

MODEL FOR CHAPTER BYLAWS

The following model has been developed to serve as a guide when writing, amending, or revising chapter bylaws. Requirements of the chapter are of primary importance and the model can be adjusted to fit such specific and unique needs so long as the bylaws do not conflict with the bylaws of the National Society or those of an existing state society/organization. NSDAR Bylaws may be used as a **guide** for proper language. Do not use bold and/or italics in the chapter bylaws to indicate mandated language.

KEY:

Bold Face Italics – These words are mandated by the bylaws of the National Society and must be copied word for word in chapter bylaws. Examples are Articles I., II., and III.

[Bold and bracketed] – is recommended but is not mandatory.

(Underlined within parentheses) – These words are to be filled with language chosen by the chapter and may include optional wording.

[Comments within brackets] – This is for information. These words are not intended to become part of the bylaws.

[If applicable, the Articles of Incorporation are printed preceding the bylaws and as they are superior to the bylaws, the two must not conflict.]

BYLAWS OF THE (chapter name) CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this chapter shall be the (chapter name) Chapter of The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, hereinafter referred to as the National Society or NSDAR. [Organizing chapters refer to *NSDAR Bylaws*, Article XIII, Section 15, before selecting a name. Also, if the chapter will be incorporated, use the same name as in the Articles of Incorporation so as not to be in conflict.]

ARTICLE II - Objects

The objects of this chapter shall be to promote the objects of The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

(1) To perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence, by the acquisition and protection of historical spots and the erection of monuments; by the encouragement of historical research in relation to the Revolution and the publication of its results; by the preservation of documents and relics, and of the

records of the individual services of Revolutionary soldiers and patriots; and by the promotion of celebrations of all patriotic anniversaries;

- (2) To carry out the injunction of Washington in his farewell address to the American people, “to promote, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge,” thus developing an enlightened public opinion, and affording to young and old such advantages as shall develop in them the largest capacity for performing the duties of American citizens;*
- (3) To cherish, maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom; to foster true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing for mankind all the blessings of liberty.*

ARTICLE III – Membership

[Members is an acceptable alternative to Membership]

Section 1. Eligibility. *Any woman who meets the requirements as set forth in the bylaws of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution is eligible for membership. NSDAR and its chapters may not discriminate against an eligible applicant based on race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.*

Section 2. Admission. *An applicant for membership through this chapter shall submit all required documents, prepared in accordance with instructions established by the National Society, and accompanied by the prescribed fees and dues.* [If a chapter wants to vote on members or require endorsement as a condition of membership, then either or both must be part of the chapter bylaws. The bylaws will indicate the vote necessary (majority, two-thirds, etc.), if the vote is to be by ballot (although a secret ballot is not required), and who votes (chapter or executive committee/board). For application endorsement, the bylaws can stipulate who is eligible to endorse. Bylaws example for a vote: Chapter membership shall be by a majority vote by ballot of the chapter. Bylaws example for endorsement: Two members of any chapter who are in good standing and who know the prospective member, will be required to endorse all membership applications.]

Section 3. Transfers and Reinstatements. A member in good standing who desires to unite with a chapter by transfer, either from another chapter or from member-at-large, or by reinstatement, may be admitted in the same manner as a new member.

Section 4. Associates.

- a. A chapter may admit associate members in the same manner as a new member provided she is a chapter member in good standing.
- b. An associate member shall not be counted toward representation, or represent the chapter as a delegate at a state meeting or at Continental Congress, and may not hold chapter office, chair a chapter committee, or have a vote in the chapter.

Section 5. Resignations. A member in good standing may resign from membership in the National Society by presenting her resignation in writing to the (officer title), who shall

immediately report the resignation to the Office of the Organizing Secretary General. A member who is delinquent in payment of dues may not resign from membership.

Section 6. Honorary Chapter Regent. (Upon her retirement) a chapter regent may be eligible to be elected honorary chapter regent after serving (a term/full term) in office. Election (may be by voice vote/will be by ballot vote) and a (majority or two-thirds or four-fifths) will elect. An honorary chapter regent shall have no duties or privileges. [If the chapter will have honorary chapter regents, it must be specified in the bylaws.]

