

AAO Position Papers July 2014

Definition

A position paper is a living document put forward by members of a Section or a Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Academy. The purpose of these documents is to educate the lay public and press on timely issues. On occasion the American Academy of Optometry may deviate from these stated audiences under special circumstances.

Who May Generate a Position Paper?

Sections and SIGs may originate a position paper or the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Academy may request that a Section or SIG author a position paper. In all cases the BOD shall be the final approving body of any and all position papers.

Who Are Considered the Authors of Position Papers?

Section and SIG's will be considered the authors of position papers representing the American Academy of Optometry's position on the topic to the lay public and press. Authorship information will be placed at the end of the paper and will include:

- Section Name
- Lead author(s)
- Writing Committee members

It is at the authoring Section or SIG's discretion whether to list all authors under the heading of the "writing committee" or to delineate "lead authors" separately from the writing committee. Although not typically included, *if applicable*, these can be used:

- Committee on _____, 20xx – 20xx
- Consultants or liaisons
- Acknowledgments

Position Paper Approval & Posting Date

All position papers must be approved by the BOD; other organizations may also give approval. When other organizations are involved, they will be named and their approval dates (month & year) documented.

Where Do Position Papers Reside After Final Approval by the Board of Directors?

All position papers will reside on the Academy's website. Academy members may print position papers and provide them to interested parties during the period where the paper is active and considered approved.

How Long is a Position Paper Considered Approved?

A position paper once approved by the BOD will have a posting date affixed to it and from that point forward will have an expiration date of 2 years unless reaffirmed, revised, or retired at or before that time. Sections, SIGs, or the BOD may request changes or removal of the position paper if new information is discovered that warrants the action, at any time prior to expiration. After expiration a paper will be removed from the Academy website.

How is an Expired Position Paper Renewed?

To renew and repost an expired position paper an authoring Section or SIG will need to review, amend, or edit a paper to ensure that the material is current and relevant to the lay public and press. If a major rewrite is needed then the entire review process will need to be followed (See "Steps for Gaining BOD Approval..."). Position papers requiring only minor nonsubstantive changes should be submitted to the BOD using Word "tracking" to facilitate review; a reapproval by the BOD is all that is required. When an expired paper has been reapproved by the BOD, it will be reposted on the Academy website with a new posting date and expiration date assigned.

Copyright and Conflict of Interest Statement

All position papers will have the following statement: *"This document is copyrighted and is the property of the American Academy of Optometry (AAO). All authors have filed conflict of interest statements with the AAO, and any conflicts have been resolved through a process approved by the AAO Board of Directors. The AAO has neither solicited nor accepted any commercial involvement in the development of the content of this document."*

Required Disclaimer

All position papers must feature the following disclaimer: *"This report is furnished for general information purposes only. It does not constitute the practice of optometry or medicine, nor should it be relied upon for dealing with a specific, individual medical or health condition. Please consult a qualified eye care professional for advice about a specific condition."*

Steps for Gaining BOD Approval of AAO Position Papers

The submission and review process has been modified from past practices in hopes of streamlining, speeding and strengthening the review process. The new process will involve using "Editorial Manager" and the *Optometry and Vision Science* (OVS) editor. It should be understood that this process is not synonymous with submitting a manuscript to OVS nor should there be any expectation that the position paper will be published in OVS once approved by the BOD.

Below are the steps to be taken in obtaining approval for a position paper brought forward by a Section or SIG within the Academy. Prior to beginning to write a position paper authors are encouraged to visit "Study Guides and Strategies: Writing Position Papers" at <http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr9.htm>.

Steps:

1. A Section or SIG that wishes to submit or is asked by the BOD to submit a position paper must first submit a topical abstract to the Academy office. Academy staff will disseminate the abstract to the BOD. This initial step is to notify the BOD of the intent of the author(s) and may act as an early intervention step if deemed necessary prior to significant effort being made by the authors. The author(s), Section, or SIG should be identified at this point. Upon rapid review and approval of the abstract by the BOD, Academy staff gives the authors the green light to proceed. This step can be omitted if the BOD requests the position paper.
2. Once the topical abstract has obtained BOD approval, the Section or SIG drafts a position paper.
3. The manuscript is next submitted for peer review to the OVS Editorial Manager online review system by a "Corresponding Author." The corresponding author is the only person OVS will communicate with throughout the review. The manuscript cover letter must state *"This position paper abstract has been reviewed by the AAO Board of Directors and approval has been given by the Board to submit this to OVS for reviewer comment."* The corresponding author submits it

electronically to *OVS* through Editorial Manager. It should be clearly understood that the *OVS* editor will provide the manuscript to appropriate Academy members for review and critique but this process is not the same as that followed for manuscripts submitted to *OVS* for consideration.

4. *OVS* Reviewer and Topical Editor suggestions/critique will be returned to the corresponding author by the Editor-in-Chief through Editorial Manager. It should be noted that *OVS* only reviews content and does not “copy edit” the position paper.

5. If requested through the critique/review the corresponding author will submit the revised manuscript to *OVS* via Editorial Manager. The corresponding author must specifically note in the cover letter how the authors have responded to the *OVS* reviewers and Topical Editor along with the revised submission.

6. Satisfactory completion may be acknowledged to the corresponding author in the form of an accept decision, if *OVS* also wants to publish it, or a reject decision if *OVS* doesn't wish to publish it, but feels it is appropriate for AAO Board and website posting. Note: The reject decision is made only to record in the EM system that the manuscript is no longer under review/consideration. This is explained to the corresponding author at the time of the decision.

7. The final manuscript, along with the Editor and reviewer comments, is submitted by the corresponding author to the AAO Office (not the *OVS* Editorial Office) for final approval by the BOD.

8. Continuing current Academy procedure, this is sent to the AAO legal advisors for review.

9. Following legal review and review by the BOD the paper is either approved or sent back to the corresponding author to address BOD comments or concerns. After final approval by the BOD, the position paper is posted on the AAO website.