

Suggested Branch procedure when members don't renew their membership.

When a member does not renew, what happens? Beyond the removal from the National and branch rosters, is there anything else that needs to be done? Not necessarily, however, smart branches take one more step in the non-renewal process: the **'exit interview'**. The goal of the interview is to better understand the reasons why the member decided not to renew and more importantly, what actions the branch can take going forward to improve retention.

A common reason for non-renewing is a change of location, "aging out" or a major change in personal or work life that makes continuing the membership impractical. However, what about other possible reasons that could be avoidable in the future? That information can be invaluable as the branch works to improve its recruitment and retention efforts. Learning that information is where the exit interview can be helpful.

The intention for the interview should be information gathering and the approach should be engaging and not confrontational. The setting should be friendly and comfortable. An in-person is most effective but a phone call or a Zoom meeting are also useful. The person conducting the interview should be assigned from the board and use a consistent template of questions. Responses should be written down. Remember the primary goal is discovery in order to identify possible corrective actions in branch procedures.

Here are a few suggestions but certainly not the only ones that could be asked. Decide what you want to know about your branch as you design your questions.

Sample questions and fictitious interview:

Hello _____, thanks for meeting with me. I would like to take a few notes however, your name will remain anonymous. It is important for our branch to understand the reasons members do not renew so we can work to improve our branch for its members. Your feedback is valuable and will help us going forward. Is that OK?

- 1. So first, in general, what led to your decision not to renew?*
- 2. What is there anything specific that you could share?*
- 3. Is there anything the branch could have done differently?*
- 4. What was most useful or what did you enjoy being a member of AAUW?*
- 5. What is one suggestion (anything) to improve our branch?*
- 6. My last question is how would you describe AAUW to someone?*

Thanks Linda and greatly appreciate your time.

Remember, the purpose of an exit interview is intended to discover ways the branch can improve. Otherwise, there's no reason to take this additional step.