

## **Sample Bylaws**

### **ARTICLE 1**

#### NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be [INSERT RG NAME]

### **ARTICLE 2**

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization shall be:

- a. To promote the welfare of blind and low vision veterans so that, notwithstanding their disabilities, they may take their rightful place in the community and work with their fellow citizens toward the creation of a peaceful world.
- b. To preserve and strengthen a spirit of fellowship among blind and low vision veterans so that they may give mutual aid and assistance to one another.
- c. To maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom and to encourage loyalty to the Constitution and laws of the United States and of the states in which they reside.
- d. To be organized and operated as a corporation not-for-profit, no part of the income or assets of which shall inure to the benefit of any of its members or officers, nor be distributable thereto otherwise than upon dissolution or final liquidation; and such corporation is organized and shall be operated exclusively for charitable, educational, patriotic, and civic improvement purposes.

### **ARTICLE 3**

#### MEMBERSHIP

Any person eligible for membership in the Blinded Veterans Association is eligible for membership.

### **ARTICLE 4**

#### OFFICERS

##### Section 1. Elected Officers

The elected officers of the organization shall be a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

##### Section 2. Duration of Positions

- a. Election for a two (2)-year term of office shall be conducted at the respective business meeting.
- b. Election shall be by a majority vote of the members present or represented by proxy. Failure to fulfill any term of office will result in a four (4)-year bar from office.

##### Section 3. Election Procedures

Nominations for the elected officers of the organization shall be conducted on the respective meeting floor as follows:

a. New Business Session:

(1) At the appropriate time during the new business session the presiding officer will open the meeting floor for nominations.

(a) Candidates must be members of the organization.

(b) Candidates may nominate themselves.

(c) Candidates may present a short biographical speech.

(d) Nominations may be made by any member and seconded by no more than two (2) other members.

(e) Nominees need not be present on the meeting floor to be nominated for office. However, a letter of acceptance signed by the nominee must be read at the time of their nomination.

(f) After the presiding officer has determined that there are no further nominations, they shall close the nominations until the election.

b. Election Session:

(1) Nominations may be reopened at the commencement of the election portion of the agenda, or by a simple majority vote at any time up to the time of elections.

(2) When all additional nominations, if any, have been made, the presiding officer shall close the nominations, at which time the election shall be conducted.

#### Section 4. Appointed Officers

The organization may appoint a judge advocate, a sergeant-at-arms, a chaplain, and an ombudsman from among duly qualified members and may reappoint said positions accordingly.

#### Section 5. Oath of Office

All representatives of the organization, before assuming the office to which they have been elected or appointed, shall subscribe to the following oath of office:

"I, [STATE YOUR NAME] do solemnly affirm that I will faithfully execute the duties of [STATE YOUR POSITION] of the [INSERT RG NAME] and that I will support, maintain, and abide by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America and the charter and bylaws of the Blinded Veterans Association and [INSERT RG NAME] to the best of my ability."

#### Section 6. Officer Vacancies

a. A vacancy in the office of president shall be filled by the vice president.

b. Vacancies occurring among the other offices shall be filled by the members of the organization by a majority vote of a quorum of the members present at a meeting called for that purpose.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1. President**

- a. The president shall be the executive head of the organization with full power to enforce the provisions of the charter, bylaws, resolutions, and policies adopted by the organization.
- b. The president shall be the presiding officer and serve as an ex-officio on all committees.
- c. The president shall have and exercise all the functions entrusted by the organization and perform all executive officer duties.
- d. The president shall appoint such committees as may be necessary for the successful operation of the organization and may, in a proper case, and for failure to perform their duties, remove such appointed person from such committee and appoint a successor.

#### **Section 2. Vice President**

The vice president shall, during the absence or disability of the president, have all of the authority and perform all of the duties of the president until the absence or disability of the president ceases to exist, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the organization.

#### **Section 3. Secretary**

- a. The secretary shall keep written minutes of all meetings of the organization and shall furnish a copy of all such written minutes to the District Director within two months of such meetings. They shall notify all members and the District Director of scheduled meetings, and perform all additional duties assigned by the organization.

#### **Section 4. Treasurer**

- a. The treasurer shall maintain true and complete financials reflecting all of the income and expenditures of the organization. They shall report regularly to the membership on the finances of the organization and shall file budgets and financial reports with HQ as requested and/or as required by the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended, and perform all additional duties assigned by the organization.

#### **Section 5. Judge Advocate**

The judge advocate shall be responsible, under the direction of the president, for providing legal and/or parliamentary guidance to the organization and shall perform other assigned duties.

#### **Section 6. Sergeant-at-Arms**

The sergeant-at-arms shall be responsible, under the direction of the president, for maintaining peace, harmony, and order at all meetings of the organization, and shall perform other assigned duties.

#### **Section 7. Chaplain**

The chaplain shall be responsible, under the direction of the president, for conducting devotional exercises of the organization, and shall perform other assigned duties.

## Section 8. Ombudsman

The ombudsman shall be responsible, under the direction of the president, for investigating, reporting on, and settling complaints arising within the organization, and shall perform other assigned duties.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### CHAPTERS

#### Section 1. Chapter Recognition

a. The organization shall have the power to organize affiliate groups to be known as chapters, to issue, revoke, and amend their charters; to discipline their officers and members; to regulate their elections; and, generally, to regulate their activities and the conduct of their affairs.

b. It shall be the policy of the organization that chapters will be afforded the greatest amount of freedom of action and liberty consistent with these bylaws.

#### Section 2. Chapter Charter

Charters of new chapters may be issued on the accepted application of at least five (5) members in any area where a chapter does not exist. The charter issued to any chapter must contain the name of the city (or geographic area) in which the chapter is organized.

#### Section 3. Chapter Consolidation

a. When, in the opinion of the organization, it would be in the best interest of members located within the jurisdiction of two (2) existing chapters to consolidate said chapters into one (1) new chapter, the organization may take such action with the consent of the chapters concerned and designate the area of jurisdiction of the new chapter.

b. If one (1) or more chapters become inactive, this action may be taken with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the active chapter members voting in favor.

c. In the event of such consolidation, all funds and records of the consolidated chapters shall be delivered to the chapter formed by the consolidation.

#### Section 4. Chapter Investigation

a. The organization may cause any chapter to be investigated and, if such investigation establishes the fact or facts tending to prove the chapter willfully violated any of the provisions of these bylaws or is otherwise disqualified to continue as an affiliate body of the organization, the organization may revoke a charter.

b. Such an investigation can be conducted only after reasonable notice and after proceedings have been made known to the members of the organization.

c. Any decision of the organization adverse to a chapter may be appealed to the National BoD.

#### Section 5. Chapter Charter Revocation Procedures

a. In the event of the revocation of the chapter charter, all property, books, records, equipment, and funds shall be delivered to the organization and held in trust for a period of two (2) years.

b. If, within such two (2)-year period, a new chapter shall be organized in the region formerly occupied by the chapter whose charter has been revoked, then all such property, books, records, equipment, and funds shall be delivered to, and become the property of, the new chapter so organized.

c. If, after such two (2)-year period has elapsed following the original charter revocation the chapter has not been reorganized, nor has a new chapter been formed, the following administrative actions shall be implemented by the organization with respect to the property, books, records, equipment, and funds of the chapter:

(1) All books and records shall be relegated to the archives of the organization.

(2) All property and equipment shall be disposed of as determined by the organization.

(3) All funds and other monies of the chapter shall permanently revert to the general fund of the organization.

#### Section 6. Chapter Charter Revocation

Inherent in the revocation of any chapter charter is the loss of permission to use the name "[INSERT RG NAME]."

#### Section 7. Chapter Rules and Regulations

The organization will establish a manual detailing all laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing chapters, and otherwise have supervision and authority over all chapters.

### **ARTICLE 7**

#### DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

The discipline of officers and members of the organization shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article 15 (Discipline of Members) and Article 16 (Trial Procedure) of the current edition of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

### **ARTICLE 8**

#### AMENDMENTS / REVISIONS TO BYLAWS

##### Amendments / Revisions

a. These bylaws may be amended or revised by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at an annual business meeting.

b. Proposed amendments or revisions must be received by members no later than ten (10) days before an annual business meeting.

(1) Amendments or revisions of an emergency nature may be submitted on the floor of an annual business meeting with unanimous consent of the members present.

c. No such amendment or revisions may change the basic charitable purpose of the organization as set forth in the charter and bylaws.

d. All amendments and revisions must be approved, in writing, by the national board of directors annually.

**ARTICLE 9**

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

"Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised" shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent.

**ARTICLE 10**

ASSETS UPON DISSOLUTION OR LIQUIDATION

Upon final dissolution or liquidation of the organization, and after discharge or satisfaction of all outstanding obligations and liabilities, the remaining assets shall be transferred to the Blinded Veterans Association's National Headquarters to be applied to the care and comfort of blind and low vision veterans, their families, and caregivers.

These bylaws are hereby adopted on this [date].

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (President)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary)