



Omega Phi Alpha – Procedures

Procedure Name: Dues Waiver Procedures

Procedure Number: AC-07

Direct Questions to: Executive Director

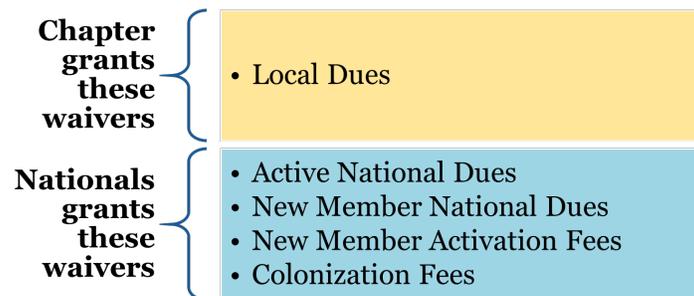
OVERVIEW

Omega Phi Alpha relies on national membership dues and fees to fund the national organization’s operations. Likewise, each local chapter relies on their local membership dues to fund the local operations. However, Omega Phi Alpha recognizes that in cases of extreme financial hardship, the payment of national and local dues and fees could create such a hardship that the sister would be unable to participate in the sorority. For these circumstances, Omega Phi Alpha has made a dues waiver option available.

Dues waivers should only be considered under extreme financial hardship circumstances. A dues waiver is not a loan. However, members who received a dues waiver are encouraged to make their best effort to pay those dues if their financial circumstances change. If a member finds they can re-pay the waiver after graduation, we encourage said members to donate to the Omega Phi Alpha Foundation to support the future of the organization.

Local active member dues, national active member dues, new member dues, new member activation fees, and colonization fees may be considered for waiver. Local dues waivers are granted at the discretion of the local chapter. All waivers for national dues and fees including active dues, new member dues, new member activation fees, and colonization fees are granted at the discretion of the national organization. In order for national dues and fees waivers to be considered at the national level, the local chapter must follow the procedures outlined below.

Types of Dues Waivers Available



PROCEDURES

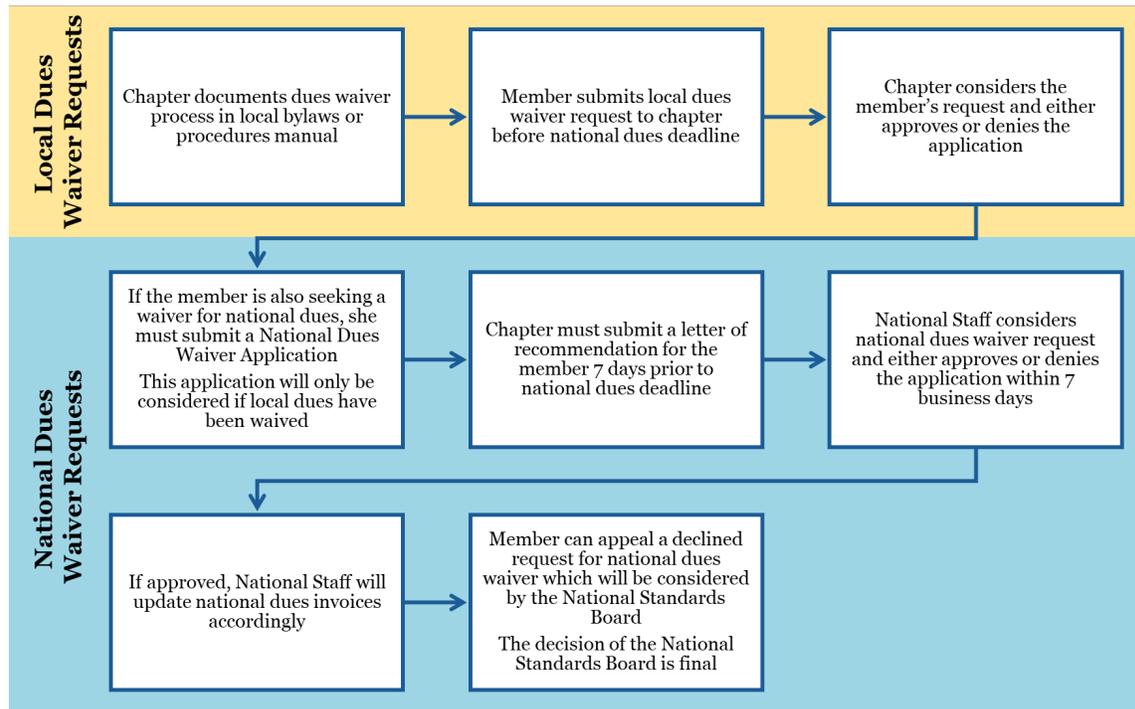
Dues waiver applications are a two-fold process, one that is local and one that is national.

In order for a National Dues Waiver Application to be submitted, considered and/or approved, members **MUST** apply for and receive a local dues waiver.



Omega Phi Alpha – Procedures

Overview:



LOCAL DUES WAIVERS:

The local dues waiver process is handled entirely by each local chapter. If a member is seeking a dues waiver, they must start this process with the local chapter.

The responsibility for determining the validity of a local dues request must reside with the local chapter's executive board or chapter standards board, depending on the chapter's bylaws and procedures. The sister requesting the waiver must request the waiver from their local chapter. The chapter executive board or chapter standard board will determine whether to grant a local dues waiver. If the local dues waiver is granted (approved and processed), the chapter's executive board can then make a recommendation to the National organization for a national dues waiver to be considered.

