

# Bylaws

of the **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF SOCIAL WORKERS**

*As amended by the NASW Board of Directors effective January, 2024*



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**SOCIALWORKERS.ORG**



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## **ARTICLE I — NAME**

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The name of this corporation shall be “National Association of Social Workers.”

## **ARTICLE II — PURPOSES**

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The purposes of said corporation are—

- to promote the quality and effectiveness of social work practice in the United States through services to individuals, groups, and communities
- to further the broad objective of improving conditions of life in our democratic society through utilization of the professional knowledge and skills of social work and to expand through research the knowledge necessary to define and attain these goals
- to provide opportunity for the social work profession to work in unity toward maintaining and promoting high standards of practice and of preparation for practice and toward alleviating or preventing sources of deprivation, distress, and strain susceptible to being influenced by social work methods and by social action.

The Association shall at all times recognize and carry out a fourfold responsibility: (1) to promote activities appropriate to strengthening and unifying the social work profession as a whole, (2) to promote the sound and continuous development of the various areas of social work practice whereby the profession contributes to the meeting of particular aspects of human need, (3) to promote efforts on behalf of human well-being by methods of social action, and 4) to continuously take intentional actions to fight racism and oppression in all its forms as befits an anti-racist organization. To these ends, the Association shall formulate a program designed to attain its several objectives and shall so organize and use its resources as to maintain consistently a sound balance and integration of its general and special activities.

In furtherance and not in limitation of such purposes, the corporation shall have power

1. to improve and extend social work practice through
  - a. setting standards and establishing criteria for sound practice
  - b. conducting appropriate study and research
  - c. improving the nature, content, and extent of professional education
  - d. publishing experience in new and established areas of professional practice.
2. to establish principles and procedures for determining and certifying competence to practice by
  - a. setting standards for professional organization membership
  - b. participating in the definition of the nature of professional education and other qualifications for practice

- c. establishing standards for the total field and participating in programs for licensing, registration, certification, and appointment through civil service, as appropriate
  - d. devising ways and means by which tangible evidence, such as certificates or titles, including the use of the “ACSW” certification, may be given social work practitioners who have achieved designated levels of competence in social work practice.
3. to bring about optimal working conditions through establishment of personnel standards and practices.
  4. to improve the administration of social work services.
  5. to develop, promulgate, and enforce a *Code of Ethics* for social workers.
  6. to define the role, contribution, and place of each specialty’s area of concern within the practice of social work and to promote the sound development and integration of the several specialties.
  7. to delineate the nature of new, evolving areas of social work practice and to provide or seek opportunity for their development.
  8. to collaborate with other professional groups to ensure cooperative effort between the social work profession and other professions and groups with which social work is or may become associated.
  9. to interpret to the community the contribution of the professional social worker, including basic and specialized qualifications.
  10. to make studies and to take action in relation to social conditions.
  11. to assume responsibility for workforce planning and development for the range of personnel—professional, technical, and supporting—needed in the provision of social services.
  12. to strengthen human welfare throughout the world by participating in international social welfare activities and cooperating with members of the social work profession in other countries.
  13. to do anything and everything incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes.

## **ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP**

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### **A. Classes of Membership**

There shall be three classes of membership in the Association: regular members, associate members, and student members, as herein defined. Additional classes of membership in the Association may be established by the Delegate Assembly.

#### **1. Regular Members**

The following persons shall be eligible for regular membership in the Association:

- a. Any person who has completed before 1950 the prescribed course of study in, or after 1950 received a master's degree or a doctor's degree from a graduate school of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, prior to June 30, 1952, by the American Association of Schools of Social Work.
- b. Any foreign-degreed person residing in the United States (a) whose education and credentials are equivalent to those of other regular members as determined by the Board of Directors and (b) who subscribes to the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
- c. Any person who holds the baccalaureate degree, having completed an undergraduate program in social work that meets the criteria established by the Council on Social Work Education after 1975.
- d. Nationals of other countries who meet the above membership requirements (including graduation from a school of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education) shall be eligible for admission to the Association as regular members; such nationals who are members of the Association shall be eligible for all rights and privileges of regular members except that the Association shall not be obligated to provide for chapter organization or other local activities outside the United States, its territories, and possessions.

