



## NPC Extension Process: Local Sorority/Interest Group Steps

Each year, the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) Panhellenic Extension Committee receives many phone calls and emails from individuals and officers representing local sororities or interest groups. These women have a desire to start an inter/national sorority on their campus or affiliate their local sorority or interest group with a NPC member organization.

Adding another NPC women's sorority to a college or university campus is an exciting process. The College Panhellenic, the college or university, the NPC member organizations, interest groups and local sororities play important roles in ensuring a successful extension occurs. Specific action steps and policies must be followed to protect all parties involved with extension. This document helps to define key terminology and the steps involved in the process.

### Terminology

#### Extension

Extension is the addition of NPC chapters to the Panhellenic community on a college or university campus, or the establishment of a sorority community on a campus where previously none had existed.

#### Local Sorority

A local sorority is an organized group of women not affiliated with an NPC member organization. Generally, the group will have constitution/bylaws, statement of purpose, officer programs or activities and membership recruitment policies/procedures. The local sorority may or may not be an associate or affiliate member of the College Panhellenic.

#### Interest Group

An interest group is more loosely organized and without all the characteristics of a local sorority. Interest groups should, at a minimum, have a list of women who have expressed interest in joining a sorority, including their contact information and class year.

#### Proper Authority

According to the NPC Unanimous Agreement V. Agreement on Extension, the proper authority for extension on a campus has the responsibility for making extension decisions in alignment with NPC policies, procedures and best practices. The proper authority on a campus is:

- a. Where there are two or more NPC sororities present on campus and a College Panhellenic Council is established, the proper authority is the College Panhellenic Council. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the College Panhellenic Council authorizes the campus to open for extension.
- b. Where there are two or more NPC sororities present on campus and a College Panhellenic is not established, the proper authority is the NPC chapters present on campus acting jointly. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the NPC chapters on campus authorizes the campus to open for extension.
- c. Where there are no NPC sororities or one NPC sorority present on campus and the administration is willing to recognize women's sororities, the proper authority is a senior-level student affairs administrator. Written approval from the administrator to the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee authorizes the campus to open for extension.
- d. Where there are no NPC sororities or one NPC sorority present on campus and the administration is not willing to recognize women's sororities but does not discipline students for joining sororities, the proper authority is the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee. A majority affirmative vote of the Panhellenic Extension Committee authorizes the campus to open for extension.



## Recommended Steps in the Extension Process

### Step One: Determine Who is the Proper Authority

The local sorority or interest group must obtain permission from the “proper authority” on campus before proceeding with the extension process and contacting NPC member organizations. Using the definition above, the local sorority or interest group should determine who constitutes the proper authority.

Contact with NPC member organizations is not permitted until permission is granted and received by the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee. Targeting certain organizations at this stage may result in disappointment as there is no guarantee that extension will occur or that organizations will be interested in the extension opportunity.

The NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee discourages local sororities or interest groups from forming an opinion about an NPC member organization and approaching the College Panhellenic Council or school administrators with plans to affiliate with a particular organization. In many cases, this approach has been disappointing to the local group. NPC organizations are unable to sponsor local sororities or interest groups while permission is being pursued. College/university administrators or Panhellenic officials may be offended if the local sorority or interest group has contacted NPC sororities without proper permission. Reminder: Permission must be granted prior to any pursuit of and/or contact with an NPC member organization.

### Step Two: Prepare for Consultation with Proper Authority

Once the proper authority is determined, it is helpful to evaluate the group's viability to pursue affiliation, and to present that evaluation to the proper authority during the consultation phase. *Timing is critical to the success of extension.* It is important to determine the campus climate and decide if the time is appropriate for extension. The local sorority or interest group should conduct a self-evaluation or assessment prior to consulting with the college/university or College Panhellenic Council.

Evaluate your group by answering the following questions (See resource titled “Local Sorority or Interest Group Information Form”):

- What are your reasons for pursuing inter/national affiliation?
- How many women comprise the local sorority/interest group?  
\_\_\_ freshmen \_\_\_ sophomores \_\_\_ juniors \_\_\_ seniors \_\_\_ Total
- Are you a recognized or approved student organization?
- How long has the group been in existence?
- Do you have alumnae members? If so, how many?
- Who is helping you with the inter/national sorority affiliation pursuit?
- Do you know if this type of extension process has occurred on the campus previously? If so, when?

### Step Three: Consultation

A meeting should be scheduled with the proper authority to seek permission to begin the process of extension.

### College Panhellenic Council or NPC Organizations as Proper Authority

In situations where there is a College Panhellenic organization, representatives of the local sorority or interest group should make an appointment to meet with the fraternity/sorority advisor (FSA) and College Panhellenic president to discuss the possibility of extension. Bring the completed evaluation to the meeting and share your desire to affiliate with an inter/national organization.