ARTICLE IV - Fees and Dues

Section 1. Application Fee. The application fee for membership in the National Society shall be determined by the Continental Congress.

Section 2. Annual Dues.

- a. The annual chapter dues are \$(amount) plus the amount required by the National Society and the (state name), payable in advance on or before (date) of each year. [The date for collection of dues should be sufficiently in advance to meet the requirements of payment to the National Society.]
- b. Dues for a member admitted or reinstated on or after July 5 will be credited for the upcoming dues year, which begins December 1.
- c. The dues and fees for readmission of a resigned member and of a member dropped for non-payment of dues shall be as established in the bylaws of the National Society.
- d. The annual dues of an associate member are \$(amount) payable in advance on or before (date) of each year. She shall pay no national or state dues through this chapter. [Most chapters find it easier to use the same date for both associate and chapter members.]
- e. Annual dues for each member shall be sent by the chapter treasurer to the Office of the Organizing Secretary General, payable to the Treasurer General, and to the state (society/organization) by the date and method established in their bylaws.
- f. On (date) [must be after the date as stated Section 2a above] the chapter treasurer shall notify all members whose dues have not been paid that their dues are delinquent [**and that such member is ineligible to vote in chapter business**]. Membership will automatically terminate if national dues are not received by the date and method established in the bylaws of the National Society. [It is not required to establish consequences for delinquent dues, but if penalty or consequence shall be imposed, they must be in the bylaws.]

ARTICLE V - Officers

Section 1. Officers. The elected officers of the chapter shall be a regent, (first) vice regent, recording secretary, treasurer, registrar, (list other elected officers in the same order used by the National Society.) [Small chapters may combine some officers, e.g. vice regent with chaplain. Large chapters having more than one vice regent shall list them as first vice regent, second vice regent, etc. Each chapter will have the above listed five officers, and no

member shall hold two of these offices, except in chapters with thirty or fewer members. The offices of regent, recording secretary and treasurer shall be held by three separate chapter members in all chapters.]

Section 2. Nominations. In the year of an election, a nominating committee of (number) members shall be elected by ballot at the regular meeting in (month). If no more than (number required above) are nominated, the ballot may be dispensed with, and the election declared. It shall be the duty of this committee to nominate a candidate, whose consent to serve has been obtained for each office to be filled and to report (number of) months prior to the meeting at which election will be held. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided the consent of the nominee has been obtained. [There is no requirement to have a nominating committee; all eligible candidates could be nominated and elected from the floor.]

Section 3. Eligibility. To be eligible for the office of regent or [first] vice regent, a member shall have held membership in the chapter for at least one year prior to her election. [The national bylaws require a chapter regent or first vice regent to have been a member of the chapter for at least one year prior to election. However, the national bylaws also allow a chapter to petition for an exception which, if approved, is granted by the National Board of Management. The NBM cannot make exceptions with regard to chapter bylaws. Chapters should use caution when setting eligibility requirements in the chapter bylaws. If the NBM permits an exception, but the chapter bylaws do not, the member would not be eligible to serve. Therefore, if the chapter includes eligibility requirements in the bylaws, then the bylaws should also include the ability to permit an exception by a vote of a (majority, two-thirds, four-fifths) of the chapter members or executive board/committee.]

Section 4. Term of Office. Officers shall be elected by ballot for a term of (number) years or until their successors are elected. A majority vote shall elect. If there is only one nominee, the ballot may be dispensed with, and the election declared by the presiding officer. The term of office shall begin (at the close of the annual meeting or specified date). No member shall serve more than (number) consecutive terms in the same office except (specify which offices). A member who has served more than half a term in any office shall be considered to have served a term. [To ensure good health and vitality of a chapter, term limits should be considered. RONR states: "... a reasonable rotation in office is desirable in almost all organizations." Officers should be selected based on their abilities and interests, and to keep the chapter viable, incumbents are encouraged to seek out and train/mentor replacement officers. A chapter regent may not serve more than six consecutive years, except by permission of the National Board of Management. However, an exception granted by the NBM does not override the chapter bylaws.]

