

**Indiana Chapter
Of
Association for Education and Rehabilitation
Of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

BYLAWS (10/27/2020)

ARTICLE I. NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be Indiana Chapter of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Section 2. The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired shall hereafter in these Bylaws be referred to as the Association.

Section 3. The Indiana Chapter of the Association shall hereafter in these Bylaws be referred to as the Chapter.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Chapter shall be to render all possible assistance in the promotion, development, and improvement of all phases of education and rehabilitation of individuals who are blind or visually impaired of all ages in the state of Indiana. This shall be accomplished through:

Section 1. Increasing public understanding of the social and economic gains to individuals and to society through providing opportunities for all individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become self-sufficient, self-supporting, and contributing members of society.

Section 2. Providing a forum on an international, regional, and local level for the discussion of all issues relating to services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and the prevention of visual impairments and providing conferences and seminars relating to this purpose.

Section 3. Encouraging an interdisciplinary approach to program or services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired through the maximum use of knowledge and skills of all related professionals.

Section 4. Fostering research to advance knowledge and skills for the improvement of services to all individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Section 5. Assisting in the development of professional standards for personnel engaged in providing specialized programs and services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Section 6. Assisting in the development of professional standards for specialized programs serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Section 7. Initiating and cooperating with other groups in the development of programs of social action for the benefit of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Section 8. Increasing public understanding of the nature and cause of visual impairment and its impact on individuals and society.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility. All persons, agencies, and/or organizations who are members in good standing of the Association and who live or work within the state of Indiana are eligible for membership in this Chapter. Any chapter member who resides outside of Indiana, may request of the Association to remain a member of the Indiana Chapter.

Section 2. Non-Discrimination. No persons, agency, or organization otherwise eligible shall be denied membership in the Chapter on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

Section 3. Types of Memberships. The memberships in the Chapter shall consist of individual and institutional memberships that will be renewable annually.

3.1 Individual Membership. Categories for individual membership shall be as follows:

3.1.1 Regular: Any person may apply for regular individual membership and submit the appropriate fee for annual dues to the Association Central Office or the Chapter. Regular members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.2 Retired: A person who has retired from full-time employment in service to individuals who are blind or visually impaired shall be eligible for regular membership at reduced cost. Retired members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.3 Clerical/Support: Any person whose occupational status is clerical, secretarial, or is in support of professional personnel and who is employed by any organization serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired shall be eligible for Clerical/Support membership status in the Association at reduced cost. Clerical/Support members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.4 Students: Students who are enrolled full-time or part-time in courses of higher education shall be eligible for membership at reduced cost. Student members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.5 Transitional: Any individual who has completed their education and are newly entering their career. Upon graduation, current student members are eligible for a one-year Transition Member category. Transitional members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.6 Associates: Any person interested in supporting services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired but who is not employed in a position within this field may apply for Associate membership status at reduced cost. The Associate Members shall receive all privileges of membership except for voting or holding office. The Associate Members shall have the privileges of serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.1.7 Same Household: Same household members are individuals residing in the same household as a current AER Regular Member. Same household members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association. Those who hold the same household membership receive a reduced price on membership.

3.1.8 Life Members: Anyone who holds a life membership with AER shall receive all privileges of membership. Life members shall have the privileges of voting, holding office, serving on committees, and any other privileges developed by the Association and shall receive all publications of the Association.

3.2 Institutional/Corporate: Institutional membership shall be available to agencies, organizations, schools, service clubs, or other similar entities wishing to offer support to the Association. The Board of Directors shall be empowered to establish categories within the Institutional membership. Institutional members shall receive one set of Association publications annually.

Section 4. Membership Fees. The Association Board of Directors shall establish dues for individual and institutional membership. The Chapter shall not charge any amount in excess of the Association dues amount.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Chapter shall be a president, a president-elect, a secretary, treasurer and past-president.

Section 2. Qualifications of Officers. Any individual voting member of the Chapter shall be eligible to serve in any office. No two offices may be held concurrently by the same person.

Section 3. Elections. The office of president of the Chapter shall be filled by succession of the president-elect. The membership shall elect a president-elect, a secretary, and a treasurer. The elections shall be held in January on the even number years.

Section 4. Term of Office. The term of office for all officers shall be two years and shall commence on March 1st of the election year.

