

Constitution and Bylaws

North Carolina Council of the Blind

Our mission is to promote awareness, education, employment and access to public accommodations for all blind and visually impaired citizens of North Carolina. To this end, we believe that visually impaired persons can contribute to society and lead productive and independent lives with dignity.

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Preamble

We, the members of the North Carolina Council of the Blind Inc., having been granted a charter on February 29, 1984, by the North Carolina Department of State and being affiliated with the American Council of the Blind, do hereby bind ourselves together to promote opportunities of social, economic and educational equality of the blind and visually impaired with society as a whole, to inform blind persons of the issues concerning their well-being and to acquaint the public with the basic attitudes for upholding the dignity, equality and independence of blind and visually impaired citizens.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the “North Carolina Council of the Blind, Inc.”

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

To promote the interests and general welfare of the blind and visually impaired and to engage in such activities as are deemed advisable to that end.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNANCE

Governance of the Council shall be shared by three entities - the Members, the Board and the elected and appointed committees - as provided in the Constitution, Bylaws and policies of the Council.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Any person at least sixteen (16) years of age who resides in North Carolina and who is in accord with the purpose and goals of this organization is eligible to apply for membership, provided that at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the total membership shall be blind or visually impaired. The terms blind and visually impaired shall conform to the definitions of blindness

for the Blind in determining the eligibility of applicants for the programs and services administered by and/or provided by the Division of Services for the Blind.

- A. Any applicant for membership may be accepted by a majority vote of the affiliate to which he/she applies or by a majority vote of the membership in convention assembled or by a majority vote of the Board.**
- B. Any member of the North Carolina Council of the Blind who takes up residence outside North Carolina may retain his/her membership in this organization until he/she has joined an affiliate of the North Carolina Council of the Blind.**
- C. By majority vote of the Board, any member may be reprimanded , suspended or expelled from this organization for releasing confidential information to nonmembers where such unauthorized release adversely affects the interests of the North Carolina Council of the Blind, as prescribed in Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised, "Trial of Members in Societies." All interest in the property of the North Carolina Council of the Blind retained or held by those persons suspended or ceasing to be members shall immediately be**

returned to the North Carolina Council of the Blind.

- D. The North Carolina Council of the Blind retains the sole authority to receive, reprimand, suspend or expel its members.**

ARTICLE V. AFFILIATES

Affiliates of the North Carolina Council of the Blind shall be subject to the following conditions and qualifications:

- A. Any organized group of eight (8) or more persons, in accord with the purpose and constitution as herein stated and desiring to become affiliated with the North Carolina Council of the Blind, shall submit to the President a list of its members with their addresses, whether sighted or blind, and its elected officials. A copy of its bylaws shall be submitted within six (6) months of acceptance of its application. The North Carolina Council of the Blind, either in convention assembled or by action of its Board, shall have the power to approve or reject the application for**

affiliation. All members of affiliates accepted under the charter of this organization shall be members of the North Carolina Council of the Blind.

- B. The President and Vice President and at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the membership of each affiliate shall be blind or visually impaired.**
- C. The Secretary of each affiliate shall forward to the membership chairperson of the North Carolina Council of the Blind the names, addresses, dues and preferred media format (Braille, large print, disk, cassette or e-mail) for all correspondence and publications within thirty (30) days of acceptance of affiliate's members, indicating whether sighted or blind. The membership chairperson shall forward to the American Council of the Blind such information within thirty (30) days of receipt of same.**

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

The officers of the North Carolina Council of the Blind shall be a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall be

elected by a majority vote of the members in convention assembled each odd-numbered year.

