

# USBC Membership FAQ's

## General Membership Questions

*Why should my organization consider membership with USBC?*

- The USBC is the national partner to advance policy and practices and facilitate the implementation of [The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding](#). The cross-cutting nature of breastfeeding calls for collaboration and outreach across a spectrum of sectors to ensure consistency and quality of breastfeeding support to every family. Becoming an integral part of this grassroots to treetops movement will provide members with sustained capacity building support from USBC, and opportunities for collaborative action with local, state and national partners.

*Who is a member of the USBC?*

- The membership of the United States Breastfeeding Committee represents the most unified voice in advocating for breastfeeding policy and practice change in the US. Visit the [membership directory](#) to view a list of current members.

*What are the benefits of membership?*

- The United States Breastfeeding Committee provides an extensive collection of benefits and opportunities to ensure that your organization gets the most from your membership. Benefits of Membership Include:

**Membership Benefits**

**Visibility**

- Listing in USBC Membership Directory
- Membership affiliation announced in Weekly Wire Newsletter
- News/initiative submissions for Weekly Wire Newsletter
- Membership Spotlight
- Present on National Webinars
- USBC Awards

**Capacity Building Support**

- Nonprofit management
- Group/Peer Sharing & Networking Calls
- Policy & Advocacy Strategy Meetings
- Campaign Planning Support
- One-on-one Trainings and Technical Assistance
- Facilitated Support for collaborative action

**Expansion of Leadership**

- Eligibility to serve on USBC Board
- Eligibility to serve on USBC Committees
- Eligibility to serve in National Collaboratives (Constellations)

**Discounts**

- Reduced Registration to attend Annual Conference
- Reduced fees for exhibits at Annual Conference

**Resources**

- Access to toolkits
- Access to BoardSource
- Access to seminars from USBC's Legal Council & Audit Firm
- Access to Conference and Webinar Archives
- Online organizational Workspaces
- Access to USBC Clearinghouse of Curated Resources

*How does my organization become a member of USBC?*

- To begin the application process, please review the [USBC Membership guidelines](#). Once reviewed, you may submit an application and the associated processing fee. To submit an application for membership, please see our [Prospective Members page](#).

*What might make my organization exempt from membership to USBC?*

- Organizations whose primary purpose is to market or sell products or services in support of infant formula feeding are ineligible for membership with the USBC. The USBC champions honesty, transparency, and accountability as integral to the success of our collaborative efforts. Representatives of membership organizations should uphold scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and integrity.

## **Membership Structure**

*What are the types of membership available with USBC?*

The USBC has two major membership categories: Voting and Non-Voting Members.

Voting members include the following subcategories

- National non-profit Organizations
- Associate non-profit (new 2019)
- Affiliate non profit (new 2019)
- State/Territorial Coalitions (new 2019)
- Tribal Coalition/Organizations (new 2019)
- Local/Community Coalitions (new 2019)
- Cultural Coalitions (new 2019)

Non-Voting Members include the following subcategories:

- Governmental Members
- Honorary Members
- Affiliate For-Profit Members (new 2019)
- Emeritus Members

We welcome you to read about each category on our [membership categories](#) page.

*Why is USBC adding new membership categories?*

- In April 2018, USBC's membership approved bylaw amendments by a 2/3 majority vote, expanding membership categories to include State, Territorial, Tribal, Local and Cultural (STLTC) coalitions, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). This historic change

solidifies USBC and its membership's commitment to inclusive, equitable collaboration to build a robust grassroots to treetops movement in the breastfeeding field.

*What is the difference between voting and non-voting members?*

- Both voting and non-voting members (with the exception of Emeritus and Honorary Members) may assign member representatives to the USBC. Each of these member representatives may serve on USBC committees, according to the guidelines in the Committees Policy.
- Only member representatives of voting membership organizations can serve on USBC's Board of Directors and cast votes in USBC elections or for approval of bylaws changes.

*What is the role of a member representative within USBC?*

- With the exception of emeritus and honorary members, member organizations are expected to send at least one representative to attend the general session portions of every membership meeting.
- Member representatives are expected to participate in [USBC Constellations](#).
- Member representatives are expected to report on organizational activities related to breastfeeding via their Group profiles in the USBC website.

## **Membership Application & Fees**

*What is the application review process like?*

- The Executive Director and/or Membership Relations staff will individually review each submitted initial and renewal application package against an Application Review Checklist to ascertain. If determination of membership eligibility remains unclear; the application will be forwarded to the USBC's Membership Engagement Committee. The Membership Engagement Committee will then make a recommendation to the USBC Board of Directors, who will then make a final decision.

