

Social Committee

Composition: 4 - 8 members

Meets as necessary

The Social Committee should promote interesting socials for the members and their spouses as well as family and members only events. It is recommended that the Social Committee plan at least one social for members and spouses each quarter.

Suggestions for socials

Good social occasions can be arranged around the following times of the year: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and/or St. Patrick's Day. An installation celebration in May or June should be held for chapter officers, members and spouses.

It would also be well to have at least one spouses' day program during the year where the spouses are invited. (If the chapter includes dues with meals, budget monies from canceled meetings to reduce total cost of social.)

Another suggestion is to have each quarter a spouse's day, with a special table set aside for couples having anniversaries during the previous or upcoming quarter.

Be sure when having such special days that the program is of interest to the guests. If the Social Committee is not in charge of the speaker for the day, be sure and clear this with the Program Committee well in advance of the special affair.

Social Committee in charge of meeting

Works with Program Committee

Sometimes, when a social is to be held, the week's meeting is canceled. When this occurs, the Social Committee is in complete charge of the meeting. For this reason, it is recommended that the Social Committee pick the dates it plans to have its special programs and functions. In turn, the Social Committee advises the Program Chairperson which dates it wants so there will be no conflict in the planning.

Member participation

It is important that the Social Committee remember to keep costs down as much as possible so more members and spouses participate. Don't forget, a reasonable number of socials with the spouses keeps them interested and active as boosters of AMBUCS™.

This committee should likewise plan and organize special activities such as golf tournaments in the summer. An excellent low cost summer social with the spouses is a "Bring and cook your own steak party." The committee then arranges for everything else.

PLANNING OUTLINE FOR SOCIALS

Committee meetings

Plan for the year:

1. How many socials, when, and approximately what dates and times.
2. Type of party: (themes; members only, with spouses, with families, with guests; attire, number expected)
3. Break down each party into categories. Issue assignments for report at next meetings.
 - Cocktail hour (type).
 - Menu (who prepares?).
 - Set-up, clean-up; decorations; equipment needed (tables, chairs, etc.).
 - Entertainment - games, etc.
 - Price per person (sell tickets or bill to members?)
 - Calling Committee (handled by regular chapter Calling Committee or Social Committee members).

Make each committee meeting a social for the group and include spouses in the planning sessions. They may want to help on food planning, decorations, and as a calling committee.

Many successful parties have a theme such as night chapter party, Las Vegas night, pool party, Halloween, Valentines' Day or a progressive dinner.

BANQUET GUIDELINES

For social functions held at motels, hotels, or country chapters, the caterer in almost all instances will require a guarantee of plates to be served. This guarantee protects not only the caterer, but also the chapter. Several contingencies must be understood by the social chairperson in making the guarantees.

1. Be realistic about the number that can be expected to attend. An offhand assumption can be a large expense to your chapter. A too cautious guarantee with no cut-off time for accepting reservations is equally disastrous, for the caterer, many times, must place the final order for food a week in advance of the function. Ask the caterer what is the latest possible moment that the guarantee may be adjusted up or down.
2. In figuring the price of the ticket, add the total fixed overhead: band, entertainment, complimentary tickets for speaker, director, governor, or other guests of the chapter; head table flowers and decorations, individual table decorations, and complimentary cocktail tickets. Divide this total by minimum paying attendees and add to the per meal cost, which includes tax and a 15 - 20% gratuity. Be sure the gratuity is specified and agreed to, and be sure there is not additional banquet room setting charge.
3. Sell tickets in advance - get money in advance or charge to chapter account.
4. If this is a sit-down meal, insist that the server pick up tickets and that final bill will be on number of tickets picked up. If this is a buffet, have caterer pick up ticket at beginning of line. Do not try to rely on your head counts of those served versus the plate count of the caterer.
5. Be sure all tickets have been numbered before distribution for sale. Record who received what numbered tickets for sale. Hold sellers responsible for return of any unsold tickets plus the proceeds from those sold.
6. Keep pressure on ticket sellers to report and pay for all tickets sold, and do not allow refund after final guarantee is made unless a physical emergency arises.
7. Avoid open, no pay bars for the cocktail hour or when dancing begins. Those who drink little or not at all do not like to pay for those who do.
8. Keep bar prices as low as possible.
9. Bargain with the caterer about the bar set-up. Many hotels have very strict policies on this. If the hotel furnishes the bar, bartenders, liquor, mix and glasses, try to get the per drink price established as low as possible.
10. When the agenda for the evening is: Cocktails 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm, banquet and program 7:30 pm - 9:15 pm, and dancing 9:30 pm - 12:30 am, run a tight ship. Tell the bartender and caterer the bar will close promptly at 7:20 pm ... no lingering last minute fill-ups, and absolutely no drinks served to anyone after the bar is closed and during the dinner. Threaten non-payment if this rule is not followed, for one or two persons running back and forth to the bar will upset any planned program.

Usher all guests into dining room by 7:25 pm and have them seated by 7:30 pm. The caterer will have the food hot and ready to serve.

If the caterer plans to clear the tables as the diners finish, insist that it be done quietly and unobtrusively.

When the program starts, have it agreed with the caterer that all waitresses and bus boys are to leave the room. Promise the caterer in return that the program will end promptly at 9:15 pm.

Open the bar at 9:15 pm, and start the band or disk jockey.

Don't select a band without an audition.

POLICY

It is the policy of National AMBUCS™ to act responsibly with respect to the serving of alcoholic beverages. Care should be taken by all AMBUCS™ and their chapters to not overserve anyone; to not allow anyone to drive while impaired during or after an AMBUCS™ event; and to never allow consumption of alcohol by anyone under the legal age.