



# NATIONAL ADVISORY ORGANIZATIONS STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE



# INTRODUCTION

The Salvation Army Standards of Excellence is a national recognition program to honor Advisory Organizations (Boards/Councils, Women's Auxiliaries, Echelon Chapters) that meet and exceed national standards of excellence. Receiving The Salvation Army National Advisory Organizations Standards of Excellence certification demonstrates a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous professional development, which enhances the advisory organization's effectiveness and fosters trust among key stakeholders.

Here are some important things to consider when completing the application.

- The application process is completed all online through Quickbase (and single sign-on). The application portal is open year round.
- Standards of Excellence certification must be renewed and a new application completed every three years.
- Application is based on full fiscal or calendar year prior to application submission.
- No financial incentives will be offered by the territory for completing the application process.



# FAQs

## **Who Is Eligible To Apply?**

All Salvation Army Advisory Councils, Boards, Echelon Chapters and Women's Auxiliaries are eligible to apply.

## **When Can Advisory Organizations Apply?**

Advisory Organizations can apply at any time.

## **Where Do I Apply?**

You can apply to become nationally recognized online on the Advisory Organizations Hub – [aohub.org](http://aohub.org)

## **How Long Is The Certification Good For?**

Once you are certified, it is good for three years.

## **Where Can I Find Resources To Help Me Apply?**

You can find a variety of resources on the Advisory Organization's Hub – [aohub.org](http://aohub.org)

## **What Is The Application Process And Timeline?**

After your application is submitted it will go through a Divisional approval followed by a Territorial approval, with a final approval by National Headquarters. You will be notified if you have been approved via email, and you will receive an electronic copy of your certificate. NHQ will mail a higher-quality certificate for you to present to your Advisory Organization members and for you to display.

## **How Will The Standards Of Excellence Help My Advisory Organization?**

Receiving The Salvation Army National Advisory Organizations Standards of Excellence certification demonstrates a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous professional development, which enhances the advisory organization's effectiveness and fosters trust among key stakeholders. Feedback from Corps Officers has shown that a concise and standardized framework for how Advisory Organizations should effectively function is needed. The Standards of Excellence meet this need, making it easier for the Officer and Advisory Organization leaders to understand how to operate, thus helping advance The Salvation Army's mission.

## **How Can I See Who Is Already Nationally Recognized?**

Visit the "Standards of Excellence Awards" section on The Advisory Organizations Hub – [aohub.org](http://aohub.org) to view all Silver and Gold Award winners by year.

## **What If I Need Practical Assistance With The Standards Of Excellence Application Or Need To Ask Specific Questions To Help Me Through The Process?**

Virtual Office Hours are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 2:00-3:30PM EST. Please visit the Advisory Organizations Hub – [aohub.org](http://aohub.org) for information about joining in on this session. These meetings are drop-in and you can come and go as you please. You can also contact Daryl Mangeri, National Advisory Organizations & Volunteer Development Manager, if you need assistance (571.689.0478 or [Daryl.Mangeri@usn.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Daryl.Mangeri@usn.salvationarmy.org)).

# ADVISORY BOARDS/ COUNCILS



# ADVISORY BOARDS/COUNCILS



## Meets Standards

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must meet both of the following requirements:

1. Does your Advisory Board/Council follow The Manual of Advisory Organizations?
2. Does your Advisory Organization have at least 9 members? (At least 6 members for an Advisory Council) Is this number consistent with your charter? \*

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must also meet 7 of the following 8 standards:

3. **Meeting Participation:**  
Does your Advisory Board/Council have at least four meetings per year with a quorum present? Do at least 2/3 of the members attend a minimum of 2/3 of the meetings? \*
4. **Orientation:**  
Do new members of the Advisory Board/Council participate in an orientation session within the first six months of election in line with the Advisory Organizations Orientation Guide? Does every meeting of the Advisory Board/Council include a learning opportunity for members? \*
5. **Budget Review:**  
Does the Advisory Board/Council annually review and recommend the budget for approval to the Divisional Headquarters? \*
6. **Committees:**  
Does the advisory board/council have at least 3 active committees (including the Executive/Nominating Committee that meet at least monthly)? Does every member serve on at least one committee? \*
7. **Board Composition:**  
Do your nominating efforts have a range of factors (such as gender, age, ethnicity, skills, and industry) as one intentional goal for recruitment? \*

8. **Event Participation:**

Are advisory Board/Council members actively engaged in at least one event such as Christmas, fundraising, and/or mission-centric programs?

9. **Financial Support:**

Do 100% of Advisory Board/Council members personally contribute financially each year?

