CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

Version - September 2025

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

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The New Jersey State Fire Chiefs Association follows the Roberts Rules Of Order. **17**

Special note regarding interpretation: Any noun, pronoun, or adjective contained in this document which refers to the masculine, feminine or neuter gender shall be interchangeable so as to encompass masculine, feminine, or neuter meaning.

PROPOSED: Amended Through September 2025

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

Version - September 2025

PREAMBLE

Whereas, Experience has demonstrated the truth in the saying, "In Union there is Strength," and to reach desired results, those who hold the same values must act together. Now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, WE, the Chief Officers of the Fire Departments of the State of New Jersey, and such other persons as we shall deem eligible to join us, do form ourselves into an association to be known as the NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION.

The Mission and purpose of the New Jersey State Fire Chiefs Association is :

To provide visionary leadership for chief fire officers and fire departments in New Jersey. To provide support and resources to chief officers through education, exchange of ideas, and knowledge in:

- Fire prevention
- Fire operations
- Fire Administration
- Firefighter health, wellness, and safety

a. Advocate before, as well partner with governmental bodies on matters impacting the work, safety, and health of New Jersey chief fire officers, firefighters, and the public.
b. Promote professionalism, respect, integrity, diversity, pride, and leadership among and between New Jersey fire associations, chief fire officers, and fire departments.
c. Support New Jersey fire officers and fire departments in their efforts to build and strengthen their relationships with the communities they serve.
d. Promote professional development for the leaders of NJ Fire & Emergency Services.
e. To advocate on behalf of the NJ Fire and Emergency Services
f. The discussion and dissemination of methods of Prevention and Suppression of fires.
g. To give attention to such other matters as the Fire Service shall, from time to time, bring before it for discussion and possible action.
h. The promotion of social and fraternal fellowship.

To the establishment of this organization in February 1905 and its incorporation in December 1918, acknowledgement is respectfully given.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of the NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

Version - September 2025

CONSTITUTION

Article I - Name

This organization shall be known as the "NEW JERSEY STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION."

Article II - Officers

Section 1. The officers of this association shall consist of a President, a First Vice President, a Second Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and Six (6) Trustees, who shall be elected from the membership as provided for in the By-laws.

Section 2. There shall be a Board of Directors which shall consist of the President, First and Second Vice Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, Trustees, and the Immediate Past President.

Section 3. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President or First Vice President, the next ranking officer shall assume that office. Where a vacancy occurs in the office of the Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Board of Trustees, the Board of Directors shall appoint one of the regular members of this Association to fill the position until the next Annual meeting, at which time an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. The membership of this association shall consist of active, honorary, life, and associate members.

Section 2. Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, current and former of any Fire Department, Company, or Brigade; paid, volunteer, or industrial, shall be eligible for active membership in this association. The Chief Executive of a Fire Prevention Bureau / Division recognized by the NJ Division of Fire Safety is eligible for active membership.

Section 3. Honorary Membership: Honorary Membership may be conferred on any person who shall have rendered outstanding service to this Association or the Fire Service as a whole.

Section 4. Life Member: Life members shall be those who the association shall deem worthy of the honor.

Section 5. Associate Members: Associate membership shall include Captains and Lieutenants, current and former, of any Fire Department, Company, or Brigade, paid volunteer or industrial, who take an active part in administration and firefighting operations.

Article IV - Meetings

The Annual meeting of the Association shall be held in the fall of each year. Other meetings shall be held as set forth in the By-laws.

Article V - Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors in writing. The Board of Directors shall review the proposed amendment through the By-law Committee, edit same, and prepare it for presentation to the membership in the Five Trumpet Journal or a separate mailing. A ballot will be included, which must be returned to the Secretary before the time specified, at least 30 days after the mailing. A Committee of three will be appointed by the President to count the ballots. A two-thirds affirmative vote of those voting shall be required for passage of any amendment. Amendments shall take effect upon adoption unless otherwise provided.

BY-LAWS

Article I - Representation

In order that the entire state shall be properly represented geographically, it shall be divided into three regions of seven counties each. Region One (1) will be those counties known in the northern part of the state: Bergen, Essex, Hud- son, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren. The seven central counties: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset, and Union, shall be known as Region Two (2). The seven counties in the southern part of the state: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem shall be known as Region Three (3).

Article II - Officers

Section 1. All officers elected shall assume the duties of their office as set forth in Article IX, Section 3.

Section 2. Presidential Officers: There shall be three, (3)

a. A President, a First Vice President, and a Second Vice President.
b. They shall be divided equally among the three regions of the state and shall hold office for a two (2) year term.
c. These Officers may not be elected to successive full two-year terms in the same office.