*Why do I have to submit proof of state registration?*

- One of the requirements to be a voting member of the USBC is to have and maintain is nonprofit status. Nonprofit status refers to incorporation status under state law and providing proof of registration confirms nonprofit status. Nonprofit status may also be confirmed by providing proof of tax-exempt status.

*Is there a fee for membership?*

- Yes. The 2019 membership fee schedule for voting and non-voting members can be viewed [here](#).

*Can I pay my Organizational Member fees in installments?*

- Yes. Fees may be paid in annual installments or as one-time payments. Annual installments must be paid by October 1 of each year during an organization’s 5-year membership term.

*What is the rationale behind the new membership fee schedules?*

- The USBC has a fiscal responsibility and need to generate revenue that more properly reflects the value and robust capacity-building supports we provide to the First Food field. Considering these changes through an equity lens, the Board has approved a “pay it forward” or “load sharing” model that has worked well in earlier, isolated experiments we’ve conducted, such as the registration structure for various meetings and our national conference. Applying this approach to Membership, we are asking that large, established organizations in the USBC network with the ability to pay in accordance to their operating budgets, support a representational share of the cost of supporting the field. In this way, organizations with financial ability PROVIDE value to the field, while also DERIVING value from the USBC Membership Benefits.

*Is there special pricing for under-resourced organizations?*

- The USBC recognizes that an organization may be under-resourced or could experience a temporary, yet significant financial setback at any point and may submit a membership fee adjustment request form.

*Can I pay my membership fee online?*

- Yes, membership fees can be paid online or via check.

*How long does it take for membership to become active?*

- Once an application is received, please allow between 4 and 6 weeks for processing and notification. Membership is active once membership fees are received.

*I paid my membership fee with a credit card. Are renewal fees automatically charged to that card?*

- No. You will need to resubmit your credit card information each time you renew.

## ***Membership Terms & Renewals***

*How long is my organization’s membership term?*

- Each organization has a membership term of five (5) years unless terminated earlier pursuant to Section 2.2.3 of the Bylaws. **Note:** Terms do not apply to honorary members—honorary membership continues as long as an individual serves in a specified position.

*What is the membership renewal process like?*

- Membership renewal notifications are delivered via email in October of the final year of the organization's membership term. Renewal applications and membership fees must be received by October 1 of the following year.

*What if my organization doesn't renew membership?*

- Should membership not be renewed, per the USBC membership policy, membership and voting rights will expire on March 31st following the renewal deadline.

## ***Membership Engagement***

*I have just been assigned as a member rep. Now what?*

- All member representatives are required to attend a member rep orientation session. We also invite member representatives to stay engaged with USBC in the following ways:
  - Learn
    - Register for the next available member rep orientation session (registration information sent in approval notification)
    - Register for USBC's four webinar series
    - Read USBC's most recent Annual Report
    - [Explore the Toolbox for Breastfeeding Advocates](#)
    - Attend the [National Breastfeeding Conference & Convening](#)
  - Connect
    - [Update your individual profile](#)
    - Explore the New Members Community
    - Explore the Membership Directory
    - Fill out Organizational profile with Organizational activities
    - Join Learning Communities
  - Act
    - Donate – Support USBC's mission!
    - Register for USBC's annual Advocacy Day Event
    - Utilize USBC's Advocacy Toolkit to take action at the national, state or local level
    - Join USBC Constellation/State Communities of Practice

*What is the Members Connection?*

- The Members Connection is the online community for member representatives. This community workspace houses important documents accessible to members, including USBC 990s, Board Meeting Minutes and USBC Policy documents.

*When are membership meetings held?*

- USBC membership meetings are held virtually every January and in-person every June. Details of each meeting are announced several months in advance.

*Can non-member representatives be engaged with USBC?*

- Yes, we invite other members of your organization (non-representatives) to create an individual profile in the USBC website, join learning communities and register for USBC hosted webinars. Non-member representatives do not have access to “members only” sections of the website.

*How do I join a learning community?*

- Watch [this brief tutorial](#) on how to join and engage with others in learning communities.

*What are constellations and how can my organization get involved?*

- Constellations are USBC supported, action-focused work teams populated by interested member and partner organizations. Each new member organization receives the Constellation Engagement Survey to inform USBC of its involvement in various topic areas.