

LEHIGH VALLEY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

Lehigh Valley Psychological and Counseling Association By-Laws

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Lehigh Valley Psychological and Counseling Association.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association (LVPCA) shall be to advance psychology and other professions involved in counseling as sciences, professions, and means of promoting human welfare.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

A. **Members** of the Association shall be persons who:

- 1) hold a minimum of a Masters Degree in Psychology or Counseling or related fields and
- 2) are identified by their licensure status, certification or primary professional role(s) such as psychologist, pastoral counselor, psychotherapist, professional counselor, marriage and family therapist, social worker, or academician, and
- 3) have completed the LVPCA membership application in full and have received approval from the Executive Committee.

Members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Association without restriction.

B. **Fellows** of the Association shall be persons who:

- 1) hold a minimum of a Masters Degree in Psychology or Counseling or related fields and
- 2) have four years of experience in the Psychology or Counseling or related fields and
- 3) have actively participated in LVPCA (Committee chair or Committee member) for a minimum of two years before application and
- 4) have completed the LVPCA fellows' application in full and have received approval from the Executive Committee.
- 5) Fellows shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of the Association without restriction.

C. **Emeriti** shall be persons who:

- 1) are fully retired from professional activities and
- 2) have Member or Fellow status in LVPCA and
- 3) have been active in LVPCA for a minimum of 3 years and
- 4) have made a significant contribution to LVPCA through service (i.e., committee work, serving on the Executive Committee, offering programs, etc.), financial support or other organizational support and
- 5) have completed the LVPCA emeritus application in full and have received approval from the Executive Committee.

Emeriti status entitles individuals to:

- 1) exemption from LVPCA dues requirements and
- 2) retention of voting status and
- 3) receipt of LVPCA mailings, including newsletters and program announcements, and
- 4) reduced fees for program attendance.

D. **Affiliates** of the Association shall be persons who:

- 1) have an interest in psychology and other mental health professions
- 2) are identified by their licensure status or primary professional role(s), such as undergraduate student, graduate student, teacher, psychiatrist and
- 3) have completed the LVPCA membership application in full and have received approval from the Executive Committee
- 4) Affiliates do not have voting rights, are not full Members of the organization, and are not eligible to hold elected office.

E. Applications for all levels of membership shall be recommended for approval or rejected for cause by the Executive Committee after review of the application. The Membership Committee shall announce its recommendations to the Executive Committee Meeting as often as needed by application reception. The Executive Committee shall approve or disapprove the recommendations of the Membership Committee. Any applicant denied membership may request to meet with the Executive Committee to appeal the decision.

F. All applications shall indicate the type of professional affiliation with which the applicant wishes to be identified for maintenance in the LVPCA database.

G. Procedures for membership application and for transfers in membership status shall be prescribed by the Executive Committee.

H. Persons in both categories of membership (Fellows and Members) are expected to practice in accordance with the American Psychological Association's latest "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" and the Pennsylvania Code of "Professional and Vocational Standards", OR the relevant ethical standards for their identified profession. Persons in both categories of membership (Fellows and Members) whose professional licenses are revoked, who are expelled from another professional association due to ethical violations, or who are convicted of a felony will be removed from membership.

Any person who has been removed from membership may apply for reinstatement after a period of five (5) years and must meet all qualifications of membership.

ARTICLE IV. DUES

A. The annual dues for each class of membership shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

B. Nonpayment of dues for one (1) year shall be considered resignation from the Association. Reinstatement shall be contingent upon payment of all back dues, or, after a lapse of two (2) or more years, membership may be renewed through re-application to the Membership Committee.

C. Exemption from dues is open, upon formal request, to members who claim hardship. Such a request should be made in writing or person to the President of the organization who will confer with the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

A. The Officers of the Association shall be the President, the President-Elect, the Past President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. All Officers shall be either Fellows or Members of the Association at the time of their election.

B. The **President** shall be a Member or Fellow of the Association who has just completed the term as President-Elect. The President-Elect shall automatically become President at the close of the year following election as President-Elect.

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings, to act as chair of the Executive Committee, and as an ex officio member of all committees, to exercise supervision over the affairs of the Association; and to perform such other duties as are pertinent to the office of the President. The President shall take care to closely inform and counsel the President-Elect on all issues of importance.

C. The **President-Elect** shall be a Member or Fellow of the Association and it shall be his/ her responsibility to serve as a member of the Executive Committee and to perform duties of the President in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President. If the President does not serve his/her full term for any reason, the President-Elect shall succeed to the unexpired remainder thereof and continue through his/her own term as President. The President-Elect shall be responsible for producing the Newsletter and other publications. The President-Elect shall use the term of office to become fully familiar with the affairs of the Association.