Section 5. Vacancies. In case of a vacancy in the office of chapter regent, the first vice regent shall become chapter regent. Vacancies in other offices shall be filled by the (executive board/chapter) (until the next annual meeting when the chapter shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term/for the remainder of the unexpired term). [If the office of regent or first

vice regent becomes vacant, all other vice regents move up, creating a vacancy in the lowest vice regent office, unless the bylaws state otherwise.]

ARTICLE VI - Duties of Officers

Section 1. Duties. *The officers of the (name) Chapter shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws, (the Articles of Incorporation), the bylaws of the National Society, the bylaws of the (state name), and the parliamentary authority, and such other duties as ordered by the chapter.*

Section. 2. The regent shall:

- a. preside at all meetings of the chapter and of the executive (committee/board)** [omit if there is no executive board/committee], **and shall have general supervision of the affairs of the chapter;**
 - b. be the chief executive officer of the chapter;**
 - c. appoint all committees except the nominating committee. [Other exclusions may be the disciplinary committee and the audit/financial review committee.]
 - d. appoint a parliamentarian (subject to approval by the executive committee/board);
 - e. be ex-officio a member of all committees except the nominating committee.** [Other exceptions may be the disciplinary committee and the audit/financial review committee.]
 - f. complete the *Chapter Master Report*, or ensure it is completed, and submit it as instructed (by the state regent).
 - g. send the annual report as directed by the state (society/organization).
- [Add other duties as necessary]

Section 3. The (first) vice regent shall:

- a. perform the duties and responsibilities of the chapter regent in her absence or inability to serve.**
- [Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 4. The chaplain shall:

- a. conduct such religious services as required;
 - b. communicate, whenever possible, with members who are ill or in distress;
 - c. plan memorial services for deceased members.
- [Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 5. The recording secretary shall:

- a. record the proceedings of the meetings of the chapter and executive (committee/board);**
- b. be custodian of all records not otherwise provided for;**
- c. notify officers of their election and committees of their appointment;
- d. notify officers and chairs of votes affecting their duties;
- e. keep a roll of members of committees and of the chapter.

[Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 6. The corresponding secretary shall:

- a. send notices of meetings;
- b. conduct correspondence as requested by the regent or required by action of the chapter or the executive (committee/board).

[Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 7. The treasurer shall:

- a. receive all funds of the chapter and deposit them in an approved financial institution as may be designated by the chapter or the executive (committee/board);
- b. disburse funds as directed by the (chapter/executive board/executive committee), and pay only those bills authorized by the (chapter/executive board/executive committee/budget);
- c. remit national dues to the office of the Organizing Secretary General prior to the first day of December, and state dues to the state treasurer by (date as required in state bylaws), of every paid member;
- d. file the appropriate form 990 with the IRS following the end of the fiscal year, ensuring that it has been accepted, and any annual reports required by the state taxing authority.
- e. prepare the accounts for a financial review or audit before each annual meeting.
[Chapter bylaws should provide for a committee appointed by the regent or elected by the chapter to review the books, and in the case of large chapters, or those with endowments, or who may be incorporated, the bylaws may provide for an audit by a certified public accountant.]

[Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 8. The registrar shall:

- a. prepare or assist prospective members in preparation of the current application;
- b. ascertain, prior to submitting, that the application is in proper form and accompanied by properly prepared supporting documentation;
- c. see that together with the application and documentation, the proper fees are remitted as established by the current procedures of the National Society;
- d. notify (list chapter officers) and the new member of acceptance to membership;
- e. notify (list officers) of the state (society/organization) of new chapter members, as required;
- f. ***upon transfer out of the chapter, send the member's application to the member (if transfer is to member-at-large) or the receiving chapter, in accordance with instructions of the National Society;***
- g. report to the office of the Organizing Secretary General all changes in membership, marriages, divorces, deaths, resignations, transfers and changes in contact information as they occur.

[Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 9. The historian shall:

- a. direct such historical work as may be requested by the chapter in accordance with the historical programs of the National Society and of the (state name);
- b. be custodian of historical and biographical papers which the chapter may acquire. [Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

Section 10. The librarian shall:

- a. cooperate with the state librarian in securing books for the DAR Library in Washington DC;
- b. provide other library work as the National Society and the (state name) may authorize. [Specify other duties as the chapter requires.]

[List duties of other chapter officers in succeeding sections.]

