

AACF Retreat Guidance Handbook

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Retreat Checklist

The Retreat Checklist is a condensed version of what you will be responsible for and their due dates. For more detailed information, please visit each section.

CHECKLIST		
TASK	DUE DATE	Done
Confirm Retreat Site with a signed Contract	Send a copy to info@aacf.org after you and your staffer have reviewed the contract. Also, volunteer AACF staff cannot sign contracts. Only employed staff can sign contracts.	☐
Create a Retreat Budget	At the start of your retreat planning. (Important: Check requests for the retreat will not be approved without an approved retreat budget)	☐
Retreat Deposit	Process a check request at least a week before the deadline on the contract	☐
Set opening and ending date for retreat registration	Dates are set by the retreat planning team. Ending date must be set at least two weeks before the start of retreat	☐
Student Registration Payments	TBD	☐
Master registration list	Due before retreat	☐
Scholarship Request Letter	Discuss with your chapter's finance team to determine how many scholarships can be offered. Determine a scholarship request and approval process. Money for scholarships will be taken from your Chapter's account.	☐
Speaker Onboarding Form	Have speaker fill out the form before the retreat	☐
Speaker and Speaker Family/Guest Waivers	Signed before retreat	☐
Certificate of Insurance/Liability	Fill out the Certificate of Insurance/Liability form two weeks BEFORE the deadline listed in the retreat site contract. All retreat sites will require a Certificate of Insurance.	☐
Site Medical/Waiver Form	Follow the retreat site policy and guidelines	☐
JEMS/AACF Waiver Form	Signed before students drive up to retreat. A copy of the waiver is to be taken with you to the retreat.	

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Retreat Contract

Due Date: Once you and your staffer have reviewed the contract, email a copy to info@aacf.org.

Most of your retreats will be held at a retreat site. This means that there will be a contract stating the terms of agreement between AACF and the retreat site. Please make sure to read over the entire contract.

Guaranteed Minimum

The guaranteed minimum is the minimum amount of people your AACF chapter is committing to paying for. You want to set this number **lower** than the amount of people you expect to attend. If fewer people attend the retreat than the guaranteed minimum, AACF is still responsible for paying for the guaranteed minimum! (e.g. You sign a contract and give a guaranteed minimum of 40 people. Only 35 people end up going to the retreat. You still have to pay for 40 people.)

Deposit

In order to reserve your spot at their site, you are required to pay a deposit. Pay attention to the deadline of this deposit which should be stated on the contract. In order to pay for the deposit, your campus' finance team needs to submit a check request through [Zoho Expense](#). To process the check request, the finance team needs a copy of the (1) Retreat Contract and (2) Retreat Budget [Click [here](#) to read about the retreat budget]. You can attach a pdf of the Retreat Contract and the Retreat Budget in Zoho Expense the same way you attach receipts.

When paying the retreat deposit, the retreat site will most likely also require a certificate of insurance. This can be requested using the [Certificate of Insurance Request Form](#). [Click [here](#) to read about the Certificate of Insurance]

Signing off on the Contract

When turning in the contract, you MUST have an employed AACF staff sign the retreat contract. If your staffer is a volunteer staffer, then the AACF office staff will sign off on the contract.

Cancellation Policies

Fully understand the retreat site's cancellation policies so that you know if you can or cannot refund a participant who is unable to attend the retreat due to sickness or an emergency.

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Budget

Due Date: Required before completing any check request (i.e., retreat deposit, reimbursements, etc.)
OR requesting payments from students

The budget is meant to help outline the expenses for the retreat and determine the per person cost of your retreat. Make sure to email this to info@aacf.org once it is done. We recommend that you get a rough headcount to gauge how many attendees you expect so that you can better estimate your per person cost. Linked below is a template that you can use for drafting your budget. Make a copy of the Retreat Budget Template in order to edit it.

Retreat Budget Template: [📄 Retreat Budget Template](#)

Suggested Budget items to include, but not limited to:

1. Lodging (if you're renting a retreat site your lodging and food will be combined)
2. Food
3. Printing (schedule, speaker copies, devotionals, etc.)
4. Snacks
5. Travel
6. Supplies for Activities
7. Speaker Appreciation Gift - the gift is a token of appreciation for speaking at the retreat. (Approximately \$150 to \$200 per message)
8. Speaker Attendance and Travel Costs - AACF should cover the cost for the speaker to attend and they can invite one additional person, but keep in mind that this will increase the registration cost for students.
9. Scholarships (You can choose to build your scholarship cost into registration, fundraise it, or transfer it from your Chapter's fund).
10. Staffers Housing and Fees - it is highly encouraged to account for the cost of having your staffer attend, but staff can choose to pay for themselves.
11. 7% of total revenue (income) goes toward the AACF administrative fee (The administrative fee provides legal, financial, and organizational infrastructure—such as tax-exempt status, liability coverage, donation processing, payroll, and compliance—so that staff and chapters can focus on ministry rather than administration.

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Registration

Due Date: The deadline for registering for retreat should be at a minimum of two weeks before the start of the retreat, but can be before.

Registration Form

Due Date: Before retreat begins

Create a form using Google Forms or some other forms creator you are familiar with. Here is some basic information you may want to collect, but not limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Willingness to Drive
- Dietary Restrictions or allergies
- Additional Needs (leaving early or arriving late)
- Emergency Contact & Information

At the end of your Registration Form, you will insert the [Payment Link](#) into the form so that students can pay for the retreat via credit card.

