

BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

ILLINOIS REGIONAL GROUP, Inc.

CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS

# CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS

**PREAMBLE:** We, the members\* of the Il Blinded Veterans Association Illinois Regional Group, Inc., in order to create a better understanding and form a closer relationship, establish unified action among all veterans and with the general public, and in general to more fully serve our country, do associate ourselves for the following purposes:

1. To foster the spirit of comradeship among all veterans and their families, and educate the general public for better mutual understanding.
2. To assist all blinded veterans in their adjustment and rehabilitation, that they may have gainful employment and become productive members of our society, thus upholding their dignity and enabling them to take their rightful place in the social and economic life of their respective communities.
3. To maintain true allegiance to the United States of America and the ideals of Americanism; to instill the love of country and flag, and to combat any attempt to impede the

efficiency or the permanency of our educational institutions.

4. To encourage the doctrine of universal liberty, equal opportunities and rights, and justice for all, to combat the forces of bigotry wherever originating or existing.

5. To promote sound minds and bodies in our members and the youth of our country.

THEREFORE, we do adopt and establish this Constitution/Bylaws.

\*Admin note: Unless otherwise indicated, hereinafter the word "members" collectively refers to "Members and Associate Members".

# ARTICLE I

## Name and Duration

Section 1. The name of the organization, by which it shall be known, is and shall be the

BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

ILLINOIS REGIONAL GROUP, Inc.

and its official title shall be:

Blinded Veterans Association Illinois  
Regional Group. Inc.

Section 2. The duration of the Group shall be perpetual, unless its Charter be withdrawn by the Blinded Veterans Association for good cause shown.

## ARTICLE II

### Purposes and Affiliation

Section 1. The purposes of this organization shall be as set forth in the aforementioned PREAMBLE to this Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 2. This organization is and shall be a subordinate group of a National Association known as the Blinded Veterans Association, as attested to by a Charter issued by said Association. The organization shall at all times be subject to the jurisdiction of the National Association and to the provisions of that corporation's Charter and Bylaws. Any provision in this Constitution/Bylaws inconsistent with the Charter or Bylaws of the National Association's Charter or Bylaws shall be null and void.

Section 3. This organization shall not participate in any way in the promotion of partisan politics or of candidates for political office. The use of its name, insignia, uniform and membership lists shall be restricted to use by the Regional Group and by its parent body, the Blinded Veterans Association. The Group shall not affiliate itself with civilian agencies for the

blind, nor with their veterans' groups, but may cooperate with such agencies or groups when and where considered appropriate and advisable.

Section 4. The Regional Group shall operate at all times strictly as a non-profit organization, and none of the assets, earnings, or income of the Group shall at any time be divided among or distributed to its members, either as dividends, bonuses, payments or otherwise. The foregoing provision shall in no way be construed as a restriction on the right of the Regional Group to render aid to needy or worthy members of the Group or to others in need.

## ARTICLE III

### Supreme Authority

Section 1. The supreme authority of the Regional Group shall be vested in its members, whether expressed in the annual Regional Group Meeting or in a regularly-called meeting.

Section 2. At all times when the membership is not assembled, the supreme authority of the

Regional Group shall be vested in a Board of Directors (see Article VII below).

## ARTICLE IV

### Membership

Section 1. Membership shall be limited to Members (service-connected) and Associate Member (non-service-connected) of the Blinded Veterans Association in good standing residing within the state boundaries of Illinois

Section 2. The definitions of the aforementioned categories of membership in the BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION, ILLINOIS REGIONAL GROUP, INC. and the rights, privileges and responsibilities and restrictions of each category shall be as outlined in the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

Section 3. All of the above-mentioned members, provided they remain in good standing with the National Association and with this Regional Group, shall have and retain full rights of membership in said Regional Group as

set forth in Section 2 of this Article and the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

Section 4. Honorary Membership. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 5 of Article III (Qualifications for Membership, Associate Membership and Honorary Membership) of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended, Honorary membership may be bestowed upon a person, or persons, who have contributed an outstanding service to this Regional Group and/or its members.

a. Honorary membership in the Regional Group may be bestowed by a majority vote of the members present at the annual Regional Group convention.

b. Honorary members shall be charged no dues.

c. Honorary members may not hold office in the Regional Group.

d. Honorary members shall have no direct voice or vote of any kind in the affairs of the Group or the BVA, but may submit suggestions or recommendations for consideration of this Regional Group and/or the BVA, and may attend meetings.