- A. The term of each newly elected officer shall commence with the first scheduled Board meeting following the convention in which he/she is elected. Both old and new officers shall attend the first scheduled Board meeting after the convention. Only new officers shall vote. All properties shall be turned over not later than this meeting.**
- B. The President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and Members-at-Large shall be blind or visually impaired.**
- C. No member shall be elected to the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms. This provision may be suspended for the office and election under consideration by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members in convention assembled.**
- D. The Treasurer shall be bonded within forty-five (45) days of election at the expense of the organization to an amount not less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the funds held by the Treasurer on the last day of the fiscal year.**

- E. The current President or his designee shall swear in each newly elected officer at the first scheduled Board meeting after the election.**

ARTICLE VII. BOARD

The Board of the North Carolina Council of the Blind shall consist of the following, as voting members:

Officers; two Members-at-Large elected from the general membership in convention assembled in each odd-numbered year, for a term of two (2) years; immediate past-President; President of each affiliate.

- A. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the Board shall be blind or visually impaired.**
- B. The Board shall advise the President and shall have charge of the business of the organization between meetings of the membership. The Board shall meet quarterly at the call of the President. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President or at the request of one-third (1/3) of the Board members.**

ARTICLE VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. From the general membership of the North Carolina Council of the Blind, there shall be the following committees:**
- 1. Legislative Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 - 2. Membership Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 - 3. Publicity Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 - 4. Constitution and Bylaws Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 - 5. Nominating Committee of at least three (3) members elected by the Board at the first scheduled Board meeting following the annual convention.**
 - 6. Credentials Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 - 7. Audit Committee of at least three (3) members elected annually by the members in convention assembled.**
 - 8. Resolutions Committee of at least three (3) members.**

9. **Policy and Procedures Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 10. **Johnny Brady Jones Benevolent Committee of at least three (3) members.**
 11. **Budget Committee of at least three (3) members elected by the Board at the first scheduled Board meeting following the annual convention.**
- B. All standing committees shall have a chairperson and vice chairperson. The President shall appoint all committees at the first scheduled Board meeting following the annual convention, with the exception of the Audit Committee which is elected by the members in convention assembled, and the Nominating Committee and the Budget Committee which are elected by the Board at the first Board meeting following the annual convention.**
- C. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees with the exception of the Audit Committee, Nominating Committee and Budget Committee. No elected officer shall serve on the Nominating Committee, or Audit Committee.**

D. Each committee member shall serve until replaced.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

The regular meeting of the membership shall be held at least annually. The Board may call a special meeting of the membership at any time if it deems such action necessary, provided that the membership is notified of the time, place and purpose of the meeting at least ten (10) days prior to the convening.

ARTICLE X. QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of fifty percent (50%) of members of the Board.

ARTICLE XI. VOTING

The manner of voting at the annual business meeting or any called meeting shall be decided upon by the members present at each meeting, except that ten

percent (10%) of the members present and voting may demand a vote by secret ballot on any issue.

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ARTICLE XII. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

All funds shall be deposited in a bank approved by the Board. All checks drawn on the account of the North Carolina Council of the Blind shall be issued on order of the President.

- A. Checks in an amount less than \$500.00 require only one authorized signature.**
- B. Checks in the amount of \$500.00 or more require two authorized signatures.**
- C. No person can sign a check payable to himself or to anyone in his/her household.**

ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY REFERENCE

Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be used as parliamentary reference by the North Carolina Council of the Blind.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS

A. This constitution may be amended at any meeting of the members in convention assembled by an

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affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting, provided that:

1. The proposed amendment shall have been signed

by not fewer than five (5) members; and

2. The proposed amendment shall have been presented to the general membership not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date on

which

final action is to be taken.

B. All other bylaws not in conflict with this constitution may be amended or adopted in the same manner as provided in Section A. of this article.

ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the North Carolina Council of the Blind, Inc., all funds, assets and properties shall be turned over to the American Council of the Blind.

**Constitution revised and adopted by the North
Carolina Council of the Blind in convention assembled
in Raleigh,**

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N.C., September 27, 2009.

