

Life Membership Toolkit

Overview

Communicating Life Membership Dues Changes

The toolkit materials have been developed as a result of conversations and feedback from state societies on the upcoming changes to Life membership dues. The materials are intended to inform Life members of changes that are taking effect in January 2021 while outlining the value of membership.

Personalization

- ADA's marketing team identified that personalized content is more likely to be read and results in greater action from members. Using a member's name in the subject line email or letter is a great first step to catching his/her attention.
- Quotes or a story from local/state leaders are a great way to connect the information with personal examples. Share a quote from a Life member on why they maintain their membership.
 - Example: The Missouri Dental Association created a sidebar to a newsletter article about dues changes with quotes from members who attended the House of Delegates meeting or were a part of the Council on Membership review process sharing their thoughts and the decision-making process for dues streamlining.
- There is some content within this toolkit placed in brackets as a suggestion for personalization. Be sure to either fill in the information or delete these areas before distribution.
- State and local societies know their members best. Content that is personalized to the local context will most resonate with members.
 - Example: The Florida Dental Association customizes content generated by the ADA to be specific to their state and includes images of state members in materials.

Distribution

Consider the intended audience and preferred communication methods in order to ensure that the information reaches the audience. This toolkit is intended for current or soon-to-be Life members and includes:

- Background information for staff
- Frequently Asked Questions (for assisting societies in responding to member questions)
- Life member exclusive benefits
- Series of email templates for society customization

Timing

The updates to Life membership are planned to take effect in January 2021. Materials are being shared in August 2020 to allow time for planning when and how to inform Life members. The new ADA dues rate for 2021 will be available following the close of the October 2020 ADA House of Delegates.

Recommended timing is: October 20, 2020 – December 31, 2020

Contact the ADA

If you create additional materials or customize materials, we encourage you to share these with the ADA as examples and for replication by other societies. Email us at clientservices@ada.org. Also, if you have questions or need additional materials, contact your Client Services manager.

Background Information for Society Staff

At the end of 2018 the ADA enjoyed a membership market share of 62% with a net membership of 163,000 members. Even so, the Association was operating in a more challenging environment than ever before with changing member demographics and membership shifts posing future risks. There is a shared need to address the long-term financial sustainability across the tripartite. The question of collective future prosperity was the driving factor to re-evaluate an approach to membership dues. That's why the ADA Board of Trustees asked the ADA Council on Membership to deliver a growth strategy aiming for a more balanced approach to membership and revenue. The end result was a streamlined dues structure recently approved at the 2019 House of Delegates.

To get there, the Council examined two things: 1.) how changing the current structure of dues discounting impacts membership numbers and dues revenue; and 2.) what potential, future-facing dues models would deliver financial sustainability and growth. This included a thorough analysis of: existing membership base and trends; member research, pricing sensitivity studies and refinement opportunities by various groups including staff, volunteers, and state dental societies.

These Council efforts led to an operational plan that simplified dues categories and monetary dues stabilization. The following four plan scenarios were identified as driving dues sustainability and moved forward as resolutions to the 2019 House of Delegates:

- H.R. 14 creates policy asking the Board of Trustees to consider proposing an annual dues adjustment of at least the average consumer price index (CPI) over the last five years, currently 1.3%. *Establishing the annual ADA dues amount remains the responsibility of the ADA House of Delegates.*
- H.R. 15 provides amendments to the ADA Governance and Organizational Manual intended to streamline the comprehensive dues rate plan as follows:
 - Elimination of \$30 dues for graduate students/residents, making it a \$0 dues category.
 - Restructure of the dues discounts for new graduates. This eliminates the current 25% and 75% dues discounts, making it a two-year dues reduction of \$0 first year following year of graduation and 50% of full dues the second year following graduation. New graduates would pay full dues beginning the third year following graduation.
 - Discontinuation of a 25% discount for Life members to bring that category to full dues.

