



## LPA Virtual Event Best Practices

After LPA's Virtualpalooza received such great response from our members, we are looking to continue with one or two virtual events each month throughout the rest of the year. Given the Board's decision to cancel all LPA-sanctioned in-person events until the end of the year, we encourage all Districts and Chapters to consider scheduling virtual events this fall. Knowing that this may feel overwhelming to undertake if you have never hosted a virtual event before, please know that we're here to help you through the process. We want to share some of the lessons learned from our Virtualpalooza experience, and also provide guidelines to be followed with LPA-sanctioned virtual events, so that we are providing a consistent and positive experience for our members.

### Tools

While there are a number of options for hosting virtual events, we have found Zoom to be easy to use while providing as safe of an environment as we can. We know some Districts and even Chapters have purchased their own Zoom paid accounts. LPA also has three paid Zoom licenses so we can also provide a zoom link for any Chapter or District to use for a virtual meeting. We highly recommend a paid account for a Zoom virtual meeting, instead of using a free account. Not only does the free account have a 40 minute time limit, it also does not have some of the same security options available. Please check with your District Director to see if they have a Zoom account available to use, or contact Angie Giuffre, [angiegiuffre.lpa@gmail.com](mailto:angiegiuffre.lpa@gmail.com), to schedule your virtual event using LPA's Zoom account.

### Logistical Information for Virtual Events

- Any LPA-sanctioned virtual event should have at least one elected officer representative in attendance.
- All LPA-sanctioned virtual events geared for anyone under the age of 18 needs to be monitored by an adult LPA representative.
- Each event should have a unique connection/Zoom link (please do not setup as a recurring appointment for these types of events).
- Zoom accounts should be setup with a password and/or waiting rooms enabled. Single-licensed paid Zoom accounts will have both passwords and waiting rooms required for all events in the near future as part of Zoom's continued security improvements. LPA's 3-licensed paid Zoom account will have passwords assigned, but will have the ability to turn on/off the waiting room setting.
- Connection Links for virtual events should be sent out to either registered attendees only or shared only among Chapter/District members. Links should not be shared via Social Media.
- If you would like to use LPA website registration for your event, please contact Angie with the following information:
  - Title of Event
  - Description of event
  - Date/time of event
  - Connection information (if you are using Zoom – please provide the full Zoom connection information). We will setup the event on our website and provide you a link for people to register, and configure the registration to email out the Zoom link to all who register. This will require that someone registering have a valid email address



## Video On or Off?

- One of the great benefits of using Zoom or something similar for virtual events, is the ability to see people and connected with them even if you are not in person. We encourage events that are social or networking in nature to definitely encourage the use of video.
- If an event is more “informative” like a webinar, it is often distracting for the attendees to see all of the videos while trying to focus on the presenter(s) and presentation. We recommend attendees keep their videos turned off during any presentation in order to provide the best viewing experience for all attendees.
- If an event has more than 25-30 people in attendance, please keep in mind that if all 30 have their video turned on it increases the internet bandwidth needed by those with weaker internet connections. Use judgement in recommending video to be turned on/off if large attendance is expected.

## Start of Each Virtual Event

At the beginning of a meeting, we recommend someone assume the role of “Zoom host” and provide a few housekeeping items to make sure everyone is informed of the “guidelines” for the event. These could include:

- Remind attendees to have accurate names displayed on their zoom account – this makes it easier for those in attendance to know who is who. It also helps to identify anybody who should not be in attendance.
- Remind attendees to keep their lines muted if they are not speaking. This helps to prevent a lot of background interference noise that is bound to happen as people attend the events not just at home, but sometimes outside or even in a car.
- The larger the group, the more difficult it is to have “open discussions” without a lot of confusion. Try to determine the best way to handle making sure everyone has a chance to be heard if they want. We found the use of the chat feature to be popular for folks to share their thoughts or ask questions. Also using the “raise hand” option to get people in a queue to unmute their lines and speak works well. Spending a little time upfront to decide how you want to handle this on your call will allow you to give your attendees clear instructions. This also helps prevent a single person from dominating the discussions.
- Instruct attendees if the video can be on or should be off during the call (see above for guidelines to help make this decision).
- If there is reason to record the event (like an informational webinar where others who are not attending might want to see the information later) please be sure to let people know at the beginning of the call that it is being recorded, and why it is being recorded.
- Reminder attendees of some general rules:
  - All LPA virtual events are intended to be a safe and private place similar to if we were meeting at a Chapter event, Regional or National Conference.
  - Please be respectful to others on the call.
  - For any Teen/Tween events, we ask that no photos or videos be taken and posted on social media
  - Anyone who is not following the rules will be asked to leave the Zoom meeting.

Although it might feel overwhelming, with a little pre-planning, planning virtual events can be a lot of fun. Feel free to reach out to Staff if you want to discuss options for hosting a virtual event.