Attest: Allen Casey, Secretary

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BYLAWS

1

AFFILIATE SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Secretary of each affiliate in the state shall forward a complete list to the membership chairperson of the names, addresses, telephone numbers and preferred media format of the affiliate's members, indicating whether blind or sighted, by February 15 of each year.

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NEW MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Any applicant for membership shall be required to

complete an application and pay the current dues, state and national.

- A. Members-at-large are those members who either do not have an affiliate in their area or do not belong to a local affiliate.**

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- B. The state shall donate seed money to get new affiliates started.**

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DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT

- A. The President shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation and progress of the North Carolina Council of the Blind and for conducting all meetings.**
- B. The President, upon approval of the Board, shall contract the services of any professional necessary to conduct the business of the North Carolina Council of the Blind.**
- C. Not less than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the annual convention, the President shall have the responsibility to appoint a qualified individual who is familiar with and who has available to**

him/her an updated copy of Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised, to serve as Parliamentarian during the business meeting.

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- D. The President shall send to each Board member an agenda at least ten (10) days prior to any Board meeting, except the post-convention Board meeting.**
- E. The President may, with the advice and consent of the Board, appoint an assistant to the Secretary and/or Treasurer.**
- F. The President, upon approval of the Board, shall appoint any committee necessary to fulfill a special task.**

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DUTIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS

- A. The First and Second Vice Presidents shall assist the President in any organizational matters deemed necessary.**
- B. In the absence of the President, the First Vice**

President shall preside at meetings of the membership and of the Board. Likewise, in the absence of the President and the First Vice President, the Second Vice President shall preside at meetings of the membership and of the Board.

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DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

In addition to the usual duties of such office, the Secretary shall:

- A. Furnish to each affiliate and members-at-large a summary of all conventions and/or meetings of the Board within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of said conventions and/or meetings.**
- B. Maintain a roll of certified voting members of each affiliate and of members-at-large.**

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DUTIES OF THE TREASURER

The duties of the Treasurer shall be the usual duties of a financial fiduciary, including:

- A. Preparing quarter-end financial statements and presenting statements to the quarterly meetings of the Board.**
- B. Preparing annual financial report and presenting report to the annual convention business session.**
- C. Issuing reimbursements of authorized and**

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- properly documented expenses incurred on behalf of the North Carolina Council of the Blind.**
- D. Maintaining records of all expense payments and reimbursements.**

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DUTIES OF THE BOARD

- A. All contracts for services, professional or otherwise, shall require a majority vote by the Board.**
- B. The Board may be polled by mail and/or by telephone by the President or the Vice Presidents.**

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DUTIES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

- A. The Audit Committee shall submit a report to the Board by January 31 of each year.**
- B. The Treasures of the local affiliates shall submit the financial report for the preceding year on**

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the form provided by the Secretary. These forms will be mailed to the President of each affiliate. Upon receipt of this information, the Treasurer shall submit the completed financial report form to the Audit Committee.

- C. Each affiliate is required to have two signatures on any and all accounts.**

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DUTIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON

- A. The Membership Chairperson shall explore opportunities to recruit new members and to establish new chapters.**
- B. The Membership Chairperson shall forward to the Treasurer, upon receipt, the names and dues of all new members.**

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DUTIES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Budget Committee, in consultation with the

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Treasurer, shall present a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board for approval not less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual business meeting.

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DUTIES OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. The Nominating Committee shall hold a candidates' forum not later than the afternoon immediately prior to the annual business meeting.**
- B. The Nominating Committee shall present to the annual business meeting a candidate or slate of candidates for each election.**

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BOARD MEETING REIMBURSEMENTS

When funds are available, the North Carolina Council of the Blind shall reimburse all approved expenses of;

A. Affiliates' officers and/or designated representatives in attendance at meetings of the

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Board.

B. Members who serve on standing committees and who attend meetings of the Board.

Bylaws revised and adopted by the North Carolina Council of the Blind in convention assembled in Raleigh, N.C., September 27, 2009.

Attest: Allen Casey, Secretary