During its 2019 session, the ADA House of Delegates approved both House Resolution 14 (H.R.14) and House Resolution 15 (H.R. 15) to take effect with the 2021 ADA dues cycle.

Combined, resolutions 14 and 15 address the biggest structural challenge facing the ADA and most of the state societies – the steep decline in full dues-paying members. While changes in the membership dues structure pose a certain level of member growth risks, it is imperative that the future dues structure promote a healthy balance among membership growth and financial sustainability. Despite the ADA and many state and locals experiencing net member gain over the last several years, there was an unhealthy balance between member growth and revenue in 39 of 53 (74%) dental societies. The dues structure changes present opportunity for alignment across the ADA and offer societies a chance to capitalize on the positive revenue outcomes.

To be sure, the Council did due diligence in examining the various risk-benefit scenarios. Essentially, the potential member loss associated with the new dues structure was forecasted nationally and also for each dental society over the next five years. However, estimates were made based on a much higher attrition rate for members than ADA has experienced historically or in recent years. This approach was taken as a risk-mitigation strategy that based projections on a 'worst-case scenario which was a scenario that doubled the expected risk.

ADA remains committed to growing and sustaining membership and market share through goals outlined in its new Strategic Plan, *Common Ground 2025*. It recognizes many state and local dental society partners have membership goals as well. Investment of both additional monies and efforts with state capacity building, positions the ADA and all of its state partners for membership gains and recovery of any membership loss, as a result of the new dues structure, within less than the five years forecasted.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are my dues increasing?

There are a number of reasons and analyses that led to this decision.

- With changing member demographics (more dentists retiring) and membership shifts, there was a need to address the long-term financial sustainability across the organization to promote a healthy balance among membership growth and financial sustainability.
- With stronger dues, we are better positioned to pivot as necessary and continue to produce valuable evidence-based resources, much like what we're experiencing during COVID-19.
- Overall, we will be better positioned to ensure the continuation of organized dentistry and its contributions to the dental profession.

How will my dues change?

Life members will now pay full dues effective January 2021. Life members are defined as an active member dentist in good standing for at least 30 consecutive years or a total of 40 years, and have reached the age of 65. Traditionally, Life members have paid 75 percent of full dues. Life members who maintain their membership until retirement will remain eligible for free dues (Retired Life).

When will the dues change take effect?

If you are a state that is aligned to the dues increase, changes will take effect January 2021. The ADA House of Delegates voted to approve changes to Life membership dues in October 2019, taking effect January 2021 at the ADA level and within some states.

If you are a state that is NOT aligned to dues increase, you will not be affected with the dues increase in [state society].

Why should I maintain my membership in 2021?

As a Life member with more than 30 years of membership, you know the power of 163,000 members advocating for the profession. You have shown a deep commitment to breaking down barriers to access to care and being a voice during critical legislative moments. With your continued commitment to membership in organized dentistry, we are able to be the premier voice for the profession while protecting the oral health of the public. Membership support makes it possible for us to advocate for the best interests of members and the public. This is in addition to the many other travel, financial, life/work balance and practice-related benefits and discounted services, valued at more than the annual cost of membership.

[Identify high level state specific benefits/resources]

ADA Practice Transitions, now poised for a nationwide launch, is a new, valuable benefit to make the process of joining, expanding, or leaving a practice more predictable and successful (expected to be available nationwide in October 2020).

Also, when looking to retire, take advantage of the ADA's Practice Transition Program to transition your practice to another dentist you feel is the best fit for your practice and your patients. And, when you retire, your national [state? and local?] member dues will be \$0 as a Life member.

Continue to benefit from one-on-one support through the ADA's Third Party Payer Concierge™ – a service not found anywhere else.

