



# **Policies and Procedures**

**Approved by General Membership on 08 March 2009**

**Effective on 17 April 2009**



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## Policies and Procedures

Approved by General Membership on 08 March 2009 and effective on 17 April 2009.

### Introduction:

Policies and Procedures are amended per the NLA-H Bylaws, Article 13, Section 3.01, dated March xx, 2009. These Policies and Procedures are a set of documents that describe an organization's policies for operation and the procedures necessary to fulfill the policies. Each Policy or Procedure item shall be numbered and contain the following descriptive information: Purpose, Persons Affected, Definitions, Policy, and Procedure. A revision history will accompany this document to show a list of changes.

Purpose: Describes objective(s) for writing the policy or procedure.

Persons Affected: Identifies the users of the policy or procedure.

Definitions: Defines abbreviations, acronyms, forms, words infrequently used, and other terms.

Policy: Describes the policy.

Procedure: Defines and outlines the rules, regulations, methods, timing, place, and people responsible for accomplishing the policy.

## Section 1 – Membership

### 1.01: Procedures for Acceptance to Membership

Purpose: Define the manner in which a person may become a Member of this Association.

Persons Affected: Candidates for NLA-H Membership.

Definitions:

Candidate: A person desiring membership to this Association.

Member: A person having full privilege and voting rights within this Association, until renewal period (See Section 1.03).

Sponsor: A member that has an interest in seeing a candidate through these procedures and will provide a report to the members of the Association.

Policy: A candidate must demonstrate interest in this Association, involvement with the goals of this Association, and obtain current-member sponsorship to be eligible for membership.

Procedure:

(a) A person interested in becoming a member may attend any number of regular NLA-H meetings or events, prior to a petition for membership.

(b) A person interested in becoming a member will petition for membership by submitting a complete membership application (without payment) to any officer of the Association.



(b.1.) The candidate must attend a minimum of three regular monthly meetings, within a three month period, that commences at the time the membership application is received.

(b.2.) The candidate must attend one other (non-meeting) Association activity within a three month period commencing at the time the membership application is received.

(b.3.) A candidate missing the minimum required meetings or activities may have a “rolling” three month period until the requirements are met, up to a total of nine months from petition date, whereupon the petition is void and the process must be initiated again.

(c) A candidate requires sponsorship from a current Member in good standing. After a minimum three month period of the application date, the sponsoring member, accompanied by the candidate, will present the candidate and candidate’s accomplishments to the Association at a regular monthly meeting.

(d) Following the presentation by the sponsor, the candidate is excused from the meeting room. A 3/4 vote of the general membership will be required to change the candidate’s status to “member.”

(e) The member will be immediately notified by the sponsor of the vote, at which time the candidate will either be invited to the meeting room and issued full membership, or be dismissed.

(f) Accepted members will make payment for annual dues at the conclusion of the meeting.

## **1.02: Sanction, Suspension, or Termination of Member**

**Purpose:** Define the manner in which a Member of this Association may be Sanctioned, Suspended, or Terminated.

**Persons Affected:** NLA-H Members.

**Definitions:**

**Sanction:** To penalize, esp. by way of discipline.

**Suspension:** To bar for a period of time from a privilege, office, or position, usually as a punishment. **Termination:** To dismiss from the Association.

**Policy:** The general membership or the Board of Directors may impose reasonable sanctions on a member, or suspend or expel a member from this Association, for good cause after a hearing. Good cause includes a material and serious violation of the Corporation’s articles of incorporation, bylaws, or rules, statement of purpose, or of law. The members or the Board of Directors may delegate powers to a regular or ad hoc committee to conduct a hearing, make recommendations to the membership, or take action on behalf of the members and the Board of Directors.

**Procedure:** (a) There are two methods that a Sanctioning, Suspension, or Termination process begins:

(a.1) Two or more members may advise the Board of Directors of a member’s actions that they believe requires review.



The Board of Directors will consider the known facts and then vote to determine whether sufficient probable cause exists to appoint a Membership Standards Committee to further investigate. A majority vote is required to move forward.

The Membership Standards Committee will be comprised of one of the Board of Directors (that voted in favor of the investigation) and two general members chosen by a random process. General members are not compelled to participate in the Membership Standards Committee. The Board of Directors will continue the random request process until a Membership Standards Committee is formed. The Board of Directors will seat these committee positions within thirty days of the original vote. Within ten days after the formation of the Membership Standards Committee, the Board of Directors will notify, in writing, the identified member of an upcoming hearing. This notice must be delivered at least ten days prior to the hearing. If mailed, the notice shall be sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. The Membership Standards Committee will conduct a hearing within thirty days of being formed in order to provide the identified member an opportunity to hear the concerns and respond in his or her defense. A majority vote of the Membership Standards Committee after the hearing is required for a decision and action to be executed.

