



Placement Policies: *Substitutes* & *Job Vacancies*

The Alamo Chapter of the American Guild of Organists provides assistance to its membership and the San Antonio community through its professional placement services. These services include: 1) maintaining a current substitute roster of organists available for hire on an interim or occasional basis (weekends, weekdays, or for special services such as weddings or funerals), as well as 2) the advertisement of vacant positions.

For more information, or to access either of these services, please contact the Placement Coordinator: Lena Gokelman / 210-499-0543 / placement@alamoago-satx.org

SUBSTITUTE ROSTER

Requesting a Substitute

Access to the substitute roster for the chapter is provided as a free service to religious and educational institutions, organizations and individuals seeking the professional services of an organist. Requests should be made through the Placement Coordinator who will then take the initial steps to arrange communication between requestor and a potential substitute. Occasionally, there are circumstances or seasons during the year when securing a substitute may prove more difficult (e.g., distance, worship time, holidays, etc.). Providing as much advance notice and information as possible is beneficial to the process. Please refer to the downloadable form on the website: 'SUBSTITUTE REQUEST'.

The following should always be included:

- *Name of requesting institution or individual*
- *Location*
- *Date and time of worship service/event (including warm-up time on the day of the worship service/event)*
- *Rehearsal date(s) and time(s)*
- *Type of professional service requested (e.g., organist, organist-pianist, organist-director, etc.)*
- *Name of contact person*
- *Contact phone number*

Though the Alamo Chapter does not negotiate payment between parties, the provision of fair compensation is a matter of economic justice. Two important factors which impact the professional musician are skill level and time. Like many professions, skill development for the professional musician requires years of hard work and a hefty monetary investment. Personal preparation often comprises practice in addition to contracted rehearsal time. The latter may include learning new music or becoming familiar with a new organ. For more information regarding fee schedules and salary guidelines, please refer to the AGO national guidelines: <http://www.agohq.org/profession/indexsalary.html>

So that the chapter's substitute roster may remain effective, the Placement Coordinator will conduct a follow-up communication to evaluate the experience between substitute and requesting institution/individual.

Placement on the Substitute Roster

There are many benefits to participating as a substitute on the Alamo Chapter's official roster. Some include: experience, exposure, networking with local musicians, extra income, and even occasional opportunities for permanent job placement.

The opportunity to participate as a substitute on the Alamo Chapter's sub roster is a benefit of membership in the AGO. If not a current member of the AGO in good standing, then the applicant must apply for membership within (3) months. Competent substitutes lend credibility to the service that the chapter provides. Therefore, the chapter must be able to make placement recommendations from its list with confidence.

In addition to a phone interview with the Placement Coordinator, participation as a substitute on the chapter's roster requires the applicant to possess at least **(1)** of the following:

- *AGO Guild certification (SPC, CHM, CAGO, AAGO, FAGO)*
- *A degree or artist diploma in organ performance*
- *An audition scheduled by the Placement Coordinator consisting of prepared hymns/service music and basic sight reading of hymnody*
- *Sponsorship/recommendation by at least (1) AGO board member (past or present) who has heard the individual play*
- *A recommendation from an organ instructor at an institution of higher education*

Substitutes must abide by the Code of Ethics and Code of Professional Standards of the AGO whether or not they are members at the time, and should exhibit professional standards expected in any other position, e.g. preparedness, respect and punctuality. To view these documents, go to <http://www.agohq.org/about/index.html>.

Over the years, the chapter has received helpful feedback via follow-up evaluations with those who have utilized the chapter's placement services. The vast majority of comments received are positive. Should the chapter receive negative feedback about a substitute, the Placement Coordinator will contact the individual. Feedback which warrants greater attention will be brought to the Executive Board for further discussion.

To submit your name for the substitute list, please complete and return the form 'SUBSTITUTE LIST' from the website.

JOB VACANCIES

As a benefit of membership, the Alamo Chapter of the AGO publishes a monthly newsletter – *The Tracker* – to its members in which job vacancies are also advertised. Advertisement in *The Tracker* is provided as a free service to the San Antonio community and surrounding areas. The deadline for submissions to the newsletter is the 15th of each month. Submissions should be directed to the Placement Coordinator at: placement@alamoago-satx.org

Providing much of the following information may prove helpful when advertising a vacant position:

- *Job title (e.g., organist, organist-director, choir director, etc.)*
- *Name of employer*
- *Location*
- *Day and time of worship services*
- *Rehearsal day and times (including warm-up time on the day of the service)*
- *Brief list of responsibilities*
- *Whether the position is full- or part-time*
- *Salary range offered, if possible (refer to the AGO national guidelines for current salary guidelines; see link above)*
- *Available instruments and worship resources (e.g., type of organ, grand piano, hymnal resources, etc.)*
- *Other pertinent information to the position (e.g., health benefits, vacation, etc.)*
- *Name of contact person*
- *Contact phone number*

A job should never be posted unless the position is currently vacant or its imminent vacancy has been publically announced. If there are updates to the position (or if it has been filled), the employing institution should inform the Placement Coordinator as soon as possible. Job advertisements appearing in *The Tracker* will run for one month and are renewable only by request of the employing institution. The form 'JOB VACANCY' may be found on the website.