10. **Terms:**

Does the Advisory Board/Council have a rotating membership structure whereby approximately 1/3 of member terms begin/renew each year? Do Members serve three-year terms? Are they evaluated in terms of involvement and contribution as part of the discussion about the possibility of renewing their term? \*

## Exceeds Standards

Must qualify for Silver and 3 of 4 exceeds standards to receive Gold Award:

1. **Fundraising:**

Does each Advisory Board/Council member annually participate in soliciting at least one individual or corporate donation for The Salvation Army (in addition to their personal giving)?

2. **Board/Council Evaluation:**

Does the Advisory Board/Council complete a self-evaluation at least every three years to determine strengths and areas of improvement? \*

3. **Strategic Plan:**

Has the Advisory Board/Council adopted a strategic plan for the Board? Are plan goals and action steps integrated into committee work and progress updates provided at regular meetings? Is the plan refreshed or reconstituted at least every three years? \*

4. **Leadership Succession:**

Has the Board/Council adopted and implemented a leadership succession plan? \*

# ECHELON





## Meets Standards

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must meet the following requirement:

1. Has your Echelon chapter adopted the Articles of Organization including member expectations?

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must also meet 7 of the following 8 standards:

2. **Membership:**  
Does your chapter have at least 15 members? \*
3. **Meetings:**  
Does the board meet at least once each quarter? \*
4. **Social Media:**  
Are there social media posts at least once each month from a chapter account? \*
5. **Website:**  
Does your chapter maintain an updated website connected to an official Salvation Army platform? \*
6. **Events:**  
Does your chapter plan and hold at least four events each year that are a mix of service, fundraising, networking, and/or education with at least 50% containing a mission component? \*
7. **Financial:**  
Does your chapter maintain a budget and provide quarterly reports to the Echelon Leadership Council? \*
8. **Local Board Connection:**  
Does your chapter President (or someone designated by the President) serve as an ex-officio member of the local Salvation Army Advisory Board/ Council and provide Chapter updates as part of their attendance? \*

## 9. Kettle Takeover:

Does your chapter participate in the Echelon Kettle Takeover (either digitally or in person)?

## Exceeds Standards

To qualify for the Gold Award, you must qualify for Silver and meet 6 of the following 7 standards:

1. **Membership:**  
Does your chapter have at least 20 members?
2. **Board Meetings:**  
Does the board meet at least six times per year?
3. **Social Media:**  
Are there social media posts at least every other week from a chapter account? \*
4. **Events:**  
Does your chapter plan and hold at least six events each year that are a mix of service, fundraising, networking, and/or education with at least 50% containing a mission component? \*
5. **Inclusive Membership:**  
Does your chapter actively work to recruit members who reflect the local community, prioritizing a range of factors (such as gender, ethnicity, profession, skills, geography, etc.) in its membership recruitment efforts? \*
6. **Kettle Takeover:**  
Does your chapter participate in the Echelon Kettle Takeover both digitally and in-person? \*
7. **Field Calls:**  
Has someone from your chapter leadership participated in at least two Echelon national or territorial field calls per year? \*

# WOMEN'S AUXILIARY



# WOMEN'S AUXILIARY



## Meets Standards

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must meet the following requirement:

1. Does your Women's Auxiliary unit have and use an established and approved set of bylaws?

To qualify for the Silver Award, you must also meet 5 of the following 6 standards:

2. **Officers:**  
Are your president, vice president, treasurer and secretary elected annually or biannually? \*
3. **Orientation:**  
Do you host an orientation for all new members that includes program facility tours and an opportunity to meet local Corps officers? \*
4. **Meetings:**  
Do you hold at least four general membership meetings each year? \*
5. **Leadership Meetings:**  
Does the president and/or the executive committee meet monthly with The Salvation Army representative? \*
6. **Committees:**  
Do you have at least five established committees including executive, nominating, membership, finance, and publicity?  
Do they meet regularly? \*
7. **Inclusive Membership:**  
Do you actively work to recruit members who reflect the local community, prioritizing a range of factors (such as ethnicity, age, profession, skills, geography, etc.) in your membership recruitment efforts? \*

## Exceeds Standards

To qualify for the Gold Award, you must qualify for Silver and meet 6 of the following 7 standards:

1. **Membership:**  
How many members does your Women's Auxiliary have? What is the minimum number of members based on your Articles of Organization?
2. **Membership Event:**  
Do you have at least one event each year designed to recruit members? \*
3. **Officer Job Descriptions:**  
Do all elected officer positions have job descriptions? \*
4. **Self-Evaluation:**  
Do your officers complete a self-evaluation each year to determine strengths and identify areas of improvement? \*
5. **Committees:**  
Do you have more than five active committees that meet regularly?
6. **Succession Strategy:**  
Do you have an established succession strategy in place? \*
7. **Mentorship:**  
Do you have an established mentorship program for new members? \*