Finally, please enjoy these exclusive offers for Life members:

- As a lifelong learner, continue your education. Receive 30% off an annual [CE Online subscription](#) by using promo code **CEMEMBER30**.
- Whether your practice needs the latest CDT codes or ways to better educate your patients, we'd like to offer you a 15% discount on [ADA Catalog products](#). Use code **21520** at checkout.
- Life members receive 25% off Lands' End labeled products for orders over \$150. Use promo code **ADAAL25** when shopping at ada.landsend.com through 9/30/21.*

**25% savings on orders of \$150 or more of Lands' End labeled merchandise. Excludes face masks, any item identified as "Promotional Product", furniture, screen print t-shirts and other promotional products with existing quantity discounts, excluded styles as marked, logo setup fees, logo application fees, monogramming, gift boxing, program certificates, gift cards, taxes and duties, or other fees. Online promotions may differ from catalog. Discount will be applied at checkout. This offer has no cash value and is not redeemable for cash. Promotional savings may be deducted from returns. Valid on Business Outfitter orders only. Not valid on previous orders or at Lands' End, LandsEnd.com or when combined with any other promotional offer or program discount. Offer valid through 11:59 p.m. Central, September 30, 2021.*

Exclusive Benefits for Life Members

- As a lifelong learner, continue your education. Receive 30% off an annual [CE Online subscription](#) by using promo code **CEMEMBER30**.
- Whether your practice needs the latest CDT codes or ways to better educate your patients, we'd like to offer you a 15% discount on [ADA Catalog products](#). Use code **21520** at checkout.
- Life members receive 25% off Lands' End labeled products for orders over \$150. Use promo code **ADAAL25** when shopping at ada.landsend.com through 9/30/21.
- Lapel pin to commemorate achievements

Email #1: Benefit-focused

We recommend this to be an email series that is sent monthly October, November and December. We recommend sending this email at least two weeks prior to invoicing.

Subject: Dr. [LastName], Thank you for your [X years] of commitment to membership

Preheader: We couldn't do it without you

Dear Dr. [LastName],

As a loyal member for more than 30 years, thank you for your dedication to the dental profession, the [state society] and the ADA. Membership makes it possible for the [state society] and the ADA to develop valuable resources and benefits and to advocate on your behalf. We hope you've had the opportunity to download the ADA Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit, access the Patient Return Resource Center, and participate in the many digital events the ADA and [state society] provided to help our profession emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic as strong as ever.

Our organizational stability is key to our ability to quickly pivot when needed, to support and provide guidance and advocate for the profession, like we had to for COVID-19. Beginning in 2021, the ADA and [state society] will be discontinuing the 25% membership dues discount for Life members. While we understand this is a change in your dues, it will go a long way in helping the solvency of the profession and enable us to continue to provide this level of support to you and all members. And when you're ready to retire, your national member dues will be \$0.

As a small token of our gratitude, enjoy these exclusive offers for our Life members:

- As a lifelong learner, continue your education. Receive 30% off an annual [CE Online subscription](#) by using promo code **CEMEMBER30**.
- Get the latest CDT codes or ways to better educate your patients, we'd like to offer you a 15% discount on [ADA Catalog products](#). Use code **21520** at checkout.
- 25% off Lands' End labeled products for orders over \$150. Use promo code **ADAAL25** when shopping at ada.landsend.com through 9/30/21.*

Thank you again for your many years of membership and for your unwavering support. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [state society – insert contact info] or the ADA at msc@ada.org.

Sincerely,

President (or other life member leader)

*25% savings on orders of \$150 or more of Lands' End labeled merchandise. Excludes face masks, any item identified as "Promotional Product", furniture, screen print t-shirts and other promotional products with existing quantity discounts, excluded styles as marked, logo setup fees, logo application fees, monogramming, gift boxing, program certificates, gift cards, taxes and duties, or other fees. Online promotions may differ from catalog. Discount will be applied at checkout. This offer has no cash value and is not redeemable for cash. Promotional savings may be deducted from returns. Valid on Business Outfitter orders only. Not valid on previous orders or at Lands' End, LandsEnd.com or when combined with any other promotional offer or program discount. Offer valid through 11:59 p.m. Central, September 30, 2021.

Email #2: Advocacy

We recommend sending this email one to two weeks after invoicing.

Subject: Dr. [LastName], we advocate for you and the profession

Preheader: Thank you for supporting advocacy efforts

Dear Dr. [LastName],

As a Life member with more than 30 years of membership in the ADA, you know the power of 163,000 members advocating for the profession. You have shown a deep commitment to breaking down barriers to access to care and being a voice during critical legislative moments.

Throughout COVID-19, the actions of the ADA helped keep many dental practices afloat when they otherwise would have been forced out of business. Without this, the dental profession may have been decimated with office closures of thousands of private practices. But your ADA Washington, D.C. advocacy team fought and dentists are now back with 98% of dental offices open as of August 10.

Some of the ways your voice has been amplified in [advocacy efforts](#) include:

- Advocating for \$310 billion in additional funding for the Small Business Administration (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans and for greater flexibility in the PPP loan program to give small businesses more time to use their funds and to ease the requirements to receive full forgiveness on the loans.
- Working with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to allow dentists to receive 1.5 million KN95 masks in preparation for the reopening of dental offices with a total of 2,275,000 masks and over 401,000 gowns distributed to over 51,000 dentists across the country.
- Supporting the creation of an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) advance which provides grants of up to \$10,000 for those that apply for the EIDL program.
- Advocating for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to include dental providers as part of the CARES Act Provider Relief Funds. HHS then dedicated a \$15 billion allocation for eligible Medicaid, CHIP, and dental providers for funding of up to 2 percent of reported revenue from patient care.
- Advocating for additional funding to help protect and strengthen the public health infrastructure impacting oral health.

Membership support makes it possible for the ADA to advocate for the best interests of members and the public. As the membership environment is changing, the Association must also change in order to remain financially stable. We recently shared that the ADA and [state society] will discontinue the 25% discount for Life members beginning in 2021. We know that an increase in dues is never easy. Through a robust membership and sustainable financial future, the ADA can continue to advocate and remain the premier voice of the profession.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to being part of the ADA community. Your support helps the ADA and [state society] drive dentistry forward.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [state society – insert contact info] or the ADA at msc@ada.org.

Sincerely,

President (or other life member leader)

Email #3: COVID-19 Resources

We recommend sending this email three to four weeks after Email #2.

Subject: Dr. [LastName], no matter what comes next, we've got your back

Preheader: Lean on [state society] and ADA to navigate practicing during COVID-19

Dear Dr. [LastName],

Our priority is – as always -- making sure you have the resources and guidance to provide care safely and confidently. Organizational stability is key to our ability to quickly pivot when needed, and to support and advocate for the profession, like we continue to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. And we couldn't have done it without you.

As we shared previously, in 2021, the ADA and [state society] will be discontinuing the 25% membership dues discount for Life members. While we understand this is an increase in your dues, it will go a long way in helping to provide the critical clinical and practice management resources and guidance that's needed with COVID-19.

We hope you've utilized the [ADA Coronavirus Center for Dentists](#), which is updated almost daily, to bring you and your team the most up to date information, including: .

- Recently updated, the ADA Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit, with printable patient letter, evaluation forms and practical infection control protocols (*updated 7/23*)
- Weekly on-demand digital events covering a range of topics, with webinars to help in your recovery and tips to help after you reopened, such as "Practicing After COVID"
- The latest safety and practice management guidance, including "When Staff or Household Members Test Positive for COVID-19" (*member exclusive*)

A new addition to these resources is our [COVID-19 Patient Return Resource Center](#). Available to members, the center offers downloadable communication tools that will help inform your patients about what they will experience when returning for non-emergent care.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [state society – insert contact info] or the ADA at msc@ada.org.

Sincerely,

President (or other life member leader)