Section 5. Vacancies. In the event of a vacancy in the office of president, the president-elect shall serve the remainder of the term as acting president and upon completion of said term shall assume the presidency in normal order. In the event of a vacancy in the office of president-elect, the board should arrange for a special election immediately. In the event of a vacancy in both the offices of president and president-elect, the board should arrange for a special election immediately. In the event of vacancy in any other offices, the Chapter Board of Directors may appoint a replacement from its own board body or the general membership for the remainder of the term. If a vacancy occurs, the President should notify AER by email within a week.

Section 6. Duties of Officers. Subject to the control of the Board, all officers shall have such authority and perform such duties in the management of the Chapter as may be provided by the Board of Directors and these Bylaws and, to the extent not so provided, as generally pertain to their respective offices. The Board may require any officer to give security for the faithful performance of those duties.

- 6.1 The President shall preside at all meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors. The President will set time and dates of future board meetings. The President will provide the bylaws to the board members

6.1.1 Other General Duties May Include:

There are several general duties that are crucial to the successful operation of the Chapter and to the smooth transitions of authority. General duties of the Chapter President:

- Understand and communicate the information contained within this document, the Bylaws, and the Chapter Affiliate Agreement.
- Acquire from the immediate Past President: records, current unresolved issues and any historical information necessary to fulfill the role. (If chapter records are not received within 30 days, contact the immediate Past President to request the records).
- Facilitate final decisions by the Board or Executive Committee regarding the operation of the Chapter.
- Assist the Chapter Board with formulating policy, directing chapter operations and developing procedures and programs.
- Prepare and distribute an agenda for all meetings.
- If the Chapter Secretary cannot be present to take minutes, the President should appoint a suitable substitute.
- Prepare the annual chapter budget in collaboration with the treasurer and submit for board approval.
- Prior to concluding term, review the responsibilities of the position and any ongoing projects with the President-Elect.
- Ensure the budget is established and adhered to for the chapter.
- Forward all current records to the incoming President within 30 days of ending the position or as defined by these Bylaws.
- Ensure that current, signed Chapter Affiliate Agreement is on file with AER.
- Ensure that chapter taxes are filed as applicable by law.
- Ensure that chapter Bylaws are on file with AER.

6.2 The President – Elect shall serve as the assistant to the President and, in the absence of the President shall preside at meetings of the membership and Board of Directors. The President – Elect shall serve as the chair of the Program Committee for the annual conference of the Chapter.

6.2.1 The following duties are essential for the efficient operation of the Chapter and for the smooth transition to office:

- Review and understand the President's responsibilities as outlined in these guidelines and the chapter's Bylaws.
- Substitute for the Chapter President. The President-Elect can act in the President's absence and perform other duties as required.
- Attend meetings. The President-Elect should attend the same meetings as the Chapter President as permitted by the chapter's Bylaws.
- Perform any other duties as assigned by the Chapter President. It is recommended that the President-Elect reviews the Bylaws for specific duties that might not be covered in the above description.
- Learn the operations of the chapter and ensure you understand the role, chapter history, board meeting planning and preparation and budgeting process.

6.3 The Past President will provide written or electronic copies of minutes, financial reports, bylaws, The Affiliate Chapter Handbook and the annual reports to newly elected/appointed board members and officers. Each Past President will be responsible for distributing from past terms a running history of official business of the board and chapter.

6.4 The Secretary shall be responsible for the records of the Chapter and shall have the minutes of the meetings prepared in proper order. The Secretary shall conduct routine correspondence as directed by the President and/or Board of Directors and shall see that records are transmitted to his/her successor at the completion of the term of office. The Secretary will chair the communication committee and report back to the board. The secretary will also keep attendance at the board meetings. The Secretary is responsible for contacting the National Office at least quarterly to obtain a list of Chapter members.

6.4.1 Secretary: General Duties

- Distribute meeting notices to appropriate parties.
- Take notes/minutes during meetings. Minutes are a record of the proceedings of all meetings and should include an accurate description of the topics discussed and decisions. Minutes should be approved by the Chapter President or some other designee as defined by the Bylaws.
- Ensure that chapter business records are maintained.
- Submit chapter leadership contact information to AER within thirty (30) days of final election.
- Complete and submit Annual Information sheet to AER.
- Transfer records to the new Chapter Secretary. All chapter records should be given to the incoming Chapter Secretary within thirty (30) days of ending the position or by the time period specified in these Bylaws.