During the course of conversations with the FSA and College Panhellenic president, determine the following:

- What is the stance of the College Panhellenic/existing NPC organizations on expanding the Panhellenic community?



- Is there an extension policy in the Panhellenic bylaws?
- Has the College Panhellenic considered extension in the recent past? What was the outcome of the proposal?
- Would the College Panhellenic be willing to form an Extension Exploratory Committee to analyze campus enrollment statistics, recruitment statistics and assess the needs of other female students on campus?
- Would the College Panhellenic be open to a presentation from the local sorority or interest group?

#### **College or University as Proper Authority**

If there is no College Panhellenic Council on campus, campus representatives of the local sorority or interest group should make an appointment to meet with the dean of students or another high-ranking student affairs administrator to discuss their intentions.

During the conversations with campus officials, determine the following:

- What is the attitude of campus officials about inter/national sororities on campus?
- Would the college/university be supportive of an NPC organization on campus?
- What type of assistance could the college/university provide with regard to advisement, meeting space or housing (if applicable)?
- Would campus officials be willing to research the possibility of inter/national sororities by hosting roundtable discussions with faculty, alumnae and female students?

#### **Step Four: Seek Permission**

##### **College Panhellenic/NPC organizations as Proper Authority**

If the College Panhellenic supports the idea of extension, the College Panhellenic must vote to form an Extension Exploratory Committee to analyze statistics and assess the needs of the students. It is important to note the College Panhellenic Council will lead the extension process, not the local sorority or interest group.

The College Panhellenic must schedule an official vote on extension. As part of the process, the Panhellenic delegates of NPC member organizations are advised to contact their respective inter/national officials and chief panhellenic officers. A minimum of two weeks should elapse between the proposal to extend and the official vote to provide time for communication between chapters and the inter/national organizations. This is expected as each organization has the right to determine the need to extend and the responsibility to ensure the livelihood of the inter/national organizations already on campus will not be threatened in any way with extension.

The full procedure for extension is documented in the NPC Manual of Information that can be accessed on the NPC website.

##### **Vote = YES**

If the outcome of the College Panhellenic vote is to expand the community by allowing the local sorority or interest group to affiliate with an NPC organization, the meeting minutes documenting the vote must be forwarded to the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair. Contact with NPC organizations may occur **only** after the College Panhellenic approves extension and the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair has received and verified the vote from the meeting minutes.

##### **Vote = NO**

If the outcome of the College Panhellenic vote is not to expand the community at this time, the local sorority or interest group has no other recourse but to continue on as a local sorority or interest group and possibly approach the College Panhellenic Council at a later date for reconsideration. Maintain documents prepared for the meetings for future reference.

##### **College or University as Proper Authority**

If the college or university is the proper authority and there is support for extension, a request should be made to the dean of students or senior-ranking student affairs official to send a letter



to the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair stating approval of inter/national sororities on campus. The letter, on college/university letterhead, can be emailed (PDF format). It is recommended the administration appoint a campus contact to work with the local sorority or interest group during the extension process. The name and contact information of the campus coordinator should be listed in the letter.

### Sample Letter Granting Permission for Extension

Dear NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair,

Recently, members of the *XYZ local sorority* met with me to discuss their desire to affiliate with an inter/national sorority. This letter serves as official notification to you that *ABC College* has granted permission to allow an NPC organization on campus for the purpose of affiliating with *XYZ local sorority*. This local sorority has been on campus for two years, growing in membership to 32. The *XYZ group* has contributed to campus life in meaningful ways through leadership, scholarship and community service.

If additional information is required for the approval process, please contact me. The campus coordinator for the extension process will be our *Director of Student Activities, Sally Smith*. She can be reached at 441-391-6646 or by email at *smith@abc.activities.edu*.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,

*Mary Kay Stone*  
*Vice President of Student Affairs*

If the college/university does not approve inter/national sororities on campus, the local sorority or interest group has no other recourse but to continue as a local sorority or interest group. It is possible the administration may reconsider its position at a later date. Maintain documents prepared for the meetings for future reference.

### Step Five: Preparing to Continue the Extension Process

If the proper authority has granted permission for extension, the extension process continues.

1. Campus Coordinator: The Panhellenic Extension Committee (for a campus with a College Panhellenic Council) or campus administration designee (for a campus with no College Panhellenic Council) will coordinate the extension process.
2. The campus coordinator notifies the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair of the campus extension opportunity. The campus coordinator sends appropriate documentation – letter of approval or meeting minutes – to the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair to verify that permission to extend was granted.
3. The campus coordinator directs the local sorority or interest group to complete an information sheet to be distributed to the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee for preparation of the NPC Extension Bulletin or Packets of Information (See resource titled “Local Sorority or Interest Group Information Form”).
4. Where there is an existing College Panhellenic Council:
  - a. Local Sorority: the campus coordinator should collaborate with officers of the local sorority or interest group to determine who to notify about the opportunity. A local sorority may:
    - i. Participate in a formal extension process conducted by the Panhellenic. In this case, all NPC organizations not present on campus will be notified of the opportunity; this option will maximize the visibility of the opportunity and increase the likelihood of attracting an interested NPC organization.
    - ii. Target specific NPC sororities. NOTE: If the local sorority/interest group is interested in one NPC organization, only that one organization will be notified. When the local sorority or interest group applies to the inter/national organization for a charter, no other member sorority of NPC may communicate with that group, either directly or indirectly, according to NPC policy.