#### **2. Associate Members**

Associate members shall be eligible for all rights and privileges of regular members except those of holding national or chapter elective office or voting in national or chapter elections. After five years of continuous membership, associate members shall be granted the right to vote in national or chapter elections.

Any person who fulfills the following requirement shall be eligible for associate membership in the Association:

Any person who has a professional interest in, or is supportive of, the issues addressed by, or the client populations served by, the social work profession.

### **3. Student Members**

Any person who is enrolled as a full- or part-time student in a graduate or undergraduate social work degree program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (or having achieved steps toward accreditation as determined by the Board of Directors) shall be eligible for student membership in the Association. The Board of Directors shall establish a dues rate for students that shall be lower than the dues rate for regular members.

Student members shall be eligible for all rights and privileges of regular membership except holding national elective office other than such positions as are specifically designated to be held by students.

### **B. Code of Ethics Adherence**

The execution of an application for regular, associate, or student membership includes an agreement to abide by the *Code of Ethics* of the Association and to submit to proceedings for any alleged violation of the same.

### **C. National–Local Membership Relationship**

A member of the Association who is a resident of or employed in the United States, its territories, and possessions shall automatically become a member of an existing chapter. Provisions shall be made for participation in Association affairs of members outside the United States but the Association shall not be obligated to provide for chapter organization or other local activities outside the United States, its territories, and possessions.

### **D. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

The Association shall recruit and retain a diverse group of members who reflect the communities they serve. All recruitment and retention efforts shall demonstrate best practices in diversity, equity and inclusion, as those terms are defined by the NASW Board of Directors.\*

### **E. Termination of Membership**

The Board of Directors has the authority to establish reasons for termination of membership and the procedures for taking such action, which will be made available to the membership. A member who is not in arrears in payment of dues may resign from membership at any time by submitting a resignation in writing to NASW. A member who is in arrears for one month in payment of dues, during which time at least one notice in writing has been mailed to the last address of the member on the membership roster shall be dropped from membership, written notice of which action shall be sent to the last address of the member so dropped. A member whose dues are in arrears shall not be eligible to exercise the privileges of membership.

### **F. Reinstatement of Membership**

Provision shall be made by the Board of Directors of the Association for an equitable policy of reinstatement of members in the Association, taking due account of the membership standards of the Association and the professional obligations of the members.

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\* See Endnotes for definitions.

### **G. Reduced Dues Rate**

A reduction in dues below the full regular member rate shall be granted to members of any group defined by the NASW Board of Directors as entitled to a reduction in dues. The dues rates for members of such groups shall be approved by the NASW Board.

## **ARTICLE IV – DELEGATE ASSEMBLY**

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### **A. Purpose**

The Delegate Assembly is the means through which the members of the Association shall exercise their ultimate responsibility for the broad professional and social policy and priority determination of the Association. The membership shall act through the Delegate Assembly in all matters except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

### **B. Powers**

The Delegate Assembly shall have the full authority of the membership, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

1. It shall take final action on amendments to these bylaws pertaining to Delegate Assembly and the NASW national/chapter dues allocation, as authorized by Article XV.
2. It shall also take final action on the following:
  - a. determination of the Association's position on broad social and professional issues
  - b. Determination of major program priorities of the Association.
  - c. Review and consideration within one year of the Delegate Assembly of an implementation plan from the NASW Board of Directors relating to the program priority goals developed at that Delegate Assembly which includes identified outcomes: review and consideration in the subsequent three years of annual reports from the NASW Board of Directors summarizing the implementation of the plan.
  - d. Determination of the guiding policies of the Association.
  - e. Establishment of professional standards for the field of social work in areas such as licensing and the *Code of Ethics*.
  - f. Approval of the *Code of Ethics*, which must be adhered to by members or applicants for membership.
3. Matters shall be brought to the attention of the Delegate Assembly
  - a. By recommendation of the NASW Board of Directors.
  - b. By petition filed with the NASW Board of Directors by three percent (3%) of the voting members of record of the Association in good standing from at least five chapters. Such written request shall be compiled and submitted in accordance with any applicable petition procedures that may be approved by the NASW Board of Directors, such procedures to include a process to determine the number of voting members of record.