D. The **Secretary** shall be a Fellow or a Member of the Association and it shall be his/her duty to keep the records of the Association's and governance meetings, and to sign such checks or drafts upon the funds of the Association as may be necessary in the event of the incapacity of the Treasurer.

E. The **Treasurer** shall be a Fellow or a Member of the Association and it shall be the duty of the Treasurer to maintain oversight of the financial transactions of the Association. The Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks and drafts on behalf of the Association, for the disbursement of funds. The Treasurer shall ensure that a full record is kept of all money received and all money disbursed and shall report thereon annually to the membership of the Association and shall arrange at all reasonable times for exhibit of the books of accounts to any member of the Association.

F. In the case of the death, incapacity or resignation of the President-Elect, the Secretary, or the Treasurer, the Executive Committee shall by majority vote elect a successor to serve out the term.

G. The term of office for Secretary and Treasurer shall be for two (2) years with the Secretary elected for a two (2) year term on even numbered years, and the Treasurer elected for a two (2) year term on odd numbered years.

ARTICLE VI. FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

- A. The Fiscal Year of the Association shall extend from January 1 to December 31.
- B. The Treasurer shall prepare and present for approval a budget for the Fiscal Year to the Executive Committee at the first meeting of the incoming President's administration.
- C. The Treasurer shall keep an itemized financial record of receipts and expenditures of the Association's business. At the direction of the Executive Committee or the President, he/she shall submit this record to a firm of Certified Public Accountants for audit.
- D. Bank accounts or funds of the Association must have two or more elected officers as signers on any account or fund, including the current secretary and treasurer. The treasurer, is responsible for obtaining updated signatures for bank funds, on an annual basis. The treasurer as signer on any checks or funds disbursed from the association accounts, will be bonded at the expense of the association. The president is responsible for updating the bond information annually, and retaining the bond information.

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNING STRUCTURE

- A. Definition: The governing structure of the Association shall consist of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly. It shall be their aggregate responsibility to establish policy, make decisions and implement actions consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the Association.
- B. Executive Committee
 - 1) Composition. There shall be an Executive Committee that shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairpersons of standing committees. The President of the Association shall be the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Secretary of the Association shall be Secretary of the Executive Committee.
 - 2) Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall be the legislative and administrative body of the Association and shall have full power and authority over the affairs and funds of the Association within the limits of these bylaws and the general objectives of the Association.
 - 3) Meeting Schedules. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held as frequent as necessary to carry out its responsibilities. Meetings may be called by the President or on the request of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Executive Committee.
- C. General Assembly
 - 1) Composition. The General Assembly shall consist of all members of the Association. All members shall have full voting privileges except where these bylaws deny this privilege.
 - 2) Responsibilities. The General Assembly shall function as the Executive Committee at the constituted time of its meeting.

- 3) Agenda. The agenda for such meetings is the responsibility of the Executive Committee. Members will be given sufficient notice of the time, place and agenda of such meetings.
- 4) Meeting Schedule. General Assembly meetings shall be held at least once per year. Additional meetings may be called by the President, at the request of the majority of the Executive Committee, or at the request of ten (10) voting members.

D. Voting

- 1) A quorum, defined as at least half of all current Executive Committee members, must be present to vote on any Association business, at Executive Committee meetings. All meetings of the Association shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.
- 2) Voting rights of Executive Committee members are reserved to those persons elected to office by members of the Association and to duly appointed chairpersons of standing committees, except as indicated in Section D. 3) of this article.
- 3) A substitute for a Committee Chair may attend meetings of the Executive Committee. At the request of a Committee Chair, a committee member may substitute for the Chair. He/She may function with the same rights as the Committee Chair at the Executive Committee meeting.
- 4) Except where provided by these bylaws, no person may occupy concurrently more than one (1) elected seat in the governing structure. Regardless of exceptions, however, a one-person, one-vote rule shall apply. There shall be no votes cast by proxy.
- 5) Voting via electronic mail and electronic reply is acceptable, and can be requested by any member of the Executive Committee. All such votes will be binding and equivalent to voting as conducted at face to face meetings. The President will be responsible for counting and distribution of ballot outcome.

ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A. An Ad Hoc committee appointed by the President will serve as the Nominations and Elections Committee.

B. The Secretary or a duly appointed designee will serve as Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

C. A slate of nominees for any office to be voted upon in that year's election will be presented to the members not later than the second Monday in September.

D. Additional nominations may be made by the membership. Nominations by mail, either electronic or by post, shall be accepted from voting members up to three (3) weeks after the mailing date of the slate.

E. A validating procedure shall be used to ensure that nominations shall be made and ballots shall be cast only by voting members of the Association.