Section 3. Secretary:

a. The Secretary shall hold office for a two (2) year term. This office is open for succession by the incumbent.

Section 4. Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall hold office for a two (2) year term. This office is open for succession by the incumbent.

Section 5 Trustees: There shall be a board of six (6) Trustees.

a. There shall be two (2) trustees from each region of the state.
b. They shall hold office for a three (3) year term, and two (2) shall be elected at each Annual meeting.
c. They may serve for not more than three (3) full terms.
d. Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the trustees shall meet and elect a Chairman from their number.

Article III - Duties of Officers

Section 1. President: It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Association and the Board of Directors.

a. The President shall appoint all Committees as provided for in Article VI of these By-laws and appoint all special committees and perform such other duties as the office shall require.
b. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees.

Section 2. First Vice President: In the absence of the President, this officer shall perform all the duties of the President.

a. When the President is presiding, this officer shall assist in every way possible.
b. The First Vice President shall attend such meetings as the President shall designate and act as his representative.

Section 3. Second Vice President: It shall be the duty of this officer to act in the capacity of the First Vice President when that officer is not present and assume all the duties listed in Section 2 above.

Section 4. Secretary: It shall be the duty of this officer to keep an accurate record of all Association and Board of Directors meetings and publish the minutes of these meetings for all members of the Board of Directors, which includes the preparation of meeting schedules and agendas (both Board and regular) at the direction of the President in accordance with the By-laws. The Secretary shall:

a. Publish a list of all committee members and notify them of their appointment.
b. Receive and answer promptly all communications pertaining to the affairs of this Association and shall direct any requests to the proper committee head or division of the Association.
c. Handle all logistic support, be aware of the status of all membership applications, process and mail all editions of the Five Trumpet Journal, Coordinate with the membership committee to process the annual dues bills and collections, and issue annual dues cards for the entire membership upon payment of such dues.

Section 5. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall:

a. Be responsible for the financial operation of the Association.
b. Receive and keep an accurate record of all monetary transactions of the Association. All money shall be deposited in any insured bank in the State of New Jersey approved by the Board of Directors. Complete written reports of all money received shall be printed for the Board of Directors and the Membership prior to any meeting of such groups.

c. Pay all disbursements by check. Such checks shall be signed by any two officers, excepting Trustees, under a Check Warrant System adopted by the Secretary and the Treasurer. A copy of the proposed check and the reason for it will be sent to the Officers for approval before a check is written and mailed for payment. A record of the check disbursement activities shall be printed and made available to the members of the Board of Directors and to the members of the Association. The warrant will be kept with an NCR copy of the check and will be made a permanent record of the financial records of the Association.
d. Prepare a printed accounting of all financial transactions defining each transaction by category.
e. Post all Quarterly and Annual Federal and State reports to be filed by the Association, including payment of all taxes required to accompany the reports.
f. Process any and all salary transactions for the payment of employees of the Association throughout the year and file all necessary Federal and State forms that are needed and required by law. Salaries will be distributed on a quarterly basis or as instructed by the Board of Directors.
g. Prepare and publish a complete printed record of all the Association financial records for the annual budget review and overall view of the Association's financial outlook on a yearly basis.
h. Close the books on September 30 of each year, and provide the Association records and all necessary reports for the annual audit by the board of trustees, who shall report on the accuracy of the accounts prior to the Annual Meeting in October of each year.
i. Follow the fiscal year of October 1 through September 30 of each year.
j. Deposit all funds received by his office in a bank account that has been approved by the Board of Directors. A predetermined balance will be kept on hand by the Treasurer for the purpose of keeping the account active. The balance of the funds will be forwarded to the Treasurer for deposit in the main bank accounts of the Association.
k. Receive and keep accurate records of all funds received by his office for the operation of the Association. Treasurer provides a written monthly report and Association-approved Monthly Financial Reconciliation Form, showing all recorded income balances within the association.

