

## Recommendation Letter Guidelines

1. Provided your recommender with a copy of the Distinguished Fellowship guidelines, a sample of recommendation letters, and a copy of the nominee's completed nomination form.
2. At least **three** of the recommendation letters must be from either Distinguished Fellows or Distinguished Life Fellows of the APA (who must be an active member in good standing). Letters from other individuals (non-psychiatrists and/or other members) are also encouraged.
3. It is **extremely important** for the recommendation letters to include detailed comments that address the quality of nominee's accomplishments in the categories where the nominee has documented his or her achievements.
4. Letters that amplify and delineate the quality of each activity reported on the nomination form are crucial to the Membership Committee's evaluation of the nominee.
5. **Letters should not simply repeat the information on the nomination form**, but rather describe the quality and thrust of the individual's achievements or experiences.
6. Information about how long the recommender has known the nominee and in what capacity is also helpful to the Committee.
7. All letters must be typewritten on letterhead and signed by the recommender. Recommendation letters on letterhead without an actual signature will be accepted **if the District Branch submits the letter with the nomination**.
8. The District Branch should review the letters to make sure they are individually written and not duplicate copies of one letter signed by different recommenders.

**How to submit a recommendation letter** District Branches can submit letters, or, if they prefer, direct recommenders to submit approved letters in any one of three ways:

1. Via email to [membership@psych.org](mailto:membership@psych.org)
2. Via regular mail to 800 Maine Avenue SW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20024
3. Upload it with your nomination form. If you don't know the name of a recommender when the form is completed, simply enter TBD for these fields.

## Sample Recommendation Letter

XXXXXXXX., M.D. *Distinguished Life Fellow*  
35 Smart Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94127

April 1, 2017

American Psychiatric  
Association c/o  
Cher'Muir Kennedy 1000  
Wilson Blvd., Suite 1825  
Arlington, VA 22209-  
3901

Re: Distinguished Fellowship Nomination for XXXXXXX, M.D.

Dear Nomination Committee:

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to write this letter of recommendation for XXXXX, M.D. Dr. XXXX is an outstanding clinician, educator, and leader of organized psychiatry in Northern California. She exemplifies the ideals of the Distinguished Fellowship of the American Psychiatric Association.

I first met Dr. XXXX in 2011, when I moved from Chicago to San Francisco and joined a monthly clinical consultation group of which Dr. XXXXXX was a member. She demonstrated an insightful capacity to conceptualize treatment interventions for a challenging group of patients. She remains unique in her contribution of psychiatric and cultural understanding of Russian speaking members of our community. Her cultural understanding was of critical help in my work with a severely disabled Russian patient and his family. In addition to this individual contribution to my work with a Russian patient, Dr. XXXXXXXX maintains an active community treatment involvement with the San Francisco Jewish Home for the Aged, where she sees and treats elderly monolingual Russian patients.

In 2013 Dr. XXXXXXXX invited me to become involved with the Northern California Psychiatric Society. As Treasurer of NCPS and a member of the NCPS Executive Committee since 2015, I have had the opportunity to directly observe Dr. XXXXXXXX's qualities as Vice President, then President of NCPS. She has been a creative and steady leader for our District Branch. My most direct work with her has been on the Budget and Finance Committee. She has been a thoughtful contributor in guiding our District Branch to financial stability, which has allowed a reduction in member dues.

Dr. XXXXXXXX has been involved in many other District Branch activities. Of particular note are her contributions to the Professional Education Committee and the NCPS Annual Scientific Meeting,

drawing several hundred psychiatrists for continuing education and fellowship. Dr. XXXXXXXX is also deeply committed to psychiatry residents in training and their transition to early career paths. She has spearheaded casual get togethers between senior NCPS psychiatrists and resident psychiatrists from our Bay Area training programs as a way of fostering connections and the exchange of ideas. And, she has put forth a proposal that NCPS sponsor one resident chosen by lottery among any of the four Bay Area programs achieving one hundred percent membership in NCPS. The winner of this lottery will be sponsored by NCPS for all expenses to attend the World Psychiatry Congress in South Africa in November, 2016.

Dr. XXXXXXXX has a deep and extensive involvement in a range of psychiatry/community interfaces in the Bay Area. She is a board member of the Psychiatric Foundation of Northern California, which has focused on homelessness in San Francisco and on suicide prevention on the Golden Gate Bridge. She continues her community psychiatry involvement as a Senior Psychiatrist with the San Francisco Department of Public Health Community Behavioral Health Services, working part-time in a community health center for the underinsured, mentally ill in our city.

In summary, Dr. XXXXXXXX is a highly respected, community involved member of our psychiatric profession. She is clearly dedicated to the educational and professional development of resident and early career psychiatrists. She has demonstrated ongoing commitment to the growth and health of our professional organizations. Most importantly, Dr. XXXXXXXX is a woman of high personal integrity who will add significant strength to our psychiatric profession for years to come.

I offer the most unqualified and enthusiastic support for the nomination of Dr. XXXXXXXX.

Sincerely yours,

XXXXXXXX., M.D