6.5 The Treasurer shall be chief financial officer of the Chapter. The treasurer shall see that regular financial statements are prepared in accordance with recognized accounting principles and shall report to the Board of Directors prior to the annual conference and may, under the direction of the board, report to the full membership at the annual conference. The treasurer will prepare an annual report to present to the Board and then the membership. This report will be sent prior to the meeting in electronic format. The treasurer should submit forms required by IRS, the Secretary of the State, and any other documentation in order to maintain chapter 501(c)(3) not for profit status. The Treasurer will also chair the finance committee and report to the board.

6.5.1 Treasurer: General Duties

- The Chapter Treasurer maintains all financial records for the Chapter.
- Treasurer is responsible for the funds and securities of the Chapter; and keeps a full and correct account of receipts and disbursements.
- Render to the President and the Chapter Board of Directors an account of all transactions and financial position.
- Collect, deposit and expend funds for the Chapter as requested and authorized by the President in accordance with these Bylaws.
- Maintain Chapter financial records in a complete and accurate method. The treasurer should balance the bank account(s).
- Report any financial information or financial statements as requested by AER (**i.e. complete and email the chapter financial report to AER by 3/1 of each year: the form is**

provided by AER.)

- In collaboration with the Board President, ensures that the chapter's tax form is filed as required by the IRS. Chapter determines who completes the tax form.
- Ensures that current bank account (i.e. name and location) is communicated to AER via the Annual Report.
- Ensure that all Chapter bank account signatures are changed to the newly elected President and Treasurer. Bank accounts should have these two (2) as approved signatories.
- Transition all financial records to the incoming Treasurer within 30 days of ending the term or as defined by the chapter's Bylaws.
- Work with Chapter President to create an annual budget.

Section 7. Salaries/Compensations. All officers shall serve without salary or compensation.

ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Authority. There shall be a Board of Directors, also referred to in these Bylaws as the Board, which shall consist of the four officers of the Chapter, the Past-President and four directors of the Chapter.

Section 2. Directors. The directors shall be elected as provided for in Article VIII of these Bylaws. Each director shall hold office for a term of two years, which shall commence on March 1.

Section 3. Quorum. No business of the Board shall take place without a quorum present. A quorum shall be constituted by the presence of a majority of the currently occupied seats on the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Purpose. The purpose of the Board of Directors shall be to conduct the business of the Chapter between the business meetings held during the annual conference.

4.1 Members at Large: General Duties

- Assist and support the officers of the Chapter in all aspects of Chapter planning and development as needed.
- Attend all meetings as required.
- Serve on committees as appointed or approved by Chapter President and others.
- Ensure compliance with the Bylaws and proper procedures of governance.
- Communicate and share meeting minutes with the chapter members.
- Share issues and concerns expressed by chapter members during Board meetings.

Section 5. Meetings. The Board of Directors shall meet no less than twice a year. All meetings shall be announced to each member of the Board, in writing, at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed meeting. In event of an emergency, the two weeks' notice can be waived. Board meetings will be held in person, via phone, or virtually.

Section 6. Resignations. Any director of the Board may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board or the president or the secretary of the Board. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, and unless otherwise specified therein, no acceptance of such resignation shall be necessary to make it effective.

Section 7. Removal of Directors. Any one of the directors may be removed with cause by action of the Board, provided there is a quorum of the Board present and provided that written notice of removal is given to the director(s) so removed. If problems are identified with any board member, the concerns should be discussed with the AER Executive Director and the Chair of Chapter Presidents. They will facilitate communication between the AER Board of Directors and the Chapter Board regarding how to address the situation and how to handle the board member's removal, if necessary.

Section 8. Vacancies. Vacancies occurring on the Board will be filled as provided for in Article IV Sec. 5.

Section 9. Votes. Each member of the Board shall have the right to debate any question before the Board and other assembly of the Chapter and shall have one vote. No officer or director shall be permitted to assign the vote possessed to anyone else.

Section 10. Policy Implementation. The Board shall have the authority to develop and implement policies and rules governing the orderly business of the Chapter. No policy or rule resulting from the authority shall be in conflict with or supersede these Bylaws. Such policies and rules shall be the result of a majority vote of the Board, when a quorum is present, and shall appear as a policy or rule in the same form as found in the approved minutes of the Board. Policies and rules shall be made available in written or electronic form to the membership for review upon request and shall be posted or distributed at the annual meeting of the Chapter.