F. An election ballot shall be prepared by the Nominations and Elections Committee. **Voting shall be by mail ballot, either electronically or by post. Ballots shall be mailed to the membership no later than the second Monday in October.**

G. The polls shall be closed twenty-one (21) days after the mailing date of the ballot.

H. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall convene to count the ballots. The person receiving the largest number of votes for each office will be designated the winner.

I. Should there be a tie vote, the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee, or one of the members of the Committee if the Chair is absent, shall resolve the tie by drawing lots.

J. The results of the election shall be announced as soon as possible.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES

A. General Responsibilities of the Committees

1) Introduction

The standing committees of the Association shall consist of those provided by these bylaws, and such Task Forces as may be established in accordance with the rules of the Executive Committee and the Association.

2) Committees

- a) Committee chairpersons and members shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.
- b) Committees shall serve for the term of the President, except as further provided by these bylaws.
- c) Each Committee Chairperson shall submit an annual written report to the Executive Committee and the membership.

3) Task Forces

- a) Task Forces may be created only under unusual and pressing circumstances by the Executive Committee when it believes an issue cannot be assigned to a standing committee, and when the issue is judged to be time-limited and project-oriented. The Task Force shall report to the president through the Executive Committee who names its members on the recommendation of the President.
- b) Ad Hoc Committees shall be appointed by the President and the Executive Committee as the need arises and shall disassemble after achieving their goals.
- c) At least once every ten (10) years from the adoption of this section, a Task Force shall be created to review the bylaws to determine whether they are current to the needs of the Association.

B. Responsibilities of the Respective Standing Committees:

- 1) **Membership** Committee: It shall be the duty of this Committee to oversee the recruitment of new members, receive and process applications for new membership and reassess for changes in membership status. This committee will also revise the membership application form as needed and maintain a complete and accurate file of members.
- 2) **Community and Practitioners' Affairs** Committee: This Committee shall represent to the Executive Committee the interests and concerns from those members who work in providing psychological services directly to the public. This Committee is responsible for identifying issues, communicating these directly to the Executive Committee, proposing programs and events, which reflect the interests of the practitioner members, maintaining an active speaker's bureau and educating the membership about direct psychological services.
- 3) **Program** Committee: This Committee shall have the responsibility for developing, publishing, and implementing a yearly plan of events and meetings for the membership. Under the direction of the Executive Committee, this Committee will plan a balance of social and professional events.
- 4) **Continuing Education** Committee: This Committee shall be responsible for communicating with and ensuring compliance with the American Psychological Association's requirements for sponsoring APA approved Continuing Education credits, for the Association's programs.
- 5) **Scientific, Academic and Student Affairs** Committee: This Committee will represent to the Executive Committee the interests and concerns from those members who function primarily in the research and/or academic sector. The Committee is responsible for identifying issues, communicating these directly to the Executive Committee, proposing programs and events which reflect the interests of the research/academic members, and educating the membership about the science of psychology.
- 6) **Ethics** Committee: This Committee will plan at least one three CE (APA approved continuing education credits) ethics program, biennially, to fulfill Pennsylvania's Psychologist licensure requirement. This Committee will provide at least one ethics article for the Newsletter annually, and serves in a consulting role when ethics questions arise from the membership of the Association.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

A. Amendment of the Bylaws shall be made by a mail ballot, electronically or by post. The polls shall be declared closed thirty (30) days after the mailing date of the ballots. The amendment must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the members who have voted.

B. The Executive Committee of LVPCA is authorized to review, approve, or reject for cause proposed amendments to the Bylaws, and amendments to the Bylaws will be presented to the membership only with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Amendments may be submitted to the Executive Committee for its approval by any member of the Executive Committee or by petition of five (5) percent of the membership. The proposal for Bylaws amendments shall contain the proposed amendment, the section being amended, and the reasons for purpose for the amendment. Where the issue is a controversial one, the thinking of those opposed to the amendment also should be summarized.

ARTICLE XI. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of the Association, its assets shall be transferred to the Pennsylvania Psychological Foundation.

Approved 1/18/91

Change to Section IX B.9 Approved March 1993

Change to Section III 5.2 Approved March 1993

Revisions Approved September 1997

Revisions to Ethics Committee and Clauses Approved April 1998.

Addition to Article III 4 Approved October 1999

Revisions to Article V Section 8 Approved October 1999

Revisions to Article III Sections 1, 2, 2b, 2c, 3, 4 and 5 Approved August 2004

Revisions to Article I, II, IV and IX approved August 2008

Revisions to, and additions to, Article III approved August 2008

Addition to Article VII of Sect 4.5 approved August 2008

Revisions Approved October 1, 2017