- iii. It is common courtesy to give special consideration to NPC organizations with chapters previously on campus or organizations with letters of interest on file.
  - b. Interest Group: the campus coordinator should collaborate with the College Panhellenic and leaders of the interest group to determine who to notify. In this situation, the College Panhellenic makes the final decision, but considers the desires of the interest group.
5. Where no College Panhellenic exists, the local sorority or interest group may:
  - a. Participate in a formal extension process conducted by the campus coordinator. In this case, all NPC organizations will be notified of the opportunity; this option will maximize the visibility of the opportunity and increase the likelihood of attracting an interested NPC organization.
  - b. Target specific NPC sororities. NOTE: If the local sorority/interest group is interested in one NPC organization, only that one organization will be notified. When the local sorority or interest group applies to the inter/national organization for a charter, no other member sorority of NPC may communicate with that group, either directly or indirectly, according to NPC policy.
  - c. It is common courtesy to give special consideration to NPC organizations with chapters previously on campus or organizations with letters of interest on file.

### **Step Six: Notification**

The campus coordinator notifies NPC organizations of the opportunity as outlined in Step Five of this document. Notification of the extension opening can come in two forms, either by utilizing the NPC Extension Bulletin or by directly targeting specific NPC member organizations.

### **NPC Extension Bulletin**

The NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee issues the NPC Extension Bulletin to all 26 NPC member organizations by email as needed. This official communication provides a convenient forum to notify all organizations of the opportunity on your campus. To be included in the bulletin, the Panhellenic president or fraternity/sorority advisor must contact the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair. The College Panhellenic Council will be asked to submit pertinent information and statistics for the campus posting. The following items are important to include in the campus description:

- Campus Statistics (past five years)
  - Undergraduate enrollment
  - Number of female students
  - Male-female ratio
  - Percentage of students residing on campus
  - Percentage of in-state and out-of-state students
- Campus Location/Setting
- Prominent Academic Programs
- Fraternity and Sorority Community History (If applicable)
  - Percentage of students in fraternity and sorority community
  - List of NPC sororities on campus
  - List of other sororities and fraternities on campus and what council they are affiliated with, as applicable (e.g., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., NPHC)
- Meeting Facilities/Housing Information (If applicable)
  - Current meeting arrangements
  - Possible meeting facilities for a new organization
  - Current housing arrangements
  - Housing and property options for the new organization
  - Provision for temporary housing
- Timeline (See [Sample Timeline](#))
  - List date of notification to organizations (via letters and/or NPC Extension Bulletin)
  - Exploratory visits allowed (optional)
  - List deadline for submitting materials
  - List dates for anticipated presentations
  - List date of anticipated notification to organizations regarding invitation to establish
  - List anticipated time for establishment



- Contact Information
  - List campus coordinator, address, phone number, fax number, email address
  - List student officer of local sorority/interest group and contact information
  - College/university website address

### **Packets of Information**

The campus coordinator may send out packets soliciting the interest of NPC organizations. An information sheet describing the local sorority or interest group should be included in the mailing. The letter should include an anticipated timeline leading up to the establishment. The campus coordinator must contact the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair and provide the names of the NPC member organizations that will receive a packet of information. The NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair will notify those NPC member organizations that the proper authority has approved extension and that the organization may respond to the solicitation.

### **Step Seven: Selection Process**

1. Based on the responses received, the College Panhellenic extension committee or campus coordinator (if there is no College Panhellenic) decides which NPC organizations to invite to campus for presentations. The local sorority or interest group should provide input and serious consideration should be given to their preference.
2. Presentations are scheduled on an individual basis with the selected sororities. The campus coordinator should see the resource titled “The Application, Presentation, and Selection Process” for details on scheduling and hosting presentations.
3. Where no College Panhellenic exists, the campus coordinator determines which NPC organization is selected, giving serious consideration to the local sorority or interest group preferences.
4. The campus coordinator should contact the NPC organizations in the finalist pool and inform the inter/national extension officials of the decision. The campus coordinator should also notify the NPC Panhellenic Extension Committee chair of the decision.
5. The campus coordinator contacts representatives of the selected NPC organization to create establishment plans, including the creation of an Establishment Agreement.