

# ASSOCIATION OF VA AUDIOLOGISTS

## BY-LAWS AND CONSTITUTION

Amended June 2009

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## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of the organization is the ASSOCIATION OF VA AUDIOLOGISTS, hereafter referred to as the Association or the AVAA.

## **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE and GOALS**

The purpose of the Association is to address the professional needs and concerns of audiologists within the Veterans Health Administration of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The goal is to achieve and maintain the highest quality of patient care, services, training, and research by individual audiologists and the programs in which they are housed. It is also the purpose of the AVAA to promote Audiology within the VA and outside the VA at regional, state and national levels and to establish professional and working ties with other related governmental and/or professional groups.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the AVAA includes all audiologists who are employed by the VA at the time of adoption of these by-laws (charter members) and all audiologists who become employed by the VA at subsequent times. Membership in the organization assumes subscription to all tenets of the Codes of Ethics of the American Academy of Audiology and/or the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association as dictated by the licensing laws of the state in which licensure is held.

There are seven categories of members: **Member, Contributing Member, Associate Member, Adjunct Member, Affiliated Member, Honorary Member, and Emeritus Member.**

**Member.** Active membership is given to all audiologists employed by the VA who (1) hold a current, unrestricted license to practice audiology in a US State, Territory or the District of Columbia and/or (2) who have been evaluated and deemed qualified by a VA Audiology Professional Standards Board. Active members are entitled to vote, to hold office, and to participate in all business and other meetings of the AVAA. A person may remain an active member until such time (s)he ceases to be employed by VA.

**Contributing Member.** A contributing member is an active member who has submitted voluntary dues payment for the current fiscal year as defined in these by-laws. In addition to the rights and privileges afforded a Member, a Contributing Member is entitled to a reduced registration fee at the Annual Association meeting.

**Associate Member.** Associate membership is granted to any legally-appointed audiology student, trainee, or fellow who is not eligible for full Member status during terms of their appointments. Membership is given for purposes of education and information, but associate members cannot vote or hold office. Audiologists who leave

VA employment who are not eligible for Emeritus Member status may request associate membership, but may neither vote nor hold office.

**Adjunct Member.** Adjunct membership is granted, upon application, to Department of Veterans Affairs employees who are not audiologists, but are directly or indirectly involved in the provision of hearing healthcare or hearing instruments to Veterans. Membership is given for purposes of education and information, but adjunct members may neither vote nor hold office.

**Affiliated Member.** Affiliated membership is granted, upon application, to any manufacturers' representative serving on the Government services team of a hearing instrument manufacturer currently contractually authorized by the Denver Acquisition and Logistics Center to provide hearing instruments or services to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Membership is given for purposes of education and information, but affiliated members may neither vote nor hold office.

**Honorary Member.** Honorary membership is granted to persons who have distinguished themselves in promoting the purposes of the AVAA, or who have distinguished themselves in Audiology and/or related areas, and who are nominated for such membership by an active member. Such nominations are considered and acted on by the Executive Committee. Honorary members can participate in the activities of the AVAA, but they may neither vote nor hold office.

**Emeritus Member.** Individuals who were the AVAA members for at least three years can request emeritus status when they retire. Emeritus status can also be awarded for exemplary service to the profession. The Executive Committee grants such status to retirees and to others on nomination by the AVAA members. Emeritus members may neither vote nor hold office.

Applications for Adjunct, Affiliated or Emeritus membership status may be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee for consideration.

Actions leading to revocation of licensure or sanctions/probationary status of licensure may be grounds for revocation of the AVAA membership on consideration and decision of the Executive Committee.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

The Executive Committee will include the following voting members: President, President-Elect, Past-President, Secretary and Treasurer. In addition, the Chair of the Field Advisory Council (or designee) and the National Program Director (or designee) will serve as non-voting, ex-officio members,

The **President** will preside at all meetings of the AVAA and of the Executive Committee and is empowered to conduct or have conducted all ordinary and necessary business of the AVAA between meetings.