- c. Chapters shall provide forums for chapter members to discuss policy issues and to encourage membership participation in the formulation of policy statements for submission to the NASW Board of Directors for placement on the Delegate Assembly agenda.
  - d. Policy matters not coming before the body through the foregoing procedures may be introduced while the Assembly is in session. The Delegate Assembly may direct the NASW Board of Directors to formulate such matters and submit them to the membership for discussion and action at a subsequent Delegate Assembly.
4. Final action may be taken by the Delegate Assembly only on proposals that have been submitted by the NASW Board of Directors in writing to each of the chapters and the delegates for membership study at least 90 days prior to the meeting of the Delegate Assembly.

### C. Composition

1. There shall be 200 elected delegates. There shall be at least one delegate for each chapter. One of the chapter delegates shall be the elected president of the chapter; in the event the president is unable to participate as a delegate, the chapter board of directors shall select one of its members as the chapter's first delegate. Consistent with the above, the number of delegates for each chapter, rounded off to the nearest whole number, shall be determined and allocated by the NASW Board of Directors, based on the ratio of the number of the full voting members of each chapter to the number of the full voting members of all chapters as shown by the records of the national office for the quarter ending June 30 prior to the election of delegates as provided for in section IV.E.
2. A chapter may elect an alternate delegate for each delegate position. Chapters entitled to a single delegate only shall be entitled to financial support for the expenses of an alternate, based on the formula for delegates.
3. At least every six years, the Delegate Assembly shall review the ratio of the number of delegates to the number of members and make any amendment that it considers appropriate to paragraph 1 above.
4. NASW Board members shall be delegates of Delegate Assembly, with voting privileges.
5. The NASW Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors from each chapter are delegates without voting privileges.
6. Except as provided in Paragraph 5, any person who is compensated for his or her services as an employee of the Association shall not be eligible to serve as a delegate or an alternate delegate.

#### **D. Voting**

The NASW Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors from each chapter are nonvoting delegates but shall be entitled to floor and microphone privileges. All other delegates are entitled to vote and have one vote on each matter.

#### **E. Election of Delegates and Alternates**

1. Each chapter will determine its election procedures, which shall be in keeping with the policies of the NASW Board of Directors.
2. Delegates and alternates shall be nominated to ensure a balanced representation of all geographic areas and population concentrations covered by the division and to provide a balanced delegation reflecting the ethnic minority distribution, gender distribution, sexual orientation distribution, and special interests of members of the chapter. Students shall also be considered.
3. Each chapter shall elect delegates and alternates for three-year terms starting two years before the Assembly and in keeping with the policies of the NASW Board of Directors. Candidates shall be, at a minimum, double slated. In specific circumstances where double slating is not feasible due to the unavailability of candidates, consideration will be given to the granting of chapter waivers by the NASW Board of Directors.

#### **F. Accountability and Responsibilities of Delegates**

In the exercise of their duties, members of the Delegate Assembly shall be fully informed about all the issues to be considered by the Assembly and shall exercise responsible financial judgment in their policy deliberations and voting. The responsibilities of the delegate shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. participating in sessions of the Delegate Assembly, except that delegates from any chapter that fails to meet affirmative action goals as established by the NASW Board of Directors shall be subject to loss of participation in the Delegate Assembly
2. disseminating information on the Delegate Assembly process and the solicitation of membership opinions on issues and the development of position statements prior to the deadline for the submission of policy statements for the Delegate Assembly agenda
3. reporting to the chapter membership units and the chapter board of directors on the decisions and actions of the Delegate Assembly
4. being available to monitor and advise the chapter and national units on the implementation of the Delegate Assembly actions.
5. reviewing and revising the structure and governance of the Delegate Assembly to increase its efficiency, effectiveness, and efficacy.

### G. Meeting

A meeting of the Delegate Assembly shall be held every three years at such time and place as shall be determined by the NASW Board of Directors, provided that notice of such meeting shall be given not less than 180 days prior to the date of the meeting. The transportation expense of delegates, NASW Board Members, the NASW Chief Executive Officer and Chapter Executive Directors attending the Delegate Assembly shall be reimbursed by the Association.

## ARTICLE V — OFFICERS

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A. The officers of the Association shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

### B. Duties

1. *President.* The President shall be the presiding officer of the Delegate Assembly, the NASW Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee and an *ex-officio* member of all committees and boards of related entities of the Association; shall be available to consult with the staff on Association matters between meetings of the NASW Board of Directors; shall represent the NASW Board of Directors between its meetings and shall report to the NASW Board of Directors all important interim actions; shall, in consultation with the NASW Board of Directors, appoint the chairpersons of all organizational units responsible to the NASW Board of Directors whose selection is not otherwise specified in the bylaws; and shall appoint all personnel of all organizational units responsible to the NASW Board of Directors whose selection is not otherwise specified in the bylaws, after consultation with the appropriate chairperson. Except with the approval of the NASW Board of Directors, the President shall not appoint one person to more than one post.
2. *Vice President.* The Vice President shall fulfill the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence or disability. The Vice President shall undertake any duties assigned by the President.
3. *Secretary.* The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee, as well as all nonfiscal records of the Association.
4. *Treasurer.* The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt, deposit, disbursement, and withdrawal of all funds of the Association and shall render periodic financial statements to the NASW Board of Directors and Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee.

**C. Term of Office**

The officers shall be elected by the membership to serve for terms of three years each and shall not be eligible to immediately succeed themselves in the same office. The first officers to be elected under these amended Bylaws may be scheduled to serve terms of less than three years to permit an orderly establishment of the three year term provision. Officers may be selected to serve in another officer position or otherwise on the NASW Board of Directors for the term following the expiration of their term of office. Officers or Board Members will be permitted to run for a consecutive term in a different position, but in no case will an officer be permitted to serve in any capacity for a third consecutive term on the NASW Board of Directors. Provision shall be made for the election of the President of the Association one year in advance of his or her assumption of the duties of the office. This person shall be known as the President-Elect. In the event of the death, disability, or resignation of the President-Elect before he or she takes office as President, the person receiving the next largest number of votes for the office of President shall assume the office and duties of the President-Elect.

**D. Vacancies**

Vacancies, with the exception of the office of President, occurring before the expiration of terms of office shall be filled by the NASW Board of Directors, and persons so chosen shall serve until the term expires.

## **ARTICLE VI — BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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### **A. Powers**

The NASW Board of Directors of the Association shall exercise all the powers of the Association, deciding on policy and priorities, policy implementation, and the equitable allocation of financial resources under the broad policy and priority guidelines established by the membership of the Association in the meetings of the Delegate Assembly.

### **B. Composition**

The NASW Board of Directors shall consist of the following members:

1. The four officers and the President-Elect of the Association. The President-Elect shall serve for a term of one year before assuming the office of President. During the one-year term, the President-Elect shall be available to work in close collaboration with the President and shall perform duties as assigned by the President.
2. Two members at large elected by the full membership of the Association. One of the two at large Board members should be elected from a CDF chapter.
3. Two student members, elected by the total voting membership, shall sit on the NASW Board. One of these shall be an undergraduate social work student and one shall be a graduate student in a master's degree program in social work. Undergraduate and graduate student candidates must be matriculating social work students for at least one of the two years of their term on the NASW Board of Directors. The school of social work attended must be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or have achieved steps toward accreditation as determined by the NASW Board of Directors.
4. Thirteen members, each of whom shall be elected by the membership of each of the 13 regions provided in Article VIII.A.

### **C. Term of Office**

The term of office of all NASW Board members shall be three years except for students whose terms shall be two years. NASW Board members may not serve two consecutive terms in the same position but may serve a consecutive term in another position as set forth in Article, V.C.

### **D. Vacancies**

Vacancies occurring before the expiration of terms of office shall be filled by the NASW Board of Directors. Persons so chosen shall serve until the expiration of the terms that they have been designated to fill.

### **E. Duties**

In accordance with the broad policy and priority guidelines established by the Delegate Assembly, the NASW Board of Directors shall be responsible for the following:

1. determination, coordination, and evaluation of the program of the Association, including study of alternative program possibilities and establishment of preferential ratings of such alternatives to guide in the allotment of Association resources
2. establishment and disestablishment of national committees and task forces depending on the policy and priorities of the total Association, definition of their functions, and allocation of specific assignments
3. determination and administration of the policies and procedures for disposition of problems that may arise affecting local organizations
4. representation of the Association in the community and maintenance of its relationship with other organizations
5. finances of the Association, including the rendering of an annual accounting to members concerning sources and amount of income and nature and amount of expenditures
6. membership policies and practices of the Association within the limits prescribed by these bylaws
7. personnel policies and practices of the Association within the limits prescribed by these bylaws
8. selection and employment of the Chief Executive Officer of the Association
9. provision at regular intervals for an evaluation and appraisal of operations in relation to fulfillment of Association goals
10. review and resolution of intraorganizational issues and problems
11. all other business of the Association in the fulfillment of the Association's purposes.

### **F. Meetings**

The NASW Board of Directors shall hold no fewer than four meetings in a given year, at such times and places as may be determined by the President. Reasonable notice of the time and place of each meeting shall be given to each member of the NASW Board. Any meeting may be conducted electronically, in whole or in part, if so directed by the NASW Board of Directors and if allowed by law.

### **G. Quorum**

A simple majority of the membership of the NASW Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

## **ARTICLE VII — EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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### **A. Powers**

The Executive Committee of the NASW Board of Directors shall be responsible for the affairs of the Association between meetings of the NASW Board of Directors.

### **B. Composition**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers and the President-Elect of the Association and four additional members of the NASW Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall be selected so as to reflect the ethnic minority distribution, gender distribution, sexual orientation distribution, and special interests of members of the Association. Students shall also be considered.

### **C. Term of Office**

Members of the Executive Committee other than officers shall serve for terms of one year.

### **D. Duties**

During the intervals between meetings of the NASW Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall have the powers of the NASW Board of Directors within the general policies, program, budget, and specific directions established by the NASW Board of Directors.

### **E. Meetings**

The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly or more often at the call of the President or on request of any four members of the Committee. Reasonable notice of the time and place of each meeting shall be given to each member of the Committee.

### **F. Quorum**

A simple majority of the Committee membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

## **ARTICLE VIII — NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

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### **A. Regions**

The NASW Board of Directors of the Association shall establish and revise as necessary 13 regions for the purpose of nomination and election of regional members to the NASW Board of Directors and to the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification. So far as practical each region shall consist of contiguous chapters containing approximately an equal number of members. Regions shall be reviewed by the Delegate Assembly every six years.

**B. Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification**

1. Election of Committee Members.
  - a. There shall be an elected Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification consisting of 13 persons, one elected within each region, whose alternates shall be in each case the candidates receiving the second largest number of votes in each region.
  - b. The term of office of the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification members shall be three years, and a Committee member other than an alternate shall not be eligible for reelection within one year of the expiration of his or her term on the Committee.
  - c. The Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification shall elect its own chairperson from among those serving in the second year of their terms.
2. Duties. The duties of the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification shall be:
  - a. to select at least two candidates for each position in the regular election of Association officers, NASW Board members, and Nomination and Leadership Identification Committee members as stated in these bylaws. The candidates shall be selected so as to reflect the ethnic minority distribution, gender distribution, sexual orientation distribution, geographic distribution, students, and special interests of the membership.
  - b. in the event the committee has received less than two qualified nominations and is unable to identify candidates to be slated for a Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification position, that position shall be filled by the NASW President in consultation with the committee.
  - c. to work closely with chapters and staff to develop a leadership roster to be used by the President of the Association for committee and task force appointments and to aid in the selection of candidates.
  - d. to meet at least annually to select candidates.
  - e. to certify completed ballots to the Secretary of the Association, who shall announce the candidates to the membership at least 30 days in advance of an election.
  - f. To receive nominations by petition: Within 30 days following the announcement of the candidates for a regular election, petitions that have signatures of the number of voting members of record from regions as designated below may be submitted in writing to the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification. Such written request shall be compiled and submitted in accordance with any applicable petition procedures that may be approved by the NASW Board of Directors, such procedures to include a process to determine the number of voting members of record. When nominations have been made by petition, the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification shall recertify the amended ballot to the Secretary of the Association:

1. Petitions for President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall include at least 450 signatures of the members entitled to vote representing five or more chapters.
2. Petitions for NASW Board Member at Large shall include at least 450 signatures of members entitled to vote.
3. Petitions for the regional members of the NASW Board and members of the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification shall include at least 50 signatures of the members entitled to vote representing the majority of chapters in the region from which the regional member is to be elected.
  - (a). Petitions for any office or offices may be submitted only on behalf of members whose names were previously submitted to the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification prior to the meetings at which the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification develops slates for those offices.
  - (b). The Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification shall notify the membership of the dates of the meetings at which the Committee proposes to develop the slates, at least 60 days before the meetings.
- g. To receive and consider nominations for student members of the NASW Board from chapters and student organizations.