ARTICLE VII - Meetings

Section 1. Monthly Meetings. *The regular meetings of the chapter shall be held on the (which day) of each month from (month) to (month) inclusive, unless otherwise ordered by the chapter or (executive board/committee).*

Section 2. Annual Meeting. *The regular meeting in (month) shall be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of receiving reports of officers and committees, (electing officers/installing officers), and for any other business that may arise.*

Section 3. Special Meetings. *Special meetings may be called by the regent or by the executive (committee/board) and shall be called upon the written request of (number) members. Except in cases of emergency, the meeting will be arranged within (number) days and (number) days notice shall be given. The business transacted at any special meeting shall be limited to that stated in the call to the meeting. [The number sufficient to compel the calling of a special meeting is determined by the size of the chapter. Five to seven days notice is usually sufficient. Special meetings cannot be held if not in the bylaws.]*

Section 4. Quorum. *(Number) members of the chapter shall constitute a quorum for a regular or special meeting. [The quorum should be as large a number of members as can reasonably be expected to be present at any meeting. It is recommended to set a specific number, not a percentage. If no quorum is set in the bylaws, the default is a majority of the membership.]*

Section 5. Proxy Voting. *There shall be no proxy voting.*

[Section 6. Cancelled Meetings. In case of emergency, three chapter officers may collectively agree to cancel a regularly scheduled meeting due to adverse weather or other circumstances beyond the control of the chapter or members. Every attempt will be made to provide timely notification to members.]

[ARTICLE VIII - Executive (Committee/Board)]

[Section 1. Officers. The officers of the chapter shall constitute the executive (committee/board)]. [Options for officers: “elected officers,” “elected and appointed officers,” “all officers and directors,” or listing each officer by title as stated in Article V.]

[Section 2. Authority. The executive (committee/board) shall have general supervision of the affairs of the chapter between its meetings and shall make recommendations to the chapter. The (committee/board) is subject to the orders of the chapter and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the chapter.]

Section 3. Meetings. Meetings of the executive (committee/board) shall be at the call of the regent, or upon written request of (number) members of the executive (committee/board). [There is no requirement to have an executive board or committee, but if one is authorized in the bylaws, then the bylaws should also state how meetings are called or scheduled (e.g. monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, etc). If the bylaws set the meetings on a regular basis, then in order to call special meetings, this also must be authorized in the bylaws.]

[Section 4. Quorum. (Number) of the members of the executive (committee/board) shall constitute a quorum for a regular or special meeting.] [If the bylaws do not set quorum, the default in RONR is a majority of the membership.]

[Section 5. Non-members. With the consent of the members of the executive (committee/board), the regent may invite chapter chairs or other non-members to attend meetings of the executive (committee/board) and to participate in discussion. Chapter chairs and other non-members shall not make motions, second motions, or vote.]

Section 6. Proxy Voting. There shall be no proxy voting.

(Section 7. Email Voting. In matters that require urgency and when a meeting is not critical to a decision, and with the written permission of every member, a vote may be conducted by electronic mail (email) which must be ratified at the next meeting.) [Before adopting this, determine if the non-profit statutes for your state permit email voting, also sometimes called ‘action without a meeting.’ Making a decision by email is not the same as having an electronic meeting (e-meeting).]

[The executive board may be called executive committee, executive board, board of directors or another term as preferred by the chapter and must be authorized in the bylaws.]

ARTICLE IX – Committees

Section 1. Program Committee. A Program Committee of (number) members appointed by the regent shall plan the programs for the year (subject to approval by the executive committee/board). (The regent shall appoint the chair/The committee shall elect the chair.)

Section 2. (Budget/Finance) Committee. A (Budget/Finance) Committee consisting of the treasurer and (number) members appointed by the regent shall (consider requests for funds,) prepare a budget, and submit it to the chapter for approval at the (month) meeting. (The treasurer shall/shall not serve as chair/The regent shall appoint the chair/The committee shall elect the chair.)

Section 3. Financial Review Committee. A Financial Review Committee of (number) members appointed by the regent shall examine the treasurer's financial records at the close of the fiscal year and submit a report at the annual meeting which will be adopted by the members. [Chapters with property, investments and/or endowments may consider having a professional audit by a CPA and this should be properly indicated in the bylaws. Do not appoint the chapter treasurer to this committee.]

