



## **AFFINITY GROUP LEADER GUIDE**

**15260 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1700, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403 (818) 382-6496**



## Table of Contents

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AFFINITY GROUP LEADER BENEFITS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AFFINITY GROUP LEADER ROLE</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WORKING WITH THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>IN CLOSING</b>	<b>13</b>



## Overview

ProVisors has a rich history of bringing together experienced Trusted Advisors for meaningful networking. An Affinity Group Leader (AGL) helps promote the organization’s mission to be a community of senior level professionals who serve their clients as trusted advisors and who also share the highest standards of integrity, performance, and accountability.

While not every detail can be anticipated, this document outlines key expectations of ProVisors members (“Members”), the ProVisors’s community and the general policies that all Group Leaders follow. By serving as an Affinity Group Leader, you acknowledge the expectations, policies and processes detailed in these pages, as well as those outlined in the ProVisors’ [Member Handbook](#) and [Code of Conduct](#). In addition to these documents, we have also created a separate [Affinity Group Leader Toolkit](#), which is intended to provide you with guidance, tips, and best practices to set you up for success.

Serving as an Affinity Group Leader is not intended to, and shall not be construed to, create an employment relationship of any kind with ProVisors. You sought to become an AGL to lead and assist your peers in acting as trusted advisors. The goal of providing these materials is to identify for you the expectations of Members and provide you with an assortment of tools designed to benefit the community and enhance the Group Leaders’ relationships in their group and the ProVisors’ community.

A current version of this Affinity Group Leader Guide can always be found on the ProVisors Hub, and we ask that you review the most current version on a regular basis.

If you have any questions, please connect with your ProVisors Regional Director or “RD”.



## Affinity Group Leader Benefits

Group Leaders receive a variety of benefits set forth below by acting as a GL. No other benefits are sought by GLs. The management of ProVisors appreciates the contributions of Group Leaders and provides the following:

- Free Membership in a Home Group of their choice. Should an Affinity Group Leader no longer serve as an AGL, the Affinity Group Leader will continue to receive complimentary Membership for an additional six (6) months
- Automatic annual Membership renewal.
- Complimentary attendance to Member paid events valued up to \$75, per event.
- Unlimited guesting permissions – may guest as many times as desired, to all groups, pending Group Leader approval.
- Annual Group Leader Appreciation Dinner hosted by ProVisors.
- Annual Group Leader Summit.
- Annual Group Leader Awards and Recognition Ceremony.



## Affinity Group Leader Role

This Affinity Group Leader Guide explains overall Affinity Group Leader (AGL) role. This section provides high-levels suggestion for effective leadership. The members become part of the community based upon these expectations.

1. **Group Attendance Numbers:** A healthy group typically has at least 30 Members in attendance at every meeting.
2. **Meeting Frequency:** Each group meets monthly, for a total of 12 times each calendar year.
3. **New Member Orientations:** AGLs typically support New Member Orientations. These are designed to help new Members maximize their experience and to understand the policies and procedures of Membership. These meetings are led by the ProVisors staff, who discuss best practices, company policies and share examples of tips and techniques to enhance the Members' success. This is also an AGL opportunity for greater exposure to new Members to enhance their personal brand and business network.
4. **Member Engagement:** On a regular basis the Regional Director will meet with the AGL to discuss group Members and their level of success and participation in ProVisors. This information helps document a Member's engagement in ProVisors and allows the AGL and Regional Director to identify potential issues and opportunities.
5. **Executive Committee:** Each group convenes an Executive Committee ("EC") to enhance Membership value within the group and to actively build the group to its fullest potential. *Please refer to the AGL Toolkit for more information on building and leveraging an effective EC.*
6. **Management of Budget:** Each group is granted an annual budget (based on the average number of attendees at meetings) that is intended to be used toward programming or social events. The AGL coordinates utilization of this budget with his/her EC within the terms outlined in this guide (pg 10-11).
7. **Succession Planning:** Each group should have a minimum of one or two Affinity Group Leader Associates (AGLAs). They are nominated by the AGL and the Regional Director will have final approval. A succession plan is important to ensure continuity in the event of leadership changes within groups. Should you wish to no longer be the AGL, please provide at least 30 (and ideally 90) days' notice to your Regional Director to ensure a smooth transition. Please note, the AGLA does not automatically become the successor to the group. The RD will identify the best candidate for the role and will consider all options.
8. **Participation in ProVisors Events:** AGLs regularly attend their Home groups, guest at other groups to promote their groups and themselves, attend social events and attend all AGL meetings.
9. **Affinity Group Leader Meetings:** AGLs should attend and participate in regular AGL meetings, which are scheduled and led by the Regional Directors. These meetings are scheduled well in advance to enable attendance.