### C. Elections

Elections shall be held through a ballot, to be sent to each member, listing the names of all persons nominated. The ballot for election of officers and NASW Board members shall be sent to each member not less than 40 days prior to the election to the address in the official files of the Association. Sending of the ballots and casting of the vote may be done by electronic mail if permitted by law.

1. Associate members with five or more years of continuous membership, student members, and regular members who are in good standing shall be entitled to vote in elections for national office of officers or NASW Board members selected by the entire membership. All such members in a region shall be entitled to vote in elections of the regionally elected members of the NASW Board and the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification.
2. A regionally elected national official who moves out of the region during his or her term of office automatically vacates the office, and the vacancy thus created shall be filled by a person living in that region in a manner provided for in paragraph 4 below.
3. Election of candidates to office shall be by a plurality of the total votes cast.
4. All vacancies for unexpired terms of officers or members of the NASW Board of Directors shall be filled by the NASW Board of Directors, except in the case of the President, where the vacancy shall be filled automatically

by the Vice President. In the case of regionally elected members, these appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the majority of presidents of chapters within the particular region.

#### **D. Removal**

Nonattendance by NASW Board members at three consecutive meetings of the NASW Board of Directors and nonattendance by officers at three consecutive Executive Committee and/or NASW Board of Directors meetings may be cause for removal. When such an officer or NASW Board member has been absent from the number of meetings designated above, the item of his or her retention may be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the NASW Board of Directors. At that meeting, the NASW Board may remove the officer or NASW Board member by a vote of a majority of the full NASW Board.

### **ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

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A. Committees and task forces shall report to the NASW Board of Directors and shall, within budget authorizations, create their own subunits as required to complete their assigned tasks. Bylaws-mandated committees include the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification; the National Ethics Committee; the National Program Committee; the National Finance Committee; a committee to develop, review, and monitor programs of the Association with respect to racism, to be known as the National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity; a committee to develop, review, and monitor programs of the Association that significantly affect women, to be known as the National Committee on Women's Issues; and a committee to develop, review, and monitor programs of the Association that significantly affect lesbian women, gay men, bisexual and transgender people, to be known as the National Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning + Issues. Additional committees and task forces may be created and abolished by the Association President with the advice and consent of the NASW Board of Directors as necessary to plan and review the goals and purposes of the Association.

B. Committees and task forces shall consist of NASW Board members and other members of the Association, except as otherwise provided in this Article. In making appointments, the President shall give consideration to diversity, equity and inclusion, as defined by the NASW Board of Directors\*, as well as special competence, geographic distribution, continuity of experience, term of service, chapter recommendations, and maximum use of Association resources. Service on the NASW Board of Directors, boards of related entities, committees, and task forces requires continuation of NASW membership in good standing.

NASW membership shall not be required for up to three members of the NASW Credentialing Committee, specifically for the credentialing professionals and the public member.

\* See Endnotes for definitions.

C. The Membership and Chapter Relations Committee is responsible for coordinating Association-wide activities related to chapter relations and services, membership services, and programs and activities. The committee is composed of eight members with a chair appointed by the President and other classes of membership designated by the NASW Board.

## **ARTICLE X — RELATED ORGANIZATIONS**

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The Association shall form and maintain related organizations as necessary to promote its general purposes and objectives. There shall be an annual accounting to the membership of the activities of these related organizations.

## **ARTICLE XI — MEETINGS OF MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION**

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### **A. Annual Meetings**

The annual meeting of the members of the Association for the election of officers and directors shall be held on such a day in May or June of each year as shall be determined by the NASW Board of Directors or the Executive Committee. **The meeting shall be held with an electronic option for NASW members in good standing.**

### **B. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the members of the Association may be called by the NASW Board of Directors or the Executive Committee and shall be called by the Secretary on written request by three percent (3%) of the voting members of record of the Association, provided that among those members are no less than 100 members from each region of the Association. Such written request shall be compiled and submitted in accordance with any applicable petition procedures that may be approved by the NASW Board of Directors, such procedures to include a process to determine the number of voting members of record. Such special meetings shall be held on such dates and at such times and places as shall be specified in the respective notices thereof.

