chapter Chairs and Vice Chairs are expected to participate in scheduled conference calls to discuss items of mutual interest. These calls are an opportunity to share meeting strategies, discuss organizational issues and communicate with your fellow Chapter leaders. It is encouraged that Chapter Chairs share information with each other, particularly regarding meeting dates and topics, so as not to unduly compete with other chapters. A google spreadsheet has been created to facilitate this information sharing:

https://docs.google.com/a/smithmooreassoc.com/spreadsheets/d/1aE1tpBuGyva1xOM9rJ9SFfnFiOgdQQ2tYK2Ltk_T1bQ/edit?usp=sharing.

Chapter Chairs are also an important resource in the distribution of information to CSMFO members. The CSMFO Secretary and Past President may request your participation from time to time.

SUMMARY ARTICLE FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT

At the conclusion of your year-long term, you will be asked to prepare a brief summary of the events in your Chapter. This summary will be published in the annual report, which is distributed in the first part of the following year.

A brief synopsis, maybe one or two paragraphs, is all that is required. Highlights can include speakers, topics, and/or interesting places your meetings were held at.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Chapters have a responsibility to CSMFO for membership development. Membership applications and materials are available on the CSMFO website, and brochures and volunteer flyers are available by request from the CSMFO office.

Benefits of CSMFO membership include the following:

- With nearly two thousand members, CSMFO is California's premier statewide association for governmental finance officials. Enormous networking opportunities and benefits are offered.
- CSMFO provides a variety of programs including training programs, webinars, a membership directory, a website offering a multitude of helpful resources, and a monthly newsletter.
- CSMFO Chapter meetings provide members the opportunity to meet on a regular basis in a variety of city locations, to exchange ideas and discuss common problems, and to develop both personally and professionally at a local level.
- CSMFO meetings and training programs provide unbiased, informative speakers and presentations on specific technical areas of the profession as well as on useful topics of general interest.

- CSMFO members share an active statewide email list that provides an easy way to stay in touch with new members, a forum for asking questions, requesting advice and sharing news, a cost-free way to distribute training and development information and a means to correspond with other finance officials on common issues and on the latest legislative developments.
- The CSMFO *Magazine* is a grassroots newsletter with articles, news clips, job changes, job opportunities, chapter highlights and other information from members across the state.
- CSMFO provides the vehicle to recognize certain members for accomplishments they have made in their own cities, awards they have received through CSMFO or other associations, or milestones they have reached in their careers.
- CSMFO membership dues are relatively low and an exceptional value and investment in the future of members and their agencies.

CSMFO CHAPTER MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING

DATE

LOCATION

TOPIC

SPEAKER

ATTENDANCE

COST

FEES COLLECTED

Note: Please attach a copy of your meeting notice to the back of this sheet, and pass on all sheets to your successor.