



# 2010 STANDING RULES MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE PALMETTO PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

---

## PPA BYLAWS – November, 2009

**Section 12.4. Membership Committee.** This Committee shall be chaired by the Second Vice President and shall be responsible for recruiting new members, including sustaining members, obtaining applications for membership, processing all such applications and, if necessary confirming required documents for membership. This Committee shall, in conjunction with the Coordination Committee, maintain event management software and membership database. This Committee shall also be responsible for processing and certifying all ballots and proxies on behalf of the Nominating Ad Hoc Committee and/or Executive Board. In addition, this committee shall publish an annual membership directory, and work with the Coordination Committee in welcoming new members.

---

### **1.0 MEMBERSHIP/CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON.**

- 1.1 Selection and Duties. The Chair of the Palmetto Paralegal Association (“PPA”) Membership Committee (“Membership Committee”) is automatically assigned to the Second Vice President, with the duties as set forth in Section 11.6 of the PPA Bylaws. The Membership Chairperson shall attend all Executive Board meetings. If unable to attend, the Chair shall send a representative from the committee to attend in her place and assign voting proxy to the representative or another board member.
- 1.2 The Membership Chairperson shall attend all Executive Board meetings. If unable to be physically present, the Chairperson shall (1) send a Committee member as substitute, (2) participate by telephone, or (3) provide the President with the Committee report and assign voting proxy to another Executive Board Member.

### **2.0 RECRUITING AND RETENTION.**

- 2.1 Activities and Assistance. The Membership Committee shall actively assist the membership and other Committees as needed in recruiting and retention efforts, including student socials. The Membership Committee shall develop and carry on activities and programs from time to time, at the discretion of the committee, to further the PPA's recruiting and retention efforts.
- 2.2 Requests for Information/Applications. The Membership Chairperson or committee member shall promptly respond to all requests for information and applications received.
- 2.3 Applications. The Membership Chairperson shall prepare and/or update the membership applications as needed, and provide an electronic version of a current application to the NFPA Representative each month (as long as there are changes) for use in the NFPA web site.

### **3.0 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS.**

- 3.1 Review of Applications. The Chairperson of the Membership Committee or a member of the Committee shall review and process all applications. All relevant information on the application shall be completed, any proof of credentials shall be attached, and the applicable dues shall be included before an application shall be considered to be complete. The list of CLE credits for the preceding year shall be obtained from the PPA Education Committee Chairperson and incorporated into the application process.

- 3.2 Incomplete Applications. In the event an incomplete application is received, the Membership Chairperson, or committee member shall request that the applicant complete the application. This request may be made by telephone or in writing within fifteen (15) days of the date the application is received by the Chairperson. The applicant shall provide the requested information or documentation as quickly as possible. If the application is not completed within thirty (30) days, the application shall be considered lapsed.
- 3.3 Timeliness. The Membership Committee shall complete the application process as promptly as possible, including sending a letter of acceptance or non-acceptance to the applicant, in no event later than forty-five (45) days from receipt of the application.
- 3.4 Approval of the Application.
  - 3.4.1 Applications for Membership qualifying under Section 8.2 of the PPA Bylaws, as applicable, may be approved by the Membership Chairperson.
  - 3.4.2 Questions Regarding Eligibility. If a question arises regarding the applicant's eligibility for membership, one or more of the following steps shall be taken:
    - 3.4.3 The Membership Committee may request by telephone, email or in writing, that the applicant provides additional information, clarify or verify information contained in the application.
    - 3.4.4 The Membership Committee may contact any professional reference given by the applicant to clarify or verify information contained in the application.
    - 3.4.5 For Applications Approved. The applicant will be notified in writing promptly of the application's approval. Successful applicants for new membership will receive a copy of the PPA Bylaws, a membership card evidencing their membership for the current year.
    - 3.4.6 For Applications Rejected. If a question of eligibility for membership still exists, the Membership Committee shall notify the applicant, in writing, that based upon the information supplied to the Committee the Committee is unable to approve the application. The prospective member will be invited to contact the Chairperson of the Committee within thirty (30) days of notification of membership rejection, if he or she still desires to become a member. In the event an application is rejected, the dues paid by the prospective member shall be refunded.
    - 3.4.7 Applications Reevaluated. Any member may submit a request for reevaluation of a membership determination, along with supporting documentation to be considered in the request. The request shall be submitted confidentially, in writing, to the Membership Chairperson. The Chairperson shall consider the request and make any investigation as appropriate. Determination as to any further action is at the discretion of the Membership Chairperson. All written documentation regarding the investigation shall be destroyed within thirty (30) days after the close of an investigation, unless further action is to be taken.

