# Proposed OCB Bylaws

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# Bylaw 1: Membership

1.1 This organization offers three levels of membership: Voting Members, Associate Members, and Junior Members. Each category of membership carries its own rights, responsibilities, and privileges.

1.1.1 Voting Members

Voting membership is open to any individual aged eighteen (18) or older who demonstrates a genuine interest in OCB and its mission by regularly attending and actively participating in OCB and/or chapter meetings. Eligible individuals may apply for membership by following the procedures set forth by the Board and submitting the required dues. Voting members are entitled to all rights and privileges within the organization, including the ability to vote, serve on committees, and run for elected office.

1.1.2 Associate Members

Associate membership is available to individuals who have an interest in issues relating to blindness but who have not paid dues or completed a formal application for membership. Associate Members:

- Have no voting rights.

- May not serve on committees or run for elected office.

- Can receive newsletters and have access to the organization's informational list serve.

- May apply for full membership at any time should they choose.

1.1.3 Junior Members

Junior Membership is open to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and are in junior high or senior high school. Junior Members may participate in activities of the organization but do not have voting rights and may not hold elected office. They may participate as a non-voting junior board member to begin developing leadership skills. Junior Members shall pay dues as established by the Board of Directors. Upon graduation from high school or reaching the age of majority (18), Junior Members may apply for Regular Membership under the provisions of these bylaws.

1.2 Any member wishing to withdraw their application may do so by oral or written request to the Secretary.

1.3 Any Member shall be removed from the membership list when two (2) consecutive mailings, either print or e-mail, have been returned with no current contact information provided. The individual may be reinstated for membership in the OCB upon request provided dues are current and by providing current contact information to the Secretary.

1.4 A Member in Good Standing is defined as one who is current on membership dues, has up-to-date contact information on file, and supports the general purposes of the OCB.

**NOTE: Most of this bylaw came from the Constitution Article 2.**

# Bylaw 2: Dues

2.1 The annual dues for this organization shall be ten dollars ($10.00), which includes five dollars ($5.00) for OCB and five dollars ($5.00) for ACB national membership. Dues must be submitted to the OCB Treasurer by January 1 each year, with a thirty (30) day grace period.

2.2 Each chapter has their own due structure in addition to the state dues.

2.3 Junior member dues shall be five dollars ($5.00) of which one dollar ($1.00) is ACB national junior member fees, one dollar ($1.00) for OCB junior member fees, and three dollars ($3.00) for chapter fees and are due to the OCB's treasurer by January 1 with a thirty (30) day grace period.

2.4 The OCB does not prorate dues for partial-year membership. Dues can be paid anytime during the year; however, only those members who pay dues prior to March 1 will be included on the membership list for ACB.

**NOTE: Some of this bylaw came from the Constitution Article 2.**

# Bylaw 3: Duties of Officers

3.1 There shall be five executive officers consisting of: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

3.1.1 President

The President shall be the chief administrative officer of the OCB and shall be charged with the responsibility of:

A. Carrying out the policies and programs of the Board.

B. Presiding over conventions and meetings of the Board.

C. Representing the OCB as one of the official delegates to the American Council of the Blind convention (in person or virtual).

D. Appointing Standing Committee chairs and other committee chairs as needed.

E. Representing the OCB whenever necessary or desirable.

F. Appointing any unexpired Board positions until the next election.

3.1.2 First Vice President

Duties of the First Vice-President shall include:

A. Assume leadership in the President's absence: perform the duties and responsibilities of the President whenever the President is absent, unavailable, or unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the office; ensure continuity of leadership and organizational functions during such times.

B. Support the President and the organization by assisting the President in carrying out organizational goals, programs, and initiatives, and serve as a key advisor and partner to the President in decision-making.

C. Serves as coordinator for the annual convention. Assists committee chair(s) in all aspects of convention planning, including locating and securing the site, the convention program planning, scheduling, logistics, overseeing registration, accommodations, and related details. Work with committees, officers, and members to ensure a successful event.

D. Actively engage in leadership training and skill development to prepare for potential future service as President; gain experience by participating in committees, projects, and organizational events and serves as mentor to the Junior Board Member Representative.

E. Work closely with the President to understand all aspects of the office to be prepared to assume the role of President at the conclusion of the current President's term or in the event of an unexpected vacancy.

3.1.3 Second Vice President

A. Assist the President and First Vice President in carrying out organizational goals and activities. Perform assigned duties that contribute to the effective operation of the organization.

B. Serves as the parliamentarian for the organization, providing guidance on rules of order and proper meeting procedures; Ensure that meetings are conducted fairly, efficiently, and in accordance with the organization's bylaws and parliamentary authority.

C. Be prepared to assume additional leadership responsibilities as needed.

D. Support the organization's long-term stability through active participation and mentorship.

3.1.4 Secretary

A. The Secretary shall keep a record of all convention proceedings and minutes of all Board meetings and prepare organizational correspondence as needed.

B. The Secretary shall work with the Treasurer in making sure the organization's yearly 990 form is completed and filed.

C. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the ACB AMMS Database up-to-date and reporting information by ACB's deadline of March 1.