Section 6. Trustees: They shall act as a budget committee and consult with the Secretary, and the Treasurer and the President shall prepare a budget for the coming year. The Budget shall be presented to the Board of Directors by the committee for adoption at the Board meeting prior to the Annual Meeting.

a. They shall arrange for and secure a bond for all of the officers; the amount of said bond to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Board of Directors: It shall be the duty of the Board to transact the business of the Association not otherwise provided for. They shall act upon the proposed budget at their meeting prior to the Annual meeting and present an approved budget to the Annual Meeting.

a. They shall arrange for meeting places, topics, reports, et cetera, not otherwise provided for.
b. They shall be authorized to engage the services of professionals, including attorneys and a CPA, and provide for payment of compensation to the Secretary and the Treasurer.

c. Officers and members may be reimbursed from the general funds of the association for out-of-pocket expenses for authorized travel and other expenses incurred on be- half of the Association in accordance with guidelines established by the Trustees.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1. Membership: The membership of this Association shall consist of Active, Honorary, Life, and Associate Members.

a. An application for membership shall be made on a standard form or online of the Association and may be reviewed by the Secretary.
b. The application fee will be the current fee on record with the secretary. shall accompany the application. Applications shall be filled out completely.

Section 2. Eligibility: Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, current and former of any Fire Department, Company, or Brigade; paid, volunteer, or industrial, shall be eligible for active membership in this association. The Chief Executive of a Fire Prevention Bureau / Division recognized by the NJ Division of Fire Safety is eligible for active membership.

Section 3. Active Members: An active member shall be any of those eligible members listed in Section 2, who shall continue to pay their dues, regardless of age. Qualified applicants' membership shall be effective on the date of the postal service mark shown on the envelope containing the Application received by the Secretary in the mail or on the date of personal presentation of Application to the Secretary, or when processed online or except that any member shall not be eligible to cast any vote within 30 days thereafter.

Section 4. Honorary Membership: Honorary Membership may be conferred on any person who shall have rendered outstanding service to this Association or the Fire Service as a whole.

a. The person's name and a short resume of the special service shall be presented to the Board of Directors.
b. The Board of Directors shall review the resume and then present the name to the Association meeting with a summary of their findings and recommendation as to membership.
c. Election to Honorary membership may be at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the members present and voting. Honorary members shall receive an Honorary Membership card.
d. Honorary Members shall have no vote.
e. Honorary members shall receive an Honorary Membership card.

Section 5. Life Member: Life members shall be those who the association shall deem worthy of the honor.

a. A proposal for Life Membership shall be made to the Board of Directors meeting together with a short resume of the reason for the proposal.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1. Membership: The membership of this Association shall consist of Active, Honorary, Life, and Associate Members.

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Section 4. Honorary Membership: Honorary Membership may be conferred on any person who shall have rendered outstanding service to this Association or the Fire Service as a whole.

f. The person's name and a short resume of the special service shall be presented to the Board of Directors.
g. The Board of Directors shall review the resume and then present the name to the Association meeting with a summary of their findings and recommendation as to membership.
h. Election to Honorary membership may be at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the members present and voting. Honorary members shall receive an Honorary Membership card.
i. Honorary Members shall have no vote.
j. Honorary members shall receive an Honorary Membership card.

Section 5. Life Member: Life members shall be those who the association shall deem worthy of the honor.

b. A proposal for Life Membership shall be made to the Board of Directors meeting together with a short resume of the reason for the proposal.

c. The Board of Directors shall review the proposal and, if deemed proper, shall grant life membership and make suitable preparations for presentation at a regular meeting of the association.
d. The President shall be made a Life Member at the conclusion of the term of office and shall be exempt from paying dues.
e. Life Members shall receive a membership card showing membership status.

Section 6. Associate Members: Associate membership shall include Captains and Lieutenants, current and former, of any Fire Department, Company, or Brigade, paid volunteer or industrial, who take an active part in administration and firefighting operations.

a. Associate members shall be entitled to participate fully in the affairs of the Association with the exceptions of holding elective office and voting privileges.

Section 7. Dues: Dues shall be the current fee on record with the secretary and shall be due on the first of January each year. Dues shall be paid not later than July 1 of the year and if they are not paid by that date, the member will be classed in arrears and lose the right to vote and privileges of the organization. A suspended member may be reinstated to membership in the Association by reapplying and approved by the Board of Directors but must pay all dues due at the time of the application.

Article V - Meetings

Section 1. Meetings: There shall be an annual meeting of this Association per calendar year; the annual meeting, at the time and location set forth by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Special Meetings: Special meetings of this Association may be called by the President.

a. Special meetings shall be called upon presentation to the Secretary of a petition bearing the signatures of not less than twenty-five members of this Association in good standing. Only such business as contained in the notice of a special meeting shall be transacted.

Section 3. Quorum: Twenty-five active members in good standing shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at the annual meeting.

Section 4. Directors Meetings: The Board of Directors shall hold four (4)regular meetings per year.

a. A majority of the Board of Directors (determined by the positions filled) shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.
b. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or 50% of the filled positions of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Notification: The Secretary shall notify the Board at least two (2) weeks prior to any regular Board meeting.

a. The Secretary shall notify the Directors at least forty- eight (48) hours prior to any special Board meeting.