Section 4. Other Committees. Such other committees shall be appointed by the regent as the chapter (or executive committee/board) may authorize or as the National Society or the (state name) may require.

Section 5. Meetings. Committee meetings shall be held at the call of the chair or upon the request of (number) members of the committee.

Section 6. Quorum. (Number) members shall constitute a quorum. [Alternatively, the bylaws could set a quorum for each specific committee. If the bylaws do not set quorum, the default in *RONR* is a majority of the membership.]

Section 7. Proxy Voting. There shall be no proxy voting.

(Section 8. Email Voting. In matters that require urgency and when a meeting is not critical to a decision, and with the written permission of every member, a vote may be conducted by electronic mail (email) which must be ratified at the next meeting.) [Before adopting this, determine if the non-profit statutes for your state permit email voting, also sometimes called 'action without a meeting.' A decision by email is not the same as having an electronic meeting (e-meeting).]

ARTICLE X - Electronic Meetings, Voting, and Communications

Section 1. Meetings. The chapter, executive (committee/board), and all committees, standing or otherwise, are authorized to meet through internet meeting services that support visible displays identifying those participating and those seeking recognition, so long as all members can simultaneously hear each other during the meeting, except that a majority of chapter meetings will be in-person. Special rules of order will be adopted to govern such meetings. Electronic mail (email) shall not be used to conduct meetings.

Section 2. Voting. Unanimous consent may be used for all voting unless a secret ballot is required. Voice voting, roll call, software provided voting icons or polls may also be used. An online voting software or service may be required for larger meetings or voting secrecy.

Section 3. Communications. Unless members indicate otherwise to the regent or recording secretary, all communications required in these bylaws, including meeting notices and proposed bylaws amendments, may be sent electronically.

ARTICLE XI - Representation

Section 1. Continental Congress. The representation of the chapter at Continental Congress shall be as provided in the bylaws of the National Society.

Section 2. State Conference. The representation of the chapter at meetings of the (state name) shall be as provided in the bylaws of the (state name).

Section 3. Delegates. The chapter shall elect delegates and alternates for Continental Congress and for the state conference at the (month) meeting. [Delegates and alternates for Continental Congress must be elected on or before the first day of the second month preceding the month of Continental Congress each year. The credentials form will indicate when the form must be mailed (usually verified by the postmark date) to the National Society. If the state bylaws provide a different deadline for the list of delegates elected to represent the chapter at the state conference, make two sections and indicate the deadline required for the state meeting.]

ARTICLE XII - Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws, special rules of order, standing rules, or rulings of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution or the (state name), these chapter bylaws, or any special rules of order the chapter may adopt.

ARTICLE XIII - Amendment to Bylaws

Section 1. Proposed Amendments. These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the chapter by a two-thirds vote, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous meeting (or with the call of the meeting). Unless otherwise provided prior to its adoption or in the motion to adopt, an amendment shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Section 2. Mandatory Amendments. Any amendment adopted by the National Society, or by the (state name) affecting the work of this chapter shall become the law of the chapter without further notice.

ARTICLE XIV - Dissolution

Although the period of duration of the chapter is perpetual, if for any reason the chapter is to be dissolved or otherwise terminated, no part of the property of the chapter or any of the proceeds shall be distributed to or inure to the benefit of any of the officers or members of the chapter. Upon the dissolution of the chapter, assets shall be distributed by the chapter executive board to and only to the state organization of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. [The proceeding language is required, the following language is optional]. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the local United States District Court, exclusively to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated within the meaning of section 501(c)(3), with purposes and objectives consistent with those of the chapter. [The chapter may provide for specific assignment of properties, whether owned or on loan by adding sections to this article.]

[This will be the last article in the chapter bylaws as mandated by NB Ruling #3, April 18, 1997, and amended by NB Ruling #8, February 5, 2000.]

[Only the last date (month and year) as amended or revised must be on the document, either on the first or last page, for ease of locating. Alternatively, all dates from original approval date to the last date may be listed. See example.]

(date bylaws approved), or
Amended (date), or
Revised (date)

Updated 2023

Beverly Przybylski, PRP

National Parliamentarian NSDAR