(a.2) The Board of Directors may, by unanimous vote, determine that the matter involving sanctioning, suspension, or expulsion requires the need for immediate action. The Board of Directors will establish the date for a hearing, not less than 20 days of the unanimous vote, and not more than 60 days of the unanimous vote. The Board of Directors will notify, in writing, the identified member of an upcoming hearing, not less than ten days of the unanimous vote, giving the member adequate notice and opportunity to be heard. However, shorter notice may be deemed adequate if the members of the Board of Directors or a committee designated by the members of the Board of Directors to handle a matter involving sanctioning, suspension, or expulsion determines that the need for a timely hearing outweighs the prejudice caused to the member and if a statement of the need for a timely hearing is included in the notice. If mailed, the notice shall be sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. A majority vote of the Board of Directors, after the hearing, is required for a decision and action executed.

(b) A sanctioned, suspended, or terminated member may appeal a Board of Directors or Membership Standards Committee decision about membership status at the next scheduled meeting of the general membership by giving notice, in writing, to any of the Board of Directors indicating his or her intent to appeal within ten days prior to the next regular meeting. The Membership Standards Committee in the case of (a.1), or the Board of Directors in the case of (a.2) will address the general membership for up to a ten minute period with the member present. The sanctioned, suspended, or terminated member may address the general membership for up to a ten minute period. Then the member must depart while the general membership votes. A 2/3 vote of the general membership is required to overturn a decision made in the case of (a.1) or of (a.2). The member will be notified within thirty minutes of the conclusion of the regular general member by at least one of the Board of Directors. These proceedings must conform to Section 2.03.

### **1.03: Membership Renewals**



Purpose: Define the manner in which a Member of this Association may renew his or her membership.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members.

Policy: Members will be renewed on an annual basis consistent with the member's initiation date. Membership renewal is not automatic. Each member will be notified by a member of the Board of Directors, in person or via electronic mail, within 30 days of the upcoming expiration. During the next meeting, the President of the Board or designee will conduct a Member Renewal session. Persons under consideration for renewal will depart the meeting room while the general membership votes. A 3/4 approval vote is required to renew each person's membership. The status of the member will be conveyed immediately following the Member Renewal session.

Appeals: A non-renewed member may appeal a decision at the next scheduled meeting of the general membership by giving notice in writing to any of the Board of Directors indicating his or her intent to appeal, within ten days prior to the next regular meeting. The Board of Directors will address the general membership for up to a ten minute period, with the member present. The non-renewed member may address the general membership for up to a ten minute period. Then the member must depart while the general membership votes. A 3/4 vote of the general membership is required to overturn a decision to not renew the membership. The member will be notified within thirty minutes of the conclusion of the regular general member by at least one of the Board of Directors.

These proceedings must conform to Section 2.03.

## **Section 2 – Meetings**

### **2.01: Robert's Rules of Order**

Purpose: To ensure consistency and proper regulation of meetings in a manner with universal acceptance.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members and guest attendees.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: All meetings held by this Association, be they board, general membership, committee or other yet to be identified, will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (most recently revised edition.)

Procedure: (a.1) Attendance and meeting minutes shall be maintained and provided to the secretary of this Association prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.



(a. 2) The President of the Board may designate a Members-at-Large member to serve as a parliamentarian to ensure compliance with this Section.

## **2.02: Special or Called Meetings**

Purpose: To ensure focus on specific business.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members and guest attendees.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: Special or called meetings address only the business specified in the call for the meeting and must be limited to that business.

Procedure: n/a.

## **2.03: Meetings Declared as “Sensitive”**

Purpose: To allow for meetings to be declared “sensitive” and for guests to vacate.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members and guest attendees.

Definitions:

Sensitive: Involving work, duties, or information of a delicate nature.

Policy: (a) Meetings shall be open to members and guests, except that during discussion and voting on sensitive issues, guests may be asked to leave the room.

(b) All issues related to an individual’s membership status shall be deemed to be sensitive.

Procedure: Any member may request that a particular topic be declared sensitive. If ten percent or more of the members in attendance agree, the topic is declared to be sensitive and the rest of this policy applies.

## **2.04: NLA-Houston Education Programs**

Purpose: To comply with this Association’s Statement of Purpose, Article 2, Bylaws.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members and guest attendees.

Definitions: n/a



Policy: In keeping with the NLA-Houston mission, NLA-Houston shall offer to the membership and the public a minimum of four educational programs annually that are appropriate to the needs established by the membership.

Procedure: Date, time, place, and topic of these educational programs shall be announced in advance.

## **2.05: Meetings of the Board of Directors**

Purpose: To clarify the meetings of the Board of Directors

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members and guest attendees.

Definitions:

Ex-Officio: By virtue of office or official position.

Policy: (a) The Board of Directors will meet monthly at a time and place announced in advance.

(b) The Board of Directors meetings will be open to all members and invited guests. Participation by non-board members is limited to recognition by the presiding officer.

(c) All committee chairs are ex-officio members of the Board of Directors and are expected to attend all Board Meetings.

Procedure: Only Directors may vote.

## **Section 3 – Association Representation**

### **3.01: Designated Spokesperson**

Purpose: Identify the person responsible for speaking on behalf of this Association.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: The designated spokesperson for the Association shall be the president and in the absence of the president, the vice president. The designated spokesperson may speak only to established organizational philosophy, policy, or procedure.



Procedure: Any communication that involves this Association and speaks to or from an individual's role within this Association which expresses opinion or offers information not already approved by the membership must be prior approved by a majority of the board.

### **3.02: Club Emblems**

Purpose: Ensure proper representation of NLA-Houston through the presentation, display, or wearing of emblems.

Persons Affected: NLA-Houston Members.

Definitions:

Club Emblem: also known as Patch or Colors.

Policy: (a) The Club Emblem should be considered an honor to wear and should not be considered a right.

(b) The full sized Club Emblem shall be considered the property of this Association and as such is not sold but rather leased to a member. Any member who has held voting status for at least one (1) month may apply to the membership committee for the right to wear a full sized Club Emblem. The membership committee may reject the request for any reason.

(c) This policy does not apply to the smaller patch or emblem awarded to associate members.

Procedure: (a) For the privilege, the member shall pay a fee of \$20.00, \$10.00 of which shall be for the costs related to acquisition and handling the Emblem. The remaining \$10.00 shall be a refundable security deposit and will be returned to the individual should the individual elect to terminate his or her membership and return the Emblem.

(b) If the former member chooses not to return the emblem, the former member will be actively discouraged from wearing the Emblem once their membership has terminated

## **Section 4 – Finances**

### **4.01: Donations From NLA-Houston Require Tax Exempt Status**

Purpose: To ensure compliance with regulations regarding tax exemption.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members, guests, donors.

Definitions: n/a



Policy: Documentation of 501(c)3 tax exempt status, together with an organizational overview and mission statement shall be required of organizations that request to be considered for receiving a donations (cash or in-kind) for charitable purposes from this Association.

Procedure: n/a

## **4.02: Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred on Behalf of NLA-Houston**

Purpose: To ensure reasonable processing of expenses.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members, guests.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: Receipts must be presented to the Treasurer within a reasonable time to be considered for payment. Reimbursable payments must be made from the Treasurer within a reasonable time.

Procedure: (a) Receipts for approved expenses made on behalf of this Association, that are considered reimbursable must be delivered to the treasurer within thirty (30) days from the date of the expenditure unless approval has been granted by the board prior to the expenditure.

(b) The Treasurer may require a specific form and signature from the requestor.

(c) Receipts must be retained by the Treasurer for no less than thirty-six months.

(d) The Treasurer will maintain log or journal entries specific to reimbursable payments.

(e) Reimbursable payment must be made to the requestor within thirty (30) days from the date of the received receipt(s).

## **Section 5 – Elections and Balloting**

### **5.01: Ballot Positions**

Purpose: To identify ballot-to-position ratio.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: (a) The election ballot will be divided into the officer positions to be filled in that election. Unless otherwise directed on the ballot, each qualified voter will select one candidate for each



position on the ballot. Selection of more than one candidate for any position of the ballot (unless otherwise directed on the ballot) will void that position on the ballot only.

Procedure: n/a

## **5.01: Election Candidate Qualifications and Nominations**

Purpose: To identify qualifications for election and the nomination mechanism.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: (a) To qualify as a candidate for election, the candidate must be a voting member of the corporation at the beginning of the month in which nominations were opened.

(b) Candidates for election will be nominated into one of the officer positions to be determined as a result of that election. The candidate who receives the highest number of votes in each position shall become a member of the Board of Directors.

(c) Only those members of this Association who were voting members at the beginning of the month in which nominations were opened will be eligible to vote in any election, regular or special.

Procedure: n/a

## **Section 6 – Board Membership**

### **6.01: Limitation of Domestic Partnership on Board Membership**

Purpose: Identify and prevent situations where conflict of interest, nepotism, or other factors may improperly influence activities of the Board of Directors.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Members.

Definitions: n/a

Policy: Only one member of a recognized domestic partnership may serve on the board at any given time.

Procedure:

(a) Determinations of domestic partnership shall be made by the board.



(b) Either member of a relationship determined to be a domestic partnership shall have the right to appeal this policy limitations to the date of the board's determination

## **6.02: Association Advisory Committee**

Purpose: To provide successor planning.

Persons Affected: NLA-H Board of Directors and Past-President(s).

Definitions:

Good Standing: Specific to this section, means a past-president of the Association and was not subject to a negative finding of Section 1.02 "Sanction, Suspension, or Termination of Member."

Policy: The purpose of the Association Advisory Committee is to advise the current Board of Directors on past practices in order to retain knowledge of the prior administration.

Procedure:

- (a) The Association Advisory Committee is chaired by the most-recent past-president.
- (b) The Association Advisory Committee is comprised of any past-president in good standing.
- (c) The Association Advisory Committee meets a minimum of once per year:
  - (c.1.) The first meeting is held within forty days of a final election for the position of President.
  - (c.2.) Subsequent meetings are held subject to agreement by the current President.



## Revision History

Item #	Revision Date	Effective Date	Page Number(s)	Approved By
New Doc.	08 March 2009	17 April 2009	All	Vote of General Membership