Article VI - Standing Committees
The Standing Committees of this Association shall be:

a. Strategic Planning / Vision
b. By-laws and Resolutions
c. Governmental Relations & Legislation
d. Public Relations
e. Scholarship
f. Awards
g. Membership
h. Audit

Section 1. The President shall designate the Chairperson of the Committees from any region of the State.

Article VII - Duties of Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees: The duties of the standing committees shall be:

1. Strategic Planning Committee: The Strategic Planning and Vision Committee, in concert with the Board of Director create a Strategic plan/Vision for the our organization for a three (3) year plan. They shall provide recommendations for updates biannually.

2. By-Laws and Resolutions Committee: This committee shall have not less than three (3) members, plus a Presidential Officer and the Secretary.

a. It shall be their duty to review and update the By-Laws of the association as necessary.
b. They shall receive all motions and resolutions for changes in the By-Laws after the first reading and prepare the same for proper position and wording.
c. They shall read them, giving title, article, section, and proper wording at the second reading for the final passage.
d. They shall receive all resolutions presented to the Association, prepare resolutions as directed by the Board of Directors, examine them as to the legality and best interest of the Association, and report their findings to the Board or the Association.

3. Governmental Relations & Legislation Committee: This committee shall have not less than three (3) members.

a. They shall develop relationships with governmental organizations and agencies as the board of directors deems appropriate.
b. They shall inquire into and report on any legislation concerning the Fire Service.
c. They may recommend to the President legislation favorable to the Fire Service.
d. They may advise against any legislation if same be not in the best interest of the Fire Service.
e. They shall keep the President advised of any controversial legislation at all times.
f. They shall file a report of their findings at each Association meeting.

4. Public Relations Committee: This committee shall have not less than three (3) members.

a. They shall, through multiple processes and media, promote a positive image of our organization. As well as create a public relations plan.
b. They shall publicize the activities of the Association meetings in all sections of the State.

5. Scholarship Committee: This committee shall consist of not less than three (3) members, at least one (1) from each region of the State.

a. It shall be their duty to establish and administer rules and regulations, prepare and distribute application forms, and select recipients for scholarship awards in the amount of any funds made available to, or by, the Association for that purpose.

6. Awards Committee: This committee shall have not less than three (3) members, one (1) from each region of the State.

a. This committee will investigate and assess the worthiness of all awards applications.
b. Anyone may submit an application for any award offered by the association. (to be found on our website)
c. All award applications will be submitted to the Secretary. The Secretary will send copies of all applications and a rating sheet to the awards committee members. The rating sheet shall be received by the Secretary by June 1st of each year.
d. The Awards Committee. The committee will be assembled by the Chairman of the trustees of interested members in good standing. The committee will meet between June 1 and July to review and select award winners. They will report their selections at the 3rd quarter Board of Directors meeting The President may appoint one of the Committee members for liaison between the Committee and the Board of Directors.
e. The Awards shall be presented at the Annual meeting of the Association. Exceptions may be made for those unable to attend the Annual Meeting
f. The awards shall be prescribed by the Awards rules and regulations.

7. Membership Committee: The Membership Committee will promote recruitment and retention of members.

a. The will also be responsible for the annual membership renewal process, as well as recruiting new Members
b. The membership committee will send our annual renewal notices
c. They will provide the secretary and Board of Directors with a list of active and inactive members
d. The Membership Committee will keep track of our membership rolls

8. Audit Committee: Will conduct an annual audit of our financial records and report their findings to the Board of Directors. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees will appoint 3 trustees to be the audit committee

a. The Audit Committee will use best practices for auditing procedures The will follow the "audit checklist" to ensure proper assessment of our financial status and records.

b. The audit will be completed by the end of the 1st quarter of the preceding year's financial records.

Section 2. Special Committees: The President may appoint other committees as may become necessary.

a. Should any Special committee be found to be of advantage as a permanent standing committee, it will be necessary to amend the By-Laws for their inclusion in that category.
b. In the event the Membership of the New Jersey State Fire Chief's Association by a 75% majority vote of the ACTIVE membership determines the Association shall cease to exist, a Special Committee shall be formed consisting if the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 2 Trustees. This Committee will then ensure that all bills against the Association are paid, and any remaining monies will be transferred to the Scholarship Fund. The final Act of this committee would be determining which organization (if any) would be best suited to continue administering the Walter G. Fortnum Jr. Scholarship.