D. The Secretary shall work with the Treasurer to keep an internal database up to date with members contact information and communication preferences.

3.1.5 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

A. Be the custodian of all monies and commercial papers of the OCB.

B. Be bonded at the expense of the OCB to an amount which shall never be at any time less than the amount held by the Treasury.

C. Keep an accurate written record of each financial transaction.

D. Make a complete financial report at the convention(s) and to the Board. All financial reports shall be open to any Member in Good Standing.

E. Any non-budgeted expenditures above $150 should be submitted in writing for Board approval prior to payment or purchase.

F. Supply the Secretary with a list of the registered members at each convention.

G. Work with Secretary in making sure all federal and state required documents are submitted in a timely fashion.

H. Chair the Budget Committee.

**NOTE: Several parts of this bylaw came from the Constitution Article 4.**

# Bylaw 4: Powers and Duties of the Board of Directors

4.1 The Board of Directors, consisting of the five executive officers, four (4) directors (one serving as Director of Public Relations), along with a Junior Member Representative (non-voting), shall be the governing body of this organization.

4.2 The Board is responsible for carrying out the policies and programs adopted by the membership at the annual convention.

4.3 The Board is responsible for insuring the efficient functioning of all officers and committee chairpersons as well as overseeing the planning of all regular conventions and all special conventions which may be called.

4.4 It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors, including officers, to have regular attendance at all Board meetings. Any member who fails to attend more than two (2) consecutive meetings without prior approval of the Board shall cease to be a member of the Board, and the unexpired term shall be filled as outlined in these Bylaws (reference 3.1.1.F.)

4.5 Duties of Other Board Members

4.5.1 Directors

A. Assisting in the decision-making of the board both physically and procedurally.

B. Serve as representative of the membership and actively advocate the mission of OCB.

C. Each director shall act in the best interest of the organization and its entire membership, rather than based on personal preferences or individual interests.

D. Each director shall chair or serve on a committee.

4.5.2 Director of Public Relations

A. Shall periodically issue press release statements promoting public awareness of the abilities of blind individuals, correct misconceptions, and enhance the visibility and reputation of the OCB and blind community.

B. Shall draft statements and social media posts for outreach and recruitment.

4.5.3 Junior Member Representative

A. Attend all meetings and be involved in discussions.

B. Learn and observe Robert's Rules of Order.

C. Bring forth ideas from the Junior Membership.

4.5.4 Past President

The Past President, if any, serves in an ex-officio manner and shall chair the nomination committee.

4.6 Meeting and Voting Procedures

A. The board of this organization shall conduct all business according to Robert's Rules of Order Revised.

B. If an urgent matter arises between regularly scheduled quarterly board meetings that requires board action or a vote, the Board of Directors may be polled via email, text, or phone.

**NOTE: Most of this bylaw came from the Constitution Article 4.**

# Bylaw 5: Standing Committees

5.1 The President will appoint the chairs for the following standing committees for the ensuing year:

- Membership

- Fundraising

- Resolutions

- Constitution and By-laws

- Convention Committee

5.2 Other standing committees are the Budget and Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, and the Nominating Committee, chaired by the Past President.

5.3 Other committee chairs shall be appointed by the President as needed to conduct the business of the organization.

# Bylaw 6: Fiscal Year

6.1 Each fiscal year of this organization shall begin on January 1 of the calendar year and end on December 31 of the same calendar year.

6.2 Newly elected officers shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the convention. During the following quarter, the Budget and Finance Committee shall begin preparing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, with the goal of having it approved prior to the start of the new fiscal year. Once adopted by the Board of Directors, the budget may not be amended except by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

6.3 Annual dues for the OCB are due by January 1st with a grace period of thirty (30) days. Dues pay for national and state dues. Dues can be accepted on a non-prorated basis any time during the fiscal year; however, only those who have paid dues prior to March 1 will be added to the national ACB membership list for the year.

# Bylaw 7: Code of Conduct

7.1 OCB is committed to maintaining the integrity of its events by creating a welcoming, professional, safe, and respectful environment for all who attend and/or participate in its events. The term "events" shall include conventions, meetings, functions, whether in person or virtual, or any other gatherings sponsored or convened by the OCB. All participants at the OCB events are required to adhere to this Code of Conduct policy as drafted and adopted by the OCB membership at the convention. This policy defines prohibited conduct as including, but not limited to:

- Unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, genetic information, gender identification, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law, or disrespectful, offensive, and/or threatening conduct, verbal abuse, stalking, bullying, violence, or intimidation.

7.2 Any person who believes that he or she has experienced or witnessed behavior prohibited by this policy should report the conduct to the OCB executive officers verbally and follow up in writing.

7.3 Upon receipt of an allegation reported under this policy, the OCB will investigate, and the OCB executive officers will thereafter determine what action, if any, will be taken based on the circumstances. Such action may include banning the individual from the event where the conduct is determined to have occurred and any future events.

7.4 Nothing in this policy shall limit or preclude the free exchange of ideas and/or opinions so long as such exchange does not involve threats or other prohibited behavior as defined in this policy.