Cancellation Policy

You will want to add some sort of cancellation policy. If students decide to not attend, it can create a financial deficit. Below is an example of a cancellation policy, however, you are free to create your own.

1. If you cancel before _____ (insert date), you will be given a full refund less a cancellation fee of \$20. If you cancel before _____ (insert date), you will be given a half refund less the cancellation fee. No refunds after _____ (insert date).
2. A \$20 fee applies to all cancellations.

*** The cancellation policy of the retreat site will ultimately determine your cancellation policy. E.g. If the retreat site will not offer refunds one week before your retreat starts, then you will not be able to offer a refund one week before your retreat start date.**

Registration Payment Link

The Home Office will create a payment link for your AACF Chapter's retreat. Please allow up to one week for the link to be set up after you send the required information.

Step 1: Send in the required Information

Email info@aacf.org with the following details so your payment link can be created:

1. Budget that is approved by your staffer. (If you do not have a staffer, a Home Office Staff will review and approve.
2. Registration Pricing
 - State your per person registration cost
 - If you are offering both an early registration and a regular registration rate, include:
 - Early Registration cost
 - Early Registration start and end dates
 - Regular Registration cost
 - Regular Registration start and end dates

Example:

Early Registration: \$140

Dates: 11/2/25 – 11/28/25

Regular Registration: \$165

Dates: 11/29/25 – 12/20/25

3. Discount Codes (Optional)
 - You may create up to two discount codes that students can use during registration.
 - For each code, include:
 - The code text (note: it is case-sensitive)
 - The discount amount (percentage off the registration cost)

Example:

<u>Code Text</u>	<u>Discount Amount</u>
yayAACF35	35% off
bigyayAACF50	50% off

Note: You choose both the code text and the discount percentage.

Step 2: Confirm Pricing Setup

Before payments can be collected, confirm with the Home Office that:

- Your registration prices (including early or regular rates) are accurate.
- Any discount codes have been correctly added.

Send confirmation or any updates to info@aacf.org

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Step 3: Payment Notifications

After the payment link is live, then each time someone completes a payment, an automatic email notification will be sent to your Chapter's AACF email address. [[Back to Table of Contents](#)]

Scholarships

Each chapter can set aside funds for retreat scholarships. A written letter explaining why the scholarship is needed is given to core who then approves all scholarships. Those who are requesting a scholarship must first pay the retreat registration fee and then submit a scholarship letter for approval. Once the scholarship is approved, the amount of the scholarship will be returned to the student.

Scholarship Policy

- A student may request up to the full amount of a retreat. However, this will only cover the cost of the retreat and not additional expenses such as late fees, photos or apparel.
- A student is expected to pay what they can. If a student is requesting a scholarship, they must make this known to the core team that they will be requesting a scholarship via a written letter explaining their financial situation and the amount they are requesting.
- If a student is receiving a scholarship from their local church, this must be made known to the core team. The local church should address the check to "AACF". In the memo line, indicate who and what the check is for.

Scholarship Procedure:

1. Before requesting a scholarship through AACF, consider the following:
 - a. What are my needs? What is my situation?
 - b. Do I have time to raise or save money to attend this retreat/conference?
 - c. Will my friends and/or family be able to help financially support me to attend?
 - d. Will my local church provide a scholarship or funds for me?
2. Applicants must submit a letter to the core team to request a scholarship. The applicant must send a letter as a WORD document and must be at least 350 words. The letter must tell the core team:
 - a. Their Name
 - b. About themselves (i.e., testimony)
 - c. Why they want to attend the retreat or conference
 - d. Their financial situation
 - e. The amount they are requesting
3. The core team will read the letter and vote on if this scholarship is approved. The scholarships will be given according to need and current available resources of the local AACF Chapter. The core team is able to deny a scholarship or offer a different amount for the scholarship requested.
4. Core must approve the scholarship and have them written in the core minutes.
5. Send all approved scholarship letters and core minutes to info@aacf.org in order to process the scholarship. The scholarship will be issued to the student either as a refund to the credit card they used to register for the retreat or as a check that will be mailed to them.

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Waivers and Incident Report

AACF Waiver

Due Date: Before leaving for retreat

Each individual attending a retreat (with the exception of employed AACF staff) is required to sign an AACF Waiver. We have a template linked below that you can download, edit the specifics of the retreat and print for people to fill out.

[AACF Waiver Form](#)

Bring waivers to retreat and all waivers should be sent to the JEMS office after the retreat.

Site Medical/Waiver Form

Retreat sites may also provide a mandatory medical and waiver for each participant. In addition to the AACF waivers and other requirements, make sure to follow what your retreat site requires.

Incident Report

If there are any incidents (i.e. property damage or injury), please make sure to fill out an incident report.

Here is the link to the online incident report: <https://www.cognitoforms.com/JEMS7/IncidentReport>

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Speaker Information

Due Date: Before retreat begins

Speakers (and their family or additional attendees) will still need to register for retreat by completing your registration forms for the retreat, submitting all AACF waiver forms and the retreat site medical/waiver forms.

Additionally, speakers are required to fill out the [Speaker Onboarding Form](#) under California Labor Code Section 2775 (i.e., the ABC Test).

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Certificate of Insurance/Liability

Submit the Certificate of Insurance Form at least one week before the retreat site's deadline for the Certificate of Insurance.

Retreat sites typically require a certificate of insurance/liability. Click [here](#) to request a certificate of insurance. Please submit this form no later than a week before the deadline on the contract. When filling out the form, the number of attendees should be the guaranteed minimum and the signed maximum number of people from the contract.

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