The **President-Elect** will act as understudy to the President to become acquainted with the business and operation of the AVAA in preparation for assuming the duties of the presidency. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect will assume the duties of the President. If the President, for any reason, cannot serve out a full term of office, the President-Elect will become President for the remainder of that term and also his/her regular term. In the event that the President-Elect also cannot serve out the full presidential term for any reason, the remaining officers shall cause an election for that office to take place.

The **Past-President** will chair the Nominations and Awards Committee and serve as consultant and advisor to the President and President-Elect.

The **Secretary** of the AVAA will attend and record minutes at all meetings. In addition Secretary will: maintain a historic record of the minutes that will be available to the members of the Executive Committee arrange and schedule meetings for the Executive Committee; develop the agenda for the meetings; continue action items on the agenda until they are resolved; and record the minutes of the debriefing after each yearly program. If, for any reason, the Secretary cannot serve a full term, the Treasurer will assume the additional responsibility of Secretary until a proper election can produce a new Secretary.

The **Treasurer** of AVAA will make or authorize deposits and disbursements to and from the Association's account(s) as authorized by the Executive Committee; prepare a projected budget for planning of yearly meetings; coordinate all aspects of the AVAA budget with the Chesapeake Health Education Program (CHEP); coordinate with the Education Committee for the collection of tuition, registration fees, and dues at annual meetings; maintain a paid membership data base; maintain accurate records of sponsor donations and payments; provide a regular budget report at each Executive Committee meeting; advise the President and President-Elect on budget status if there are any adverse developments; and complete and submit the yearly tax statements to the IRS. In the absence of both the President and the President-Elect, the Treasurer will preside at meetings.

## **ARTICLE V – TERM OF OFFICE**

The term of office of the President shall be one year, with the year before that served as President-Elect, and the year following that as Past-President. The President may not serve successive terms in this office.

The term of office of the Secretary is three years. The Secretary may serve no more than two successive terms in this office.

The term of office of the Treasurer is three years. The Treasurer may serve no more than two successive terms in this office.

An individual may hold only one office at a given time in the AVAA.  
All terms of office are concurrent with the Federal fiscal year (October 1-September 30).

## **ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES**

The Organization has three standing committees: the Executive Committee, which governs the affairs of the AVAA, the Nominations and Awards Committee, which oversees elections within the AVAA and administers awards determined by the AVAA and the Education Committee, which determines the educational content of the annual meeting and organizes and coordinates the occurrence of that meeting. In addition, special ad hoc committees may be established if the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, determines such need.

The Executive Committee will include the President, the President-Elect, the Past-President, the Secretary/Treasurer, two non-voting, ex-officio members, the Chair of the Field Advisory Council and the National Program Director. The Executive Committee may add additional non-voting members to its body to perform specified functions or duties of the AVAA, e.g., information dissemination, public relations, and others.

The Nominations and Awards Committee is chaired by the Past-President and includes four active members of the AVAA, appointed by the President, who are not members of the Executive Committee. The committee defines and administers all procedures for the nomination of candidates for the elective offices of the AVAA. These candidates arise from nominations from the AVAA members or from a slate of possible candidates generated by the Executive Committee. The Nominations and Awards Committee will solicit nominees for consideration for awards established by the Association from the membership. The Committee will present recommendations for award recipients to the Executive Committee for consideration and approval. Term of Committee membership is for one year, renewable for a second term.

The Education Committee is chaired by the President-Elect and includes at least four but no more than six active Members of the AVAA appointed by the President. The committee proposes topic areas, specific speakers and prepares the agenda for the annual meeting of the AVAA upon approval of the Executive Committee. The committee also organizes and coordinates the local arrangements for the meeting. Term of non-chair membership will be two years. Membership may be renewed for one additional term.