Section 3. Reports: Each Committee Chairperson shall give a report at the Board of Directors meeting when requested.

a. The Chairperson shall supply a written report for the Annual meeting, which shall be given to the Secretary for inclusion in the meeting minutes.

Article VIII - Rules of Order

Section 1. The presiding officer shall preserve order and decorum and shall take no part in debates while presiding.

a. All questions of order shall be decided by the presiding officer subject to appeal to the meeting. Upon each appeal, the vote shall be taken without debate.
b. The presiding officer may state the reasons for the decision given and shall put the question as follows: "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?"
c. A two-thirds majority of those voting shall be necessary to reverse the decision of the Chair.

Section 2. Every member who speaks or offers a motion shall rise, give their personal name and the Company or Department affiliation, and respectfully address the Chair.

a When finished speaking, a member shall at once be reseated.

a. When speaking, all members shall confine themselves to the question under debate and avoid all personal or in- decorous language.

b. If required, the member shall put the motion in writing.

Section 3. When two (2) or more members rise to speak at the same time, the presiding officer shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

Section 4. A member called to order shall immediately cease speaking and be reseated until the point of order has been decided, when the member will be entitled to the floor again.

Section 5. A motion to table the question shall always be in order, except when a member is in possession of the floor.

a. Such motion must be put without debate, and if supported by a majority of the members present and voting, shall be declared carried, and no further debate or amendments shall be in order until the main questions shall have been decided.

Section 6. A motion to adjourn shall always be in order except when a member is in possession of the floor, or a vote is being taken, or it has been decided that a vote be now taken.

a. A motion to adjourn is not debatable, but a motion to adjourn to a given time is open to debate.

Section 7. Any question coming before the meeting for which no provision has been made in the Constitution, By-Laws, or Rules of Order shall be decided by the presiding officer. The Chair shall be guided in decisions by the rules laid down in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

Section 8. Discussion of religious or political matters will not be allowed on the floor at any meeting of the Association.

Section 9. Order of Business

a. The suggested (the chair presiding over the meeting may alter the order if given good reason) order of business for the Regular Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order
2. Flag Salute & Invocation
3. Introduction of Host Chief
4. Introduce Association Officers & Guests
5. Memorial Service (Annual Meeting)
6. Report of Secretary
7. Report of Treasurer
8. Reports of Officers

9. Reports of Committees and Representatives
10. Reports of Members
11. Nominations (Annual Meeting)
12. Reports of Partner Agencies
13. Unfinished Business
14. Election of Officers (Annual Meeting)
15. Installation of Officers (Annual Meeting)
16. New Business
17. Good & Welfare
18. Program
19. Adjourn

b. A formal Installation of Officers may be held at a later time and date; however, the new officers shall take charge at the Annual Meeting after the completion of Old Business and prior to the start of New Business.

Article IX - Miscellaneous Section 1. Nomination of Officers

a. Nominations for office may be made orally or in writing.
b. Should only one nomination be made for each office called for, the Judge of Elections may prepare a slate of those nominees for the various offices and shall then declare those nominees unanimously elected.

Section 2. Election of Officers

a. Election of officers shall be by ballot except where only one nomination shall be made for each office called up for election.
b. Under Rule 13 of the Order of Business, the President shall appoint a Judge of Elections and not less than two (2) or more than six (6) tellers.
c. The Judge of Elections shall direct the tellers to distribute the ballots to all members in good standing. (By showing a current membership card or through verification by the Secretary.) Each teller should keep a record of the number of ballots distributed.
d. After a reasonable time (10 minutes in person, or up to 2 weeks if done electronically), the Judge of Elections shall declare the balloting finished and direct the tellers to collect the ballots. The number of ballots distributed and collected should tally to the number who voted.
e. The election board shall then count the votes for the various nominees for each office.
f. At the conclusion of the count, the Judge of Elections shall read/make notification of the results for each office and declare the persons receiving the greatest number of votes for each office elected to that office.

Section 3. All newly elected officers shall take office at the beginning of Rule 15 "New Business" at the Annual Meeting.

Section 4. Ballots: The Secretary shall provide the Judge of Elections with printed or electronic ballots upon which shall be spaces provided for all elective offices and further spaces for Resolutions and/or By-Law changes. Such spaces are to be marked with a number.

Section 5. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee may be appointed to act as the Judge of Elections unless that person is a nominee for an elective office.

Section 6. Amendments to the By-Laws: Amendments to the By-Laws shall be made as set forth in Article VI of the Constitution.

a. All amendments shall take effect upon passing unless otherwise provided

The New Jersey State Fire Chiefs Association follows the Roberts Rules Of Order.

As amended through September 2025