10. **Annual Group Leader Summit:** Every AGL is invited to attend the annual summit for all group leaders. The purpose of the annual summit is to network, exchange ideas, share best practices, and learn more about ProVisors. This event is hosted and planned by ProVisors.

## Working with the Regional Director

All ProVisors staff is completely focused on Membership satisfaction, retention, and support. These hard-working employees understand they are here to support the Membership and its volunteer leadership. While all employees at ProVisors are committed to supporting its Members, the Regional Directors serve a special role: Regional Directors are here to assist the Affinity Group Leader in any way possible to enhance the member experience and maximize the value to the Affinity Group Leader.

It is the role of the Regional Director to work closely with AGLs to ensure the health of each individual group. AGLs should view their Regional Director as a partner and sounding board in supporting the success of their group.

This support takes many forms. The Regional Director may:

- Host AGL Meetings to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practices among all AGLs in the region.
- Conduct regular 1-1 meetings with AGLs to provide individual coaching.
- Collaborate with each AGL annually to assess their group's overall effectiveness and identify opportunities to strengthen it.

The Regional Director maintains a sharp focus on:

- Maintaining a robust attendance at each meeting, striving for at least 30 Members.
- Ensuring commerce and collaboration is facilitated throughout the region.

If a group is struggling to meet the metrics of a healthy group (e.g. retention, active Membership count, attendance, etc.), the Regional Director will meet with the AGL to help the AGL create a plan for success for his/her Group. If, despite these efforts, the group continues to struggle, there may be an AGL transition, with the thought that sometimes a fresh perspective can provide the catalyst for change. In this instance, the Regional Director will identify the best successor to lead the group into the future and will work with the current AGL to provide a smooth transition. Occasionally, ProVisors may decide that it is best to sunset the group because it is not creating enough value for the Members. This happens if there has been low attendance for long periods of time. In the case of this decision, the RD will work closely with the AGL to help with the transition.



## Policies and Procedures

The [Membership Handbook](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) explain all ProVisors policies and procedures in detail. It is the responsibility of each Affinity Group Leader to be informed and understand ProVisors policies and procedures.

For purposes of this Affinity Group Leader Guide, the following are key aspects or additional details related to those policies that AGLs are most likely to need to reference.

### 1. Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

ProVisors is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment at meetings and events. ProVisors will not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, bullying or intimidation including, but not limited to, on the basis of gender, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. Good social conduct is a matter of common sense and basic principles of respect and fairness. Conduct or comments that contributes to an environment that is hostile or lacking respect and dignity will not be tolerated.

Despite common sense and the prevalence of anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and training, some people just don't get it. As an AGL, you should set an example of good social conduct and holding others responsible for any inappropriate comments or behavior. Petty slights or trivial inconveniences may not rise to the level of harassment but still violate ProVisors' principles and should be avoided or addressed.

Discrimination is not always blatant. Some discriminatory behavior can be subtle, perhaps unconscious. For example, studies show that women get interrupted when speaking more than twice as often as men. While meetings can get lively and Members may cut each other off, pay attention to who's interrupting whom. Is your group diverse in occupation as well as sex, race, ethnicity, etc.? Does your Executive Committee reflect such diversity? Does your Troika Manager tend to group Members and Guests together by a particular sex, race or ethnicity?

And remember that language matters. Do you use "guys" to address a mixed-gender group? To some, it is an informal greeting to a group of people. To others, it's a symbol of exclusion — word with an originally male meaning that is frequently used to refer to people who don't consider themselves "guys."

The vast majority of individuals accused of harassment aren't sexual predators or people seeking to harass others. In fact, they tend to think the opposite. They feel that what they're doing is bringing levity and humor into social interaction. But their state of mind does not matter. Any unwanted behavior that makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended is harassment and has no place at ProVisors.

Also, just because the recipient of an inappropriate comment or behavior does not protest or voice his or her disagreement, or lodge a complaint, does not mean the exchange was wanted or welcome. If you see or hear inappropriate comments or behavior, address it. Prompt action will likely prevent it from being repeated or escalating in severity.



If you are not comfortable addressing the situation yourself, please follow ProVisors' "Complaints Procedure" set forth in the ProVisors Code of Conduct as soon as practicable. **ProVisors can only take action in response to known incidents.** Complaints will be taken seriously, fully and timely investigated, and fairly resolved.

## 2. Meetings

### a. Meeting Elements

Each ProVisors group will inevitably take on the personality of the AGL and its Executive Committee. There are, however, meeting elements that are expected throughout the ProVisors' community. *For a sample agenda, please refer to the Affinity Group Leader Toolkit.*

1. **Welcome and Mission Statement:** Reading of the ProVisors mission statement: *ProVisors is a community of senior level professionals who serve their clients as trusted advisors and share the highest standards of integrity, performance and accountability. ProVisors promotes and enables relationship-building, information-sharing and collaboration among its Members for the benefit of their clients and one another.*
2. **Introductions:** Tee up self-introductions of the Executive Committee Members, Members of the ProVisors staff (including Regional Directors), visiting GLs/AGLs, Guests from other groups, and attendees. The AGL introduces others, such as special Guest speakers, etc.
3. **Testimonials:** A testimonial is a restatement of referrals of business, business introductions and commerce producing introductions. *See the Member Handbook for more details.*
4. **Needs/Deals/Wants:** At the end of each group meeting, Members have an opportunity to mention any professional needs, deals and/or personal "wants." Members should also be reminded to post their professional needs/deals/wants to Business Opportunities to distribute to all Members. *See the Member Handbook for more details.*

### b. Guesting

As outlined in the [Code of Conduct](#), all Provisors' Members in good standing are allowed to request to guest at other meetings.

The final decision for approving requests resides with the AGL of each group. AGLs should respond to guest requests through the Hub in a timely manner, and to accommodate as many requests as possible while still providing a good meeting experience. As a best practice, any Member whose request cannot be honored should be provided a reason and a suggestion for when they will be able to guest.

Additionally, it is recommended that AGLs guest at other groups at least six times per year to learn from other AGLs, promote their Affinity Group and show Members that guesting is a great way to form connections and build business.





### 3. Programming and Events

#### a. Budgets

If an AGL has delegated the budget to someone on the EC of his/her group to manage, the AGL should ensure the person is: a) using the funds in a manner that is consistent with these guidelines; and b) submitting receipts for reimbursement based on the terms above. ProVisors will only provide budget updates/messaging to AGLs.

Each group is provided a modest annual budget at the beginning of each calendar year. The intent of the budget is to provide extended opportunities for programming, content or to bring the group together, for activities outside of meetings in a social setting.

Budgets are based on the average number of attendees as documented here:

0-19 Members	\$500
20-29 Members	\$750
30+ Members	\$1,000

#### b. Acceptable Budget Expenses

It is highly recommended to utilize the budget for programming or content to deliver additional value to the group.

1. Examples of approved events for the group or joint outings:
  - Educational content or Guest speakers to the education of the group
  - Opportunities for extended learning credits
  - Happy hours to bring the group together
  - Hosted event at Member's home
  - Joint event with another Affinity Group
2. Meal expenses – only for Executive Committee Members, and AGLAs. These meal expenses should be limited to a reasonable amount. Most of the budget should be utilized for Member benefit.
3. Gift cards may only be purchased for speakers and special Guests only - gift cards may NOT be distributed to group Members or EC Members:
  - Gift cards are purchased in \$25 increments (total of 12, \$25 gift cards/yr)
  - Again, Gift Cards may NOT be purchased for group Members or EC Members



### c. Unacceptable Uses of the Group Budget

- Financial contributions to charities and/or charitable events.
- General gifts or gift cards for current Members or relatives (i.e. thank you, door prize, swag, etc.).
- Permits or room fees for regular home group meetings.

### d. Budget Reimbursement Procedures

- Receipts must be submitted to ProVisors within 30 days of when the expense was incurred to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Any items determined to be appropriate/approved expenses will be posted against the group's budget and processed for payment within 15 days of receipt.
- Budget must be used by December 31, and receipts received by December 31 of the current calendar year.
- Events must be posted on the Hub and attendees must be registered via the Hub (to track registration) to qualify for reimbursement. Use the [Group Social Checklist](#) to have the event posted and allow 2-3 business days for processing. (Please take that timeline into consideration when making a request.)
- There is no budget carryover or pre-paying for January events.
- **Venue deposit reimbursement process:**
  - Deposits will ONLY be paid in advance from the budget for approved events.
  - We will not pay deposits that exceed the remaining budget funds.
  - The group must have enough in their budget to cover the deposit.
  - We will not advance funds from Member paid events.
  - A receipt of deposit is required for advanced payment.
  - The event must take place during the current calendar year.
  - **For paid events (where Member funds are collected by ProVisors via the Hub):**
    - Reimbursements will be processed once an event has happened to allow us to manage the collected funds and process all receipts accordingly.
    - ProVisors cannot collect funds owed for an event after the registration cutoff date. If a Member is permitted to register late or "walk-in" and attend a paid event on the same day, any funds owed should be paid directly to the event host by the Member.

### e. Social Event Planning

AGLs and Members of the EC plan group events, requesting events be posted on the Hub and ensuring payment for the events. ProVisors will not pre-pay for events but will reimburse receipts submitted by the AGL or Members. AGLs should exercise judgment when planning any event where alcohol will be available and/or other activities that may result in an unsafe or unhealthy outcome.

Group social events should be planned in advance and posted on the Hub at least four weeks prior to the event. To qualify for reimbursement, social events MUST be posted on the Hub for Member registration.



Groups planning an event must complete the [Group Social Checklist](#) and submit it to the event specialist at least four weeks prior to the event. *Use the link to complete the form:*  
<https://share.hsforms.com/15OPJlmCNSlyzTc24L7sFJA4y1my>

For ideas on how best to use the Budget, please review the Affinity Group Leader Toolkit.

## **F. Regional Events**

In major regions (where ProVisors has 200+ Members), region-wide events will occasionally be offered. When this occurs, these events will be planned, organized and paid for by ProVisors. These events create an added Member benefit and a unique opportunity for more Member connections but may require additional travel time since they are open to all Members in the region and regions can be geographically broad. AGLs are encouraged to both attend these events and promote them to the Affinity Groups they lead.

## **4. Executive Committee**

### **a. Executive Committee Composition**

AGLs are encouraged to convene an Executive Committee (EC). The role of the Executive Committee is to enhance Membership value within the group and to actively build the group to its fullest potential.

Typically, an Executive Committee is composed of six to eight Members, including an Affinity Group Leader and Affinity Group Leader Associate. The local Regional Director is also part of the EC and should always be invited to attend meetings. Other roles (some of which may overlap or be filled by the same Member) include:

- Welcome Chair
- Troika Manager
- Testimonial Tracker
- Programming Chair
- Care Chair
- Social Chair
- Social Media/IT Chair

*See the Affinity Group Leader Toolkit for detailed descriptions/responsibilities for each Executive Committee role.*

### **b. Executive Committee Responsibilities**

The Executive Committee should meet at least once per quarter (monthly, sometimes weekly, in newer groups) to identify and recruit new attendees, plan programming, and discuss any issues with Members.

The Members of the Executive Committee should:

- Promote ProVisors and attract new Members to come to meetings by guesting and getting



information about the group out to others.

- Invite Members to attend the group meeting.
- Serve as a leader to others by encouraging and stimulating commerce among Members.
- Recommend monthly programs, Guest speakers, joint group meetings and special events.

### **c. Executive Committee Selection Process**

The Affinity Group Leader identifies and selects all Members of the Executive Committee, with the exception of the AGLA role. Because of that role's importance, should there be a vacancy, they can nominate potential AGLAs to the Regional Director, who has final approval over that decision. Members of the Executive Committee should be in the highest level of senior leadership within their respective industries with access to robust networks. A mix of experienced Members and new Members help round out the Executive Committee by bringing experience and new connections to the group.

## **5. Affinity Group Leader Associates**

### **a. Role Description & Requirements**

The Affinity Group Leader Associate (AGLA) is the group's ancillary leader in the event the Affinity Group Leader is unavailable from time to time. Typically the AGLA assumes responsibility for all decisions traditionally handled by the AGL – including approving requests for Membership in the group – in the AGL's absence. An AGLA will have opportunities to lead group meetings and is a key Member of the Executive Committee.

An AGLA should not currently be a GL of another Home Group or Affinity Group. This is an opportunity to groom a Member to become a leader and/or to be in a leadership succession plan for the group. AGLAs receive other benefits in addition to the general Membership benefits they already receive. Additional benefits include:

- The opportunity to lead at least one group meeting each year.
- Enhanced visibility among the group and elevated status within ProVisors.
- The opportunity to be considered for a future Leadership role.

### **b. Selection & Training Process**

AGLs periodically evaluate all Members of the Executive Committee as potential AGLAs. Once an Affinity Group Leader identifies a potential AGLA, the AGL works closely with the Regional Director to discuss the potential AGLA's qualifications. The Regional Director makes the final decision who may become an Affinity Group Leader Associate.



## In Closing

We hope that the information in these pages helps answer many of your questions and clarifies the processes we rely on to create a consistent experience. We appreciate your participation in the success of the group. If you have any questions, please reach out to your Regional Director for assistance and support!