#### **4.0 MEMBERSHIP DUES.**

- 4.1 Dues for the Current Year. The annual dues for the 2010 calendar year are established as follows:
 

Voting Member	\$ 85.00
Associate Member	\$ 85.00
Student Member	\$ 30.00
Sustaining Member	\$130.00

- 4.2 Payment in Kind. Dues for Sustaining Members may be received in the form of discounts or services to the PPA, at the discretion of the Executive Board.
- 4.3 Dues for Subsequent Years. The dues for subsequent years shall be established from time to time by the Executive Board.
- 4.4 Student Carry-over. In accordance with NFPA guidelines, current student members may renew one additional year as a student member if they have graduated from their paralegal program, but have not yet found employment as a paralegal at the time of renewal.
- 4.5 Dues for Partial Year Memberships. No discount shall be given for individuals joining the PPA during the middle of the year; provided that, at the Membership Chairperson's discretion, new member applications received from individuals during the last quarter of the year may be held for processing in the following year.
- 4.6 Non members who advertise in the quarterly newsletter or participate as a vendor at the annual seminar shall pay an additional 25% above the sustaining membership price for their ad, listing or vendor table as a way to encourage them to join and more fully support and sustain PPA throughout the year.

## **5.0 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL.**

- 5.1 Renewal Notice. A renewal notice and application shall be distributed to or mailed to each member of the PPA no later than November 30th of each year.
- 5.2 Renewal Deadline. In accordance with Article IX of the PPA Bylaws, all membership renewals shall be due by January 1st, payable on or before January 31st of the renewing year.
- 5.3 Renewal Application Rejected. If a member applies to renew their membership and owes dues or other funds to the PPA, their application will be denied until dues are paid in full. The Coordination Committee Chair and Treasurer will provide a list of these names.
- 5.4 Termination of Membership. In accordance with Article IX of the PPA Bylaws, the membership of any individual whose annual dues have not been received by February 28th shall be automatically terminated. The membership will be reinstated upon payment of the annual dues amount together with a \$10.00 reinstatement fee.

## **6.0 PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP.**

- 6.1 Filing a Request for Termination. A request for termination of a membership shall be filed with the President, in writing, by the Membership Chairperson. Memberships may be terminated in accordance with Section 8.6 of the PPA Bylaws.
- 6.2 Investigative Committee. The President shall then appoint a committee of two Executive Board members to work with the Membership Chairperson to thoroughly investigate any alleged charges against a member. The investigative committee shall report its findings to the President within sixty (60) days, unless an extension of time is granted by the President for cause.
- 6.3 Notification to Member. Within seven (7) days of a receipt of a request for termination, the President shall notify, by certified mail, the member whose membership has been placed in jeopardy that a request for termination has been received. The member under investigation shall be formally requested, to respond with relevant information via affidavit or personal meeting with the investigative committee.

- 6.4 Confidentiality of Investigation. All such investigations shall be confidential and private and the name of the member under investigation shall not be disclosed to any person other than to persons whose testimony is necessary in connection with the investigation and the Executive Board. All communications concerning such proceedings are to be marked "Confidential" and all files are to be maintained in strict confidence. When the matter is concluded, the file is to be sealed, labeled appropriately and archived in the membership files maintained by the Membership Chairperson.
- 6.5 Investigation Report to the Executive Board. The findings of the investigation committee shall be reported to the Executive Board at a meeting closed to the general membership. The vote of a majority of the members of the Executive Board shall be required to terminate the membership of the member under investigation.
- 6.6 Notification to Member of Executive Board Action. The Secretary shall notify the member within fifteen (15) days of the action of the Executive Board. Such notification will be sent via certified mail to the addressee only, and will advise the member of the findings of the Executive Board and the appeal procedure as set forth in 4.7 below.
- 6.7 Appeal from Removal of Membership. An individual whose membership has been terminated may make written appeal for reinstatement as follows:
- 6.7.1 Timeliness. Any appeal for reinstatement must be received by the PPA Secretary within thirty (30) days of the individual's receipt of the termination notice, as provided in 4.6 above.
- 6.7.2 Appeal to the Executive Board. The terminated individual may forward to the PPA Secretary an appeal for review by the Executive Board. Such appeal may be in writing or the individual may request to personally appear at an Executive Board meeting. The appeal shall be considered by the Executive Board in closed session, such appeal to be considered within thirty (30) days of its receipt by the PPA Secretary. The individual's membership will be reinstated only upon the majority vote of the Executive Board. The terminated individual shall be promptly notified, in writing, of the Executive Board's decision regarding the appeal.
- 6.7.3 Limit on Number of Appeals. No individual whose membership has been terminated may appeal such termination more than one time.

## **7.0 MEMBER DATA.**

- 7.1 Maintenance of Data. The Membership Committee shall be responsible for maintaining an updated and accurate database of member information, as necessary to respond to requests by the Executive Board for member information, and shall provide the Coordination Committee Chairperson an updated listing of members and their e-mail addresses for meeting notice purposes monthly.

## **8.0 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY.**

- 8.1 Membership Directory. The Membership Committee shall be responsible for the publication of an up-to-date directory of the PPA members. The directory shall be published during even numbered years by April 30th and periodically updated at the discretion of the Membership Committee.

## **9.0 PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD.**

- 9.1 Solicitation. The Membership Committee is responsible for the solicitation and bestowal of the Paralegal of the Year Award. Each year, during the months of August and September, the Membership Committee shall solicit from the membership nominees for the award (example nomination form attached).

- 9.2 Award Determination. The Membership Chairperson and designated members of the Membership Committee shall determine, in their discretion, based on the nominations received and the committee's investigations of the nominated members' contributions, the member that will receive the award. The Membership Chairperson will present the Committee's choice to the Executive Board at the October Board meeting, and the Board will approve or disapprove the selected recipient.
- 9.3 If Nominees Unacceptable. If, in the discretion of the Membership Chairperson and designated committee members, the contributions of the nominees in any certain year are not worthy of the award, the Membership Committee may decline to present the award for that year. In addition, if the Executive Board disapproves the Committee's choice, the Membership Committee will not present an award for that year.
- 9.4 Award Announcement. The Paralegal of the Year Award for the previous year shall be announced at Christmas social/meeting in December by the Membership Chairperson. The Paralegal of the Year shall receive a plaque commemorating the award and a check from the PPA in the amount of \$50.00 at the time of the announcement.

#### **10.0 NFPA Dues Statements and Member Address Updates**

- 10.1 The Membership Chairperson shall complete the quarterly NFPA Dues statements and remit them to the Treasurer. The New Year Statement will be completed and remitted within one week after March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The Mid-Year Statements will be completed and remitted within one week after June 30<sup>st</sup> (second quarter), September 30<sup>st</sup> (third quarter), December 31<sup>st</sup> (fourth quarter). Forms are available from NFPA and were updated as of January 2006.
- 10.2 The Membership Chairperson shall remit a complete updated address listing for all members (voting, associate, student and sustaining) to NFPA based on the schedule as provided, so that members receive NFPA publications at the correct address. The address list shall be in Microsoft Excel format in accordance with the instructions provided by NFPA. The update shall be sent to [duane@paralegals.org](mailto:duane@paralegals.org) or as instructions are updated from time to time.