## **ARTICLE VII – FOCUS and SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

The formation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within the AVAA serves as a means to involve the membership in solving problems or exploring and monitoring topics of ongoing interest. Special Interest Groups (SIG) consider topics and developments of long-term interest to subsets of the AVAA membership, and receive official approval from the Executive Committee. To be recognized as an official undertaking of the AVAA, members interested in forming an SIG should petition the Executive Committee by furnishing the topic area, rationale, and proposed membership of the SIG. The

Executive Committee can dissolve any group for cause or because the assigned task is completed. SIGs will furnish status reports to the Executive Committee on request.

Individuals who are not members of the AVAA may be affiliate members of a SIG when expertise and interest so dictate. Affiliate members may not comprise more than 49% of total membership, may not vote in matters concerning SIG recommendations, nor chair the SIG. SIGs will be governed in a manner determined by Executive Committee approval.

Problem focused work groups and committees will address issues requiring relatively short resolution periods of less than a year. Impetus to form such groups can come from the membership or the Executive Committee. Work group Chairs and specific charges to the groups will be made by the Executive Committee. Membership will include at least four members of the AVAA. They will submit progress reports as requested and a final report by or prior to the designated deadline.

## **ARTICLE VIII - DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION**

No actions shall be taken or made public in the name of the AVAA or implying AVAA concurrence or involvement without the express written approval of the Executive Committee (including the National Program Director for Audiology and Speech Pathology). One or more members of the committee may refer appropriate matters to membership for a vote.

## **ARTICLE IX – ELECTIONS**

Annually, the Nominations and Awards Committee, chaired by the Past President, will inform the membership of the offices to be filled during that year and solicit nominations from members for designated positions. Each nomination will be made by one active member of the AVAA and seconded by another active member. Potential candidates may self-nominate, but required seconding by two active members of the AVAA. The nominee will indicate to the Chair of the Nominations Committee their ability and willingness to serve for the term of office. Persons with valid nominations will be placed on the ballot for consideration. The Nominations and Awards Committee shall submit a ballot containing at least two candidates for each position to the membership via electronic ballot. The ballots will be returned to the Chair of the Nominations Committee for tallying. The voting period will be 30 calendar days from the date of the announcement. The ballots will be counted and their authenticity checked by the Nominations and Awards Committee and an independent person. The results will be announced on or around July 1, three months prior to onset of the term of office. Rules and regulations governing the election process will be established by the Nominations and Awards Committee and furnished to each member one month in advance of the onset of the election cycle.

The Nominations and Awards Committee will also be responsible for soliciting nominations for special awards, for making recommendations for such awards to the Executive Committee, and for presenting such awards.

## **ARTICLE X – MEETINGS**

Meetings of the AVAA will be held annually unless rescinded and amended by vote of the membership. The place, date, and occasion of meetings will be considered by the Executive Committee and a proposal made to the membership when and as needed for consideration.

## **ARTICLE XI – FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AVAA**

Financial support for the organization such as dues, unrestricted contributions, and other financial considerations will be discussed by the Executive Committee of the AVAA on an annual or as-needed basis and recommended to the general membership for consideration. For fiscal and other purposes, the AVAA year will coincide with the Federal fiscal year, i.e., October 1 – September 30.

Voluntary payment of dues will be solicited from the membership two months prior to the beginning of the Association's fiscal year. Dues payments received will be deposited in the AVAA accounts to be utilized for the provision of educational activities for the membership. The amount of the voluntary dues will be established by the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS**

Motions to adopt, amend, or repeal bylaws bearing the signatures of at least ten (10) active members of the AVAA and/or a majority of the Executive Committee shall be submitted for publication to the membership. Active members of the AVAA shall be allowed thirty days to return their votes on such motions. A three/fifths majority of members voting on the item(s) in question is required to adopt, amend, or repeal by-laws.

The adoption, amendment, or repeal of a by-law shall take effect immediately upon its passage.