Section 11. Annual Report and Budget. The Board shall present at the annual conference to the membership a report, verified by the President and Treasurer and approved by a majority of the directors showing in detail the following:

- 11.1 the assets and liabilities as of the end of the fiscal year (January 1-December 31).
- 11.2 the principal changes in assets and liabilities during said fiscal period;
- 11.3 the revenue or receipts of the Chapter, both unrestricted and restricted to particular purposes, during said fiscal period;
- 11.4 the expenses or disbursements of the Chapter during said fiscal period; and
- 11.5 the number of members of the Chapter as of the close of the fiscal period together with a statement of increase or decrease in such number during said fiscal period, and a statement of the place where the names and places of residence of current members may be found.
- 11.6 The Annual Report shall be filed with the records of the Chapter and a copy entered into the minutes of the proceedings of the annual conference or meeting of the members. The Board shall review and make recommendations concerning the budget of the Chapter. The Annual Report will also be posted on the chapter website.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Special Committees. The President is authorized to appoint special committees to make studies or to consider specific questions related to the work of the Chapter. He/she shall designate a chairperson for all committees he/she appoints except as otherwise provided in other sections of this Article. He/she may appoint special committees on his/her own initiative or at the request of the Board or by a majority vote of the membership.

Section 2. Standing Committees. The Chapter shall have the following committees: Bylaws, Program, Nominating, Legislative, Membership, Finance, and Communications.

- 2.1 Bylaws Committee. The Committee will be composed of a minimum of three (3) members. It will review, draft, and submit to the membership proposed revisions and/or amendments to the Bylaws of the Chapter.
- 2.2 Program Committee. The Committee shall be composed of members along with the President Elect serving as the chair of the Program Committee. The principal tasks of the committee are to

plan and prepare, with the full assistance of the Board for the next annual conference. As subcommittee of the Program Committee, the Awards Committee shall consist of Program Committee Chair and at least one Board member. This subcommittee shall conduct the nomination process for the Chapter Awards. The names of the nominees and the nomination document will be presented to the full Board for a vote. In the event there is more than one nominee for any award, the nominee with a simple majority of the votes will be considered the award winner. The Awards subcommittee will select the type of award and the vendor.

- 2.3 Nominating Committee. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members.
- 2.4 Legislative Committee. The Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) members. This Committee shall study legislation at the federal and state levels, which is of significance to services for the benefit of individuals who are blind or visually impaired in Indiana. It shall make recommendations, where appropriate, to the Board and to the membership regarding such legislation. The Committee may make policy on behalf of the Chapter only when such statements have received prior approval by a majority of the Board.
- 2.5 Membership Committee. This Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) members. It shall develop and implement a membership recruitment and retention program for the Chapter.
- 2.6 Finance Committee. The Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) members with the Treasurer serving as the chair of the Finance Committee and the Audit Committee. All committee chairpersons should submit written budget requests to the Treasurer at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual Chapter meeting. Chapter members may submit budgetary proposals to the Board following the same guidelines. Upon approval of the Board, the budget shall be submitted to membership at the annual Chapter meeting and voted upon during the business session of the Chapter meeting. It must be accepted by a majority of the voting membership present. Adjustments in specific monetary amounts for designated budget items may be approved by the membership, but no additional budget items will be accepted from the floor during the meeting. There will be a subcommittee called the Auditing Committee which will review all financial transactions of the chapter for the two calendar years and report their results back to the Board no later than 2/28 of an even numbered year. This subcommittee shall consist of the Auditing Committee Chair, and at least two

chapter members that shall be elected by the board at the October board meeting of an odd numbered year. The committee will review all financial transactions of the Chapter for the 2 prior calendar years and report their results back to the Board by 2/28 of following even numbered year.

2.7 Communications Committee. The Committee shall be composed of a minimum of two (2) members with the Secretary serving as the chair of the Communications Committee. Three principal tasks of the committee are to publish a quarterly newsletter; design, maintain and update the chapter website and social media accounts; and will insure the virtual meeting account is current. The Communications Committee will assist the Program Committee in preparing and posting or distributing materials needed for the annual conference as determined jointly by the committee chairs.

Section 3. Reports of Committee to Board. Each committee shall provide the Secretary with current list of its members, minutes of its meetings and any proposals that it makes.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Meetings. The Chapter, under the direction of the Board, shall provide for the membership an annual conference and business meeting.

- 1.1 Time and place. The time and place of the annual conferences, meetings, and business meetings shall be determined by the Board who shall properly notify the membership. To the extent possible, the place where the conference is held shall be centrally located to the membership.
- 1.2 Purpose. The purpose of the annual conference shall be to promote the purposes of the Chapter and the Association and the interests of its memberships. The purpose of the annual meetings shall be to conduct the business of the Chapter with the free participation of all individual member.
- 1.3 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called at any time by the Board or the Board shall entertain a request from any member or group of members for a special meeting of the Chapter. In the latter case, the Board may, after determining the appropriateness of such a meeting, schedule a date that is not in direct conflict with established annual meetings of the Chapter, Region or Association.

- 1.4 Non-Discrimination. The Chapter shall make every reasonable effort to schedule and hold its meetings and conferences in a location where all members can freely participate and be fully accommodated without discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, national origin, or handicapping condition.

ARTICLE VIII. ELECTIONS

Section 1. The President, upon assuming office, shall appoint a Nomination Committee consisting of a minimum of three (3) members.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall seek nominations for Officers and Board positions from the membership. The Nominating Committee shall then contact each nominee to determine if the nominees accept the nomination. Those nominees who accept their nomination must provide a vita describing their qualifications, including work history and activities in the field of work for the Blind and Visually Impaired to the Nominating Committee Chair. Each candidate's vita will be distributed to all membership by January 10th of the even numbered years.

Section 3. The Nominations Committee will conduct an election no later than February 1st of the even numbered calendar year. The Nominating Committee shall design and distribute a ballot to membership.

- 3.1 Tally of Voting. The Nominating Committee shall provide for an accurate tally of voting by the membership. Where a candidate for an Officer Position is unopposed, that candidate shall be declared and elected. Whenever there is more than one candidate for an Officer Position, an election must be held. A simple majority of the votes cast will constitute election to that Office. When there are only four candidates for the Board Positions, those candidates shall be declared elected. Whenever there are more than 4 candidates for the Board Positions, an election must be held. The four candidates with the most votes shall be declared elected. When the ballot is submitted to the membership, all positions will be listed with a candidate even if the position is unopposed.
- 3.2 In the event that no one candidate for an office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off ballot shall contain the names of the two candidates who receive the highest number of votes in the general election. This second ballot shall be transmitted to chapter members no later than one week after the closing of the initial election and returned within one week of transmission. A simple majority of the votes cast will constitute election to that office or position.

- 3.3 In the event of a tie in any run-off election, a in person or virtual coin toss will be conducted by the Nominating Committee with the candidates and a quorum of the board present to determine the winner.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

Section 1 These Bylaws may be amended. The amendment shall originate in one of the following manners:

- 1) submission by a petition to the Board of at least ten (10) voting members of the Chapter;
- 2) submission by a petition to the Board the Bylaws Committee; and
- 3) submission by a petition to the Board a majority vote of the Board.

Section 2. Notifications. A proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Board at least fifteen (15) days prior to consideration by the Board. Immediately upon approval by the Board the proposed bylaws will be submitted to the Association for approval. Upon approval from the Association, the proposed bylaws will be submitted to the entire membership of the Chapter no less than twenty (20) days prior to the final vote of the membership.

Section 3. Adoption of Amendments. Adoption of proposed amendments requires a quorum and affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership present in person or virtually at the Chapter business meeting.

ARTICLE X. QUORUM

A quorum at a regular business meeting shall be constituted by the presence of at least one-tenth of the entire voting membership in attendance at the annual conference or special business meeting.

ARTICLE XI. BUDGET AND FISCAL

Section 1. In addition to the Chapter membership dues, the Chapter may accept gifts or donations from interested individuals or groups and may conduct fund raising activities as approved by the Board.

Section 2. The Treasurer shall receive all income. All monies shall be deposited in accounts selected by the Treasurer and approved by the President and Board.

Section 3. Regular expenditures of the Chapter shall be made in accordance with a budget by the Board. All expenditures shall be paid by checks signed by the Treasurer or the President.

ARTICLE XII. PARLIMENTARY AUTHORITY

The Chapter, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or in the rules adopted by the Board, shall be governed in all of its meetings by parliamentary law as contained in Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised.