

ACNM Policy on Moving or Cancelling an Event

Introduction

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. ACNM sets the standard for excellence in midwifery education and practice in the United States and strengthens the capacity of midwives in developing countries. Our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and gynecologic and reproductive health.

The purpose of the ACNM Policy on Moving or Cancelling an Event is to define the circumstances and criteria under which ACNM, as a business practice, would move or cancel a contracted event.

Moving or Canceling an Event Policy Statement

The Board of Directors of the American College of Nurse Midwives understands the importance of honoring existing legal contractual commitments. The board also values inclusiveness, equity, advocacy and anti-racism. ACNM strives to encourage midwives with common interests to forge connections through ACNM events. If defaulting from signed hotel agreements to shift our conference site based on current political or social beliefs becomes the standard approach for ACNM to advocate for change, we could easily find ourselves with a short list of states to hold a conference, limited options of hotels that will work with us and/or have the space requirements to meet our needs, and spending a significant amount of dollars in hotel penalties to make these late shifts.

Additionally, developing a reputation as a business that pulls contracts based on social or political beliefs will make it difficult for ACNM to build strong working relationships with hotel chain representatives and negotiate favorable rates, features and contract language that benefit ACNM members. ACNM conferences also have an impact on the workers at these properties and the local businesses who would be impacted by the loss of business. Further, the midwives in the area who would benefit from the educational or networking opportunity would be an unanticipated casualty of such a shift.

ACNM's board has therefore adopted this Event Policy Statement to guide ACNM staff as they plan and contract events. The statement also gives potential attendees of these events a clearer idea of the criteria and factors ACNM considers when making such a business decision. The goal is to ensure that ACNM makes sound business decisions while balancing its desire and intent to uphold its core values.

Three basic concepts are included in this statement:

- Transparency in identifying core criteria for consideration of moving or cancelling an event
- ACNM is a bipartisan organization. We support policy solutions and a wide-range of stakeholders that work to promote access to midwives and evidence-based midwifery-led care, improve the culture of maternal health and create better health outcomes for all people nationwide despite party or politics.
- Maintaining ACNM accountability and responsibility for all important programming decisions.

When considering cancelling a hotel contract, serious consideration will be given to the amount of the cancellation penalty and the willingness of the hotel or event site to release ACNM from these financial penalties as outlined in the event contract.

Rather than boycotting a state, ACNM should consider opportunities for community engagement to support local midwives in the area by bringing our presence to a city or state.

ACNM will not move or reschedule a conference or event if local city or state legislation and laws infringe on the beliefs of some ACNM members. ACNM will not move or reschedule a conference or event if local city or state beliefs on social issues infringes on the beliefs of some ACNM members.

Making the Best Business Decision

If any circumstances make it inadvisable, illegal, impossible, or commercially unreasonable to proceed with an ACNM event, ACNM will recommend that we move the event to another location. If another location with comparable facilities is not available, ACNM may be forced to cancel the event or move it to a virtual offering. The ACNM Board will make the final decision on whether to move or cancel an ACNM conference. Examples of such circumstances would include:

- Declaration of pandemic or infectious disease by the US government/CDC, or the World Health Organization where the health and safety of our members and staff are compromised due to this pandemic/disease
- US government declared war
- Actual, threatened, or suspected terrorism as declared by US government
- Civil disorder in the city of the event
- US government travel restrictions and/or curtailment of transportation facilities preventing the majority of attendees from arriving at event
- Threat of imminent natural disaster (such as the event city being in the projected path of a hurricane) interferes with event location operations, or the ability of the majority of attendees to travel safely to the event site.

These logistical concerns, based on our hotel cancellation language, may trigger ACNM to move a meeting. These include:

- Major construction that would detract from the educational focus of the conference or meeting
- Strike and/or labor disputes at the event venue
- Bankruptcy or change in ownership management such that there is concern that the owners could not meet the obligations of the contract
- The inability of the Hotel or other contracted event venue(s) to provide the agreed upon facilities required for the event

Applicability: This policy applies to all events as of October 1, 2022