The member **MUST** submit a National dues waiver application for consideration (see below for more information on this process.)

To qualify for a local dues waiver, the following procedures are required:

- The chapter must have written procedures for dues waivers in their bylaws or procedures manuals. The procedures must require a written petition from the sister requesting the waiver and be applied consistently to all applicants.
- Waiver applications must be submitted to the chapter prior to the national dues invoice deadline each term to allow time for consideration of the request before the dues invoice deadline.



Omega Phi Alpha – Procedures

- The chapter's executive board or chapter's standards board (based on chapters bylaws, constitution and procedures) must consider the request. We understand the need for confidentiality; however the chapter executive board or chapter standards board must approve the matter. It is our expectation that member confidentiality will be kept.
- If the waiver is approved by the local chapter, local dues for the term MUST be waived.
- A member may then request for a National dues waiver by submitting the National Dues Waiver Application. National dues waivers will only be considered if local dues waived and processed. If local dues are not waived, national dues WILL NOT be waived.
- If a member will be seeking a National dues or fees waiver, the chapter executive board MUST submit a letter of recommendation to the national organization at least 7 days prior to national dues invoice is submitted to chapters.
 - The letter must include the following information:
 - Name of sister for whom the national dues waiver is recommended
 - Clearly state all local dues for the term have been waived
 - Local dues amount waived
 - Term and year of waiver (i.e. Spring 2020)
 - The letter must be signed and dated by each member of the chapter executive board
- Each waiver is granted for one term only.
 - If the hardship continues to the next term, another waiver must be requested.
- Extreme financial hardship is defined as a situation in which one is experiencing financial duress due to circumstances beyond your control. Examples of this are:
 - Loss of scholarship or income
 - Illness or injury causing overwhelming medical bills
 - Military deployment
 - Natural disasters
 - If you have a hardship that is not defined in the examples above, it would be at the discretion of the chapter executive board or chapter standards board to determine if the circumstance is considered a hardship with regards to local dues waiver.

NATIONAL DUES WAIVERS:

In order for National Dues Waiver Application to be submitted, considered and/or approved, members **MUST** apply for and receive a local dues waiver.

All members seeking a national dues waiver for any national dues or fees MUST submit a National Dues Waiver Application for consideration.



Omega Phi Alpha – Procedures

To qualify for a National dues' waiver, the following procedures are required:

- The chapter must have followed their chapter's written procedures for dues waivers which are documented in their bylaws or procedures manuals.
- Local chapter must approve and process the local dues waiver request.
- Local chapter must submit a letter of recommendation for National dues waiver 7 business days prior to national dues invoice deadline. The letter must include the following information:
 - Name of sister for whom the national dues waiver is recommended
 - Clearly state all local dues for the term have been waived
 - Local dues amount waived
 - Type of dues or fee waiver (i.e. National Active Dues, New Member Dues, New Member Activation Fees, or Colonization Fees)
 - Term and year of waiver (i.e. Spring 2020)
 - The letter must be signed and dated by each member of the chapter executive board
- Member must submit the National Dues Waiver Application for consideration 7 business days prior to National dues invoice deadline.
- National staff will review, approve or decline and inform members on all National dues waiver applications within 7 business days or receipt.
- National staff will update chapter National dues invoices appropriately to reflect any dues waiver approvals.
- Appeals process for declined requests:
 - If National dues waiver request is denied, members may request an appeal
 - Member must submit an appeal request to the National Standards Board for review
 - National Standards Board will review the appeal request, along with National staff's recommendation for denial
 - National Standards Board will decide within 7 business days of request submission
 - National Standards Board decision is the final and will be provided in writing to the member, local chapter, and national staff



Omega Phi Alpha – Procedures

Dues Waivers Procedures

Chapter Procedures (Examples)

Each chapter is required to have written procedures for how sisters will request Dues Waivers and then how the waivers will be considered and approved. Below you will find some suggestions for how your chapter might handle the process:

Dues Waiver Application

- Option 1 Your chapter could develop a Dues Waiver application with information concerning the sister's financial status, the circumstances leading up to the request including financial obligations and income. If you use this type of form, be sure to have your advisor review to ensure that you are not asking for any information that is prohibited by your University.
- Option 2 Your chapter could use a written application that only asks the sister to explain the circumstances that are leading waiver request.
- Option 3 Your chapter may not ask for anything in writing – other than the simple statement that the waiver is being requested. You may choose to get all the information in the interview.

Approval Process:

Your approval process will be different depending on what your application process is like. Most chapters have only the executive board consider waiver applications. If you have a lot of information on your application (option 1), your interview with the executive board may be short. If you have elected option 3, your interview process will be fairly lengthy.

Whichever option you choose to use, the goal of the executive board to determine if the sister is experiencing “extreme financial hardship” and if the waiver should be approved.

If you determine that the waiver should be approved, you will write a letter like the one above and include it when dues are submitted (see procedures above).

Waivers that Are not Approved

If you determine that the financial problem is more temporary, you should try to help the member meet the financial obligations to the sorority. You can:

- Offer a payment plan, making installment payments to help ease the burden
- Help locate opportunities to make some additional money – if sisters have contacts for part-time employment, etc.