



Dear Appraisal Institute Chapter Leaders –

Because of the uncertainties brought about by the coronavirus (COVID-19), the Appraisal Institute has been closely monitoring the advice from public health organizations and other state and federal agencies. As a competent and compassionate chapter leader, you play a vital role in helping lead our organization through this global crisis. Here is what the Appraisal Institute is doing to manage the situation, and how we can work together.

The Appraisal Institute's greatest asset is its over 17,000 professionals in nearly 50 countries, and AI takes seriously their health, safety and well-being. I encourage you to closely follow the advice given by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) and your local health authorities when considering whether to postpone, reschedule or cancel events. Your state agencies also may be giving more specific and localized guidance depending on government declarations and public health situations. Many organizations and companies are limiting gatherings through April. Most are trying to make determinations after that date, likely dependent on the state of the virus' spread and impact. It is incumbent on us as leaders, to be vigilant each day for changing events and to adjust past practices to reflect current conditions as necessary.

The Appraisal Institute's national leadership is closely working with many state appraisal regulatory agencies to determine reasonable accommodations that our chapters can take to continue to provide education. Most state appraisal regulatory agencies will approve virtual education with some caveats, and we will work with chapters during this period of time to meet the needs of the members in obtaining qualifying, designation and continuing education.

If you have scheduled offerings in the next several weeks, I urge you to carefully consider postponing them or working with national staff to discuss options. Please consider the health and safety of AI professionals and customers and be diligent in reviewing any contracts you may have in place for those events. While each chapter's situation will be unique, it may make sense to discuss whether the offering can be rescheduled and how amenable the host venue may be to changing to a future date. A couple of questions and answers related to chapter events is below.

The Appraisal Foundation, the Association of Appraiser Regulatory Officials and the Appraisal Subcommittee are meeting March 16 to flesh out options for education providers. The Appraisal Institute has urged them to provide reasonable relief to appraisal education providers to convert classroom education to online formats. As we know more, we will let you know.

Meanwhile, I encourage you to use common sense and reasonableness when scheduling meetings, education and other events. As chapter leaders, you are in the best position to determine steps for your local area. Please contact the national office if there is anything the staff and national leadership can do to assist in this unprecedented situation.

Additionally, here are answers to some Appraisal Institute education-related questions you may have:

What if I have to cancel/postpone my education program?

The cancellation and date change policies and procedures remain the same during this time. Complete and send cancel/change forms to education@appraisalinstitute.org

Will I be charged the processing fees if we have cancellations?

At this time, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express have not made announcements that they will stop charging credit card processing fees or by banks when eCheck/paper check deposits are made, thus the costs are being incurred by the Institute when new payments or refunds are being issued. AI does not have the complexity designed within the system to identify which student is cancelling due to the coronavirus or for other reasons. As such no changes have been made to the policy regarding charging processing fees.

Will the AQB and the states allow us to offer our education virtually?

Some states are allowing exceptions at this point. Some states have had emergency meetings regarding approvals, so please check with your state before making any decisions. TAF and the AQB are meeting March 16 to make a decision regarding virtual approvals. If your chapter is planning to pursue virtual offerings, please contact AI's national education staff to discuss and ensure credit will be given.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Sherman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jefferson L. Sherman, MAI, AI-GRS
2020 President