### **C. Notice of Meetings**

Notice of meetings, whether annual or special, shall set forth the date, time, and place thereof. Such notice of meetings shall be provided no less than 10 nor more than 60 days before each meeting and shall be addressed to each member of the Association at his or her address as it appears on the records of the Association. Notices of adjourned meetings need not be given.

### **D. Quorum**

At any annual or special meeting of the Association, the presence of 25 members shall be necessary for and shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but less than a quorum shall have the power to adjourn a meeting, from time to time, without notice.

## **ARTICLE XII — CHAPTERS**

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### **A. Geographical Coverage**

Under the NASW Board established policy, no more than 56 chapters may be formed at various levels, including state, regional and or/other appropriate geographic designations. The Association shall support chapters as appropriate to promote its general purposes and objectives.

### **B. Purpose**

The chapter is constituted to advance the programs and policies of the Association on the local level and for the purpose of advancing and protecting the social work profession. The chapter is a programmatic unit of the Association at the local level. The program of the chapter shall be related to the basic unified program plan of the Association, taking into consideration the special needs and interests of the members within the chapter.

### **C. Membership**

All members of the Association in the designated geographic area of a chapter shall automatically be members of that chapter. A member may elect whether he or she wishes to affiliate with the chapter in the area of residence or in the area of employment. In special circumstances as determined by the NASW Board of Directors a member may elect to affiliate with a chapter within which the member neither lives nor works.

### **D. Organization**

1. *Subunits*: A group of members of a chapter may petition the chapter board of directors to be recognized as a subunit of the chapter for the purpose of carrying on program activities. The NASW Board shall set guidelines for the establishment of subunits.
2. *Chapter Officers and Directors*: Each chapter shall have sufficient officers to discharge the functions as defined in the chapter Charter. The officers and directors are to be elected from the membership of the chapter to represent all geographical areas and population concentrations covered by the chapter and to provide a balanced membership group reflecting the ethnic minority, gender and sexual orientation distribution, students, and special interests of the members of the chapter.
3. *Charter*: Each chapter shall have a Charter approved by the NASW Board. The Charter provides for the decision-making process and authority of the chapter, which is consistent with these bylaws and meets the standards and policies established by the NASW Board, and it provides authority to the chapter for the use of the NASW name and logo. A chapter that is not in compliance with the established standards and polices will be subject to sanctions as provided in Article XII.H.

4. *Nominations and Elections:* Each chapter shall provide for a Committee on Chapter Nominations and Leadership Identification that is either elected directly by the membership or is comprised of members of the chapter board of directors appointed by the chapter president and affirmed by the chapter board. The Committee on Chapter Nominations and Leadership Identification shall have nomination and election procedures, and procedures for their appointment, that meet standards established by the NASW Board of Directors.

#### **E. Program**

The programs, policies, and actions taken by the chapter shall be consistent with the official position and policy of the Association.

#### **F. Chapter Financing**

1. Designated funds shall be provided for each chapter to promote the programs of the Association in the following manner, including:
  - a. rebates in accordance with Article XVI—Dues and Other Income,
  - b. supplemental grants at the discretion of the NASW Board of Directors, and
  - c. monies raised by the chapter in accordance with the accepted procedures of the Association.

#### **G. Multi-Chapter Alliances**

1. Chapters, with approval from the NASW Board of Directors, may initiate and develop multi-chapter alliances to achieve the Association's programmatic goals and purposes.
2. In accordance with the NASW Board of Directors' responsibility to ensure an equitable allocation of financial resources in keeping with the priorities of the Delegate Assembly, the NASW Board may allocate funds for the purpose of encouraging chapters to form multi-chapter alliances. These alliances must meet criteria established by the NASW Board to ensure an effective level of member services.

#### **H. Accountability**

1. Chapters shall be accountable to the NASW Board of Directors through review of chapter activities and chapter use of Association resources. Review will be in accordance with the program and policy objectives of the Association, with appropriate sanctions for noncompliance.
2. The NASW Board shall establish policies and procedures for sanctioning a chapter for noncompliance, which policies shall also provide for an appeal process. Sanctions may include withholding rebates and other corrective action(s) up to and including revocation of a chapter's Charter.

**I. Staff**

1. All chapters shall be staffed as their resources permit.
2. The National Office has the responsibility for hiring and supervising chapter executive directors. The executive director has responsibility for hiring and supervising chapter staff in keeping with the policies approved by the NASW Board of Directors.
3. Personnel practices, including the setting of qualifications and evaluation of chapter staff, shall be in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the NASW Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XIII — STAFF**

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The NASW Board of Directors shall have the power to create such staff positions as are necessary for the conduct of the Association’s business. It shall appoint the NASW Chief Executive Officer who, under the supervision of the NASW Board and in accordance with personnel policies and practices established by the NASW Board, shall have authority for all employment actions. Staff recruitment and employment actions shall be conducted in a manner that demonstrates NASW’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, as those terms are defined by the NASW Board of Directors.\*

**ARTICLE XIV — BUDGET AND FINANCE**

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The NASW Board of Directors shall annually approve the budget of the Association and shall have oversight responsibility for the Association’s financial affairs including review of financial statements at each regularly scheduled board meeting and approval of the Association’s annual consolidated financial audit.

**ARTICLE XV — AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

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Bylaws amendments related to Delegate Assembly and the NASW national/chapter dues allocation shall be adopted by a majority roll call vote of the Delegate Assembly, provided that the proposed amendments have been submitted pursuant to Article IV.B.3. All other Amendments to the Bylaws shall be adopted by a majority vote of the NASW Board of Directors in attendance at a regularly scheduled meeting provided that such Bylaws amendments have been published and distributed to members and chapters at least 90 calendar days prior to meeting.

\* See Endnotes for definitions.

The NASW Board of Directors, with a two-thirds vote, may determine the need for an emergency Bylaws amendment. Such amendment shall be adopted by a majority vote of the NASW Board in attendance at a properly scheduled meeting provided that the amendment has been published and distributed to members and chapters at least 30 calendar days prior to the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XVI — DUES AND OTHER INCOME**

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A. The NASW Board of Directors shall establish annual dues for members of the Association of which 50 percent is retained by the National Office and 50 percent shall be rebated to the chapter.

B. Three percent of each member's dues shall be allocated to the Chapter Development Fund to be used by chapters with 1,000 or fewer regular members (in accordance with guidelines set by the NASW Board of Directors) for the purpose of staffing small chapters, funding competitive grants and providing other supports as deemed necessary by the NASW Board. Up to ten percent of the amount so allocated shall be designated as a National Office charge for administration of the Chapter Development Fund.

The formula allocating a percentage of each member's dues to the National Office and a percentage rebated to chapters shall be applied after the Chapter Development Fund allocation has been made.

C. The Association may receive income from other sources, including grants for special purposes.

## Endnotes

*Diversity* refers to acceptance of and respect for the variety of similarities and differences among people, including but not limited to; gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, race, Native or Indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, other family status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, ability and disability, mental health, substance use disorders, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, veteran status, thinking style, and personality type. Inclusion of various diversity dimensions may vary by geography or organization.

*Equity* ensures that everyone has support and access to the resources needed to be successful, identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of all staff and members.

- Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions and systems, as well as in the distribution of resources.
- Equity differs from equality. Equality refers to treating everyone the same but does not necessarily lead to equitable outcomes because diverse communities have diverse needs and have faced varying obstacles and inequities.

*Inclusion* is a dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged and power is shared to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It promotes a sense of belonging. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued, for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.



## ABOUT NASW

NASW is the premier professional association that social workers depend on for workforce protection, practice guidance and social justice advocacy. It is the social work profession's most visible organization, with chapters in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, New York City, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The Association works to:

- » enhance the professional growth and development of its members
- » create and maintain professional standards for social workers
- » advance sound social policies that achieve equity and improve lives

NASW provides a variety of membership benefits including professional education, credentials and certifications, special interest practice sections, social work research, affordable insurance, and job search assistance, as well as practice, legal and ethics consultation, advocacy tools, and multiple vendor discounts. It operates a philanthropic foundation, a scholarly press and an insurance business.

**For more information on NASW membership or programs, visit the NASW website at [SocialWorkers.org](http://SocialWorkers.org) or call 202.408.8600.**



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