## ARTICLE V

### Membership Meetings

Section 1. Exclusive of the annual Illinois Regional Group BVA Meeting, the BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION, Illinois Regional Group, INC. shall meet at least once a year. Other regular Regional Group meetings may be called by the Regional Group President or the Board of Directors, when, in his/her (its) opinion, it may be necessary or advisable.

Section 2. Three or more members of the Group in good standing may petition the Regional Group President in writing to call a special meeting within forty (40) days thereafter.

(1) The petition shall contain the nature and purpose of the request for the special meeting.

(2) A copy of the special meeting petition shall be mailed to each member of the Group in good standing not less than fourteen (14) days prior to such meeting.

(3) Assuming the President approves the petition, a special meeting notice will be

promulgated to all regional group members in good standing in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of this Article.

Section 3. Each member in good standing of the Regional Group shall be eligible to attend and assist in all meetings of the membership, and shall be entitled to one (1) vote when present.

Section 4 All members in good standing, as well as National Headquarters (Attn: Administrative Director), shall be notified, in writing, of each meeting of the regional group, to include the annual Regional Group Meeting, if possible at least thirty (30) days before the date of such meeting. The notification letter will include the date, time, location and purpose(s) of the meeting. Address labels from BVA National Headquarters must be used for all such notification letter mailings.

## ARTICLE VI

### OFFICERS/ELECTION PROCEDURE

Section 1. The Regional Group shall elect the following officers each two years. from among

its members in good standing, and all members in good standing shall be notified, in writing, of such election

- a. Regional Group President.
- b. Regional Group Vice President.
- c. Regional Group Secretary.
- d. Regional Group Treasurer.

The elected Regional Group officers shall rank as listed in Section 1a through d above.

Section 2. Furthermore, the Group, at its discretion, may also elect other officers at the annual Regional Group Meeting from among its members in good standing considered necessary for its operation.

Section 3. All elected officers shall serve two-year terms.

Additionally, the Regional Group President may not serve for more than two consecutive two year terms. If there is no one available or qualified to take over the Presidency, then the incumbent may serve a third term.

Section 4. Nominations of officers shall be made at the semiannual meeting held in the Fall of each year. Nominations may be made by mail. Any member nominated must be in good

standing with the Regional Group, and must agree, in writing, to accept the office if elected.

Section 5. An absentee ballot shall be mailed by the Regional Group Secretary to those Regional Group members of record, in good standing, requesting such absentee ballots, if possible not less than twenty (20) days prior to the Regional Group Annual meeting

Section 6. Should there be more than one individual running for an office, then the election for that office shall be by voice vote, with the absentee ballots to be counted up front. Should the outcome of the voice vote be in dispute for any reason, then a roll call vote of active members will be called for by the presiding officer, with the absentee ballots being counted up front. The roll call vote will take precedence.

Section 7. Installation of officers shall take place at the close of the annual Illinois Regional Group BVA meeting. The Oath of Office shall be administered as prescribed in Section 5 of Article IV (OFFICERS) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

Section 8. A vacancy in the office of Regional Group President shall be filled by the Regional Group Vice President. A vacancy in any other elected office shall be filled by the appointment, of a Group member in good standing, by the Group's Board of Directors at the next regularly-scheduled Board of Directors' meeting.

Section 9. Elected officers shall serve until their successors have qualified. In no case, however, shall an officer serve a period exceeding eighteen (18) months.

## ARTICLE VII

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Between membership meetings and the annual Regional Group BVA Meeting, governing authority of the Regional Group will be vested in a Board of Directors. Insisting or active members in good standing

a. The Board of Directors shall have full power to act for the Group between membership meetings, providing that the Board shall take no action contrary to policies established by the membership, and all of its actions shall be

reported to the next membership meeting for approval, rejection or modification.

b. The Board of Directors shall convene at least two times from the month of the annual Regional Group BVA Convention.

c. All Board orders and business shall be adopted by a simple majority vote.

e. The Regional Group President, at his/her discretion, may grant to a member the privilege of addressing the Board of Directors on a matter of interest/importance to the Regional Group, but only for a maximum of five minutes.

## ARTICLE Viii

### Duties of Officers

Section 1. The President shall be the executive head of the Regional Group with full power to enforce the provisions of this Constitution/Bylaws and the policies adopted by the membership. He/she shall preside at meetings of the membership, and at the annual Regional Group BVA Convention. He/she shall have and exercise all of the functions especially entrusted to him/her by the membership and shall perform all of the duties usually performed by such executive officer, including the

appointment of committees as he/she may feel are necessary to the successful operation of the Group, with full authority to dissolve such committees.

Section 2. The Vice President shall act as the representative of the Regional Group President, and shall perform such duties as may be requested of him/her by that officer. He/she shall serve as Acting President during the absence or disability of the President.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- a. Keep written minutes of all meetings of the membership, and of the Board of Directors, and shall furnish a copy of all such written minutes to the National Secretary at the National Headquarters (Attn: Administrative Director) within two months of such meetings.

- b. Notify all members in good standing and National Headquarters (Attn: Administrative Director), in writing, of all regional group meetings, including the purpose(s) for which they are called.

- c. Keep/maintain in a properly-prepared book or file, all correspondence, contracts, copies of National and regional constitution/bylaws, copies of all minutes, copies

of minutes of all regional group chapters, a membership list, including all active BVA members as well as those who were rejected, and all other pertinent papers/documents which the Regional Group may have or require.

d. Perform such other duties as are assigned to him/her by the President.

#### Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

a. Maintain true and complete books of account reflecting all of the income and expenditures of the Regional Group.

b. Compile and issue, on a semiannual basis, a written financial report to the membership, and make a financial report at each meeting of the Regional Group.

c. When ordered to do so by the Board of Directors, furnish a bond to the Group.

d. File budgets and financial reports with the National Association as requested and/or as required by the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

e. Ensure that all funds except the Investment Fund shall be withdrawn from the Regional Group bank account(s) over the signature of the Regional Group Treasurer and the signature of the Regional Group President.



f. Deliver to his/her successor all books and records, monies and papers under his/her direction and control and belonging to the organization.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Discipline of members

Section 1. Discipline of officers and members the Regional Group shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article XV (Discipline of Members and Associate Members) and Article XVI (Trial Procedure) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

Section 2. Additionally, any elected Regional Group officer or member of the Board of Directors who shall be absent without good cause shown for three consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors and/or the Regional Group, shall forfeit his/her office.

## ARTICLE X

### Finance

Section 1. Membership dues for members of the Regional Group, and the regulations governing payment of such dues, are as specified in Article X (Dues) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

Section 2. All sums received by the Treasurer shall be placed by him/her in a bank designated by members of the Board of Directors. The bank account shall be in the name of the Blinded Veterans Association Illinois Regional Group , Inc.

Section 3. Funds of the Regional Group shall be dispensed only by checks drawn by the Treasurer, and countersigned by the President (or the Vice President in the President's absence or disability) in conformity with a budget adopted by the membership.

Section 4. No fund-raising endeavor involving an appeal for funds to the general public shall be undertaken without authorization by a Regional

Group meeting and prior approval of the National Board of Directors (refer to Section 13e of Article XIV (Regional Groups) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended).

## ARTICLE XI

### Procedure for Amending

Section 1. This Constitution/Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those voting, to include those voting by absentee ballot, at any Illinois annual Regional Group BVA Convention or meeting of the membership, a quorum being present, providing that thirty (30) days' written notice of such proposed amendment(s) shall have been given to all members in good standing.

Section 7. Chapters may not engage in fund-raising activities unless the Regional Group has sought and obtained approval from the BVA National Board of Director

## ARTICLE XII

### Rules of Order

Section 1. All points of parliamentary procedure not covered by this Constitution/Bylaws shall be governed by Robert's "Rules of Order, Newly Revised."

## ARTICLE XIII

### Dissolution

Section 1. In the event of dissolution of the BVA of Illinois Regional Group, Inc., all assets, real or personal, shall become subject to the provisions of Section 8 of Article XIV (Regional Groups) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.