

CONSTITUTION

ALABAMA STATE ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

(ASAFS)

Approved  
July 31, 2015

# CONSTITUTION

## ALABAMA STATE ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

### ARTICLE I – Name

The name of the organization shall be the Alabama State Association of Forensic Sciences, abbreviated as ASAFS.

### ARTICLE II - Purposes

The purposes of ASAFS are:

- A. To encourage and support the dissemination of information within the field of Forensic Sciences through training and to discuss problems of common interest; to foster professional friendship and cooperation among Forensic Scientists and support personnel; to stimulate research and development of new techniques within the field; to promote the use of standardized methodology and presentation of conclusions; to assist in maintaining a high level of professional competence among practicing Forensic Scientists and support personnel; and to lend assistance to colleges, universities, law enforcement and the various criminal justice entities in the development of Forensic Science.
- B. To promote and support the continuing study of Forensic Sciences and its role in the criminal justice system by various means, including (but not limited to) seminars and periodic meetings for the discussion of scientific and legal problems and the public interest in the role of Forensic Science.

### ARTICLE III – Membership

SECTION I. ASAFS shall have four classes of membership: Active, Charter, Retired, and Affiliate. Only Active, Charter, and Retired members of ASAFS shall have the right to vote at elections or other business of ASAFS and hold office.

- A. ACTIVE – Any person of professional competency, integrity, and good moral character employed by the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences or similar entity, who submits an application for membership and pays dues. The classification of Active member must be confirmed by a favorable vote of a majority of the voting members at an Annual Business Meeting.
- B. CHARTER – Any qualified person who submits a request for active or retired membership with the payment of dues prior to the adoption of the initial constitution (July 12, 1986) shall be classified as a Charter member.
- C. RETIRED – Any Active or Charter member may be proposed to the classification of

Retired class if the member is retired from the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences or is 65 years old and has worked in a Forensic career for twenty years. The classification of Retired member must be confirmed by a favorable vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members at an Annual Business Meeting. A Retired member shall be excused from the payment of dues.

D. AFFILIATE- Any student enrolled or who has completed a degree program in a course of study leading to a career in Forensic Sciences or any other person of good character in a closely related field with Forensic Sciences, upon the submission of an application and an endorsement in writing from an Active, Retired, or Charter member may become an Affiliate member upon the payment of dues and favorable vote of a majority of the voting members at a business meeting.

SECTION II. Application for membership or change in membership shall be submitted to the Secretary (Officers are described below) along with the endorsements and dues no later than one month prior to the Annual Business Meeting. These applications shall be forwarded to the chairman of the membership committee. This committee shall consider and make recommendations concerning each application to the members present at the Annual Business Meeting. Any back dues owed while the individual was a member must be paid before a new application can be considered. Upon a majority vote of the present active members at the Annual Business Meeting, late membership applications may be considered at that Annual Business Meeting for membership approval, pending the resolution of any back dues.

SECTION III. The amount of dues shall be set at Forty U.S. Dollars (\$40.00 USD) per year. However, upon a vote of two-thirds (2/3) the voting members at a business meeting or via electronic means, the required dues amount may be amended. Such an amendment shall be incorporated into this Constitution upon the requisite voting approval. Dues shall be invoiced following the Annual Business Meeting and dues are payable on or before the following Annual Business Meeting of ASAFS.

#### SECTION IV. Termination of Membership

A. Termination upon request of Member. Any member may terminate his/her membership in ASAFS by written request to the Secretary, but such termination shall not relieve the member of the payment of any back dues owed.

B. Termination for failure to pay dues. The Treasurer shall issue one (1) delinquent written dues notice between January 1 and June 30 of each year. Any member who remains delinquent in dues for two (2) consecutive years will automatically have his/her membership terminated. Any member dropped for the above reason shall be readmitted only upon the filing of a new application according to the rules and regulations governing applications.

C. Termination for cause. Any member may be expelled from ASAFS for unethical conduct, conduct detrimental to the profession of Forensic Science or conduct detrimental to the welfare of ASAFS. A member or members may initiate proceedings to expel another member for cause by petitioning the Ethics Committee in writing, who will present the matter at the next business meeting. A vote of three-fourth (3/4) the members is required to expel any member. Should the President feel it is necessary, an immediate expulsion initiative, to include the written motion for expulsion with any relevant supporting documentation, may be submitted to the membership by electronic means, requiring the same three-fourth (3/4) vote from the active members.

## **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS**

SECTION I. The officers of ASAFS shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

SECTION II. The officers of ASAFS must be active members of ASAFS in good standing and shall be elected at a business meeting of the members for a term of two years. Officers serving in place at the ratification of this 2015 Constitution version amendment will serve one additional year following ratification – Officers serving a term during the 2014-2015 term, shall continue to serve during the 2015-2016 term, giving them a two-year term, unless removed from office as provided in this Article, or the Officer chooses to vacate his/her position.

SECTION III. In the event of a vacancy in the Office of President, the Vice- President shall assume the duties of the President for the unexpired term until the next regular election. In the event of a vacancy of Vice-President, the Secretary shall assume the duties of the Vice-President until the next regular election. In the event of a vacancy of Secretary, the Treasurer shall assume the duties of the Secretary for the unexpired term until the next regular election. In the event the Treasurer must assume the position of Secretary, the President shall appoint a member in good standing to assume the duties of the Treasurer for the unexpired term until the next regular election. Should one of the Officers refuse to assume the duties of another office in the event of a vacancy, the President shall appoint a member in good standing to the vacant position for the unexpired term until the next regular election. If the vacant position is that of the President, the Vice President shall appoint a member in good standing to be the President for the unexpired term until the next regular election.

SECTION IV. Any Officer may be removed from office for unethical conduct, conduct detrimental to the profession of Forensic Science or conduct detrimental to the welfare of ASAFS. A member or members may initiate proceedings to remove an Officer for cause by petitioning, in writing (electronic or otherwise), to the Ethics Committee who will investigate the claim(s). Upon a majority determination by the Ethics Committee that the claim(s) are more likely true than not and are, as listed above, proper grounds for removal, shall present the matter to the active membership by submitting a written motion for removal, with any relevant

supporting documentation. Removal will require a three-fourth (3/4) vote from the active member roster approving the measure to remove the Officer. This may be done by electronic means. If the motion for removal involves any members of the Ethics Committee, the involved member(s) shall not participate in the process.

#### SECTION V.

- A. PRESIDENT – The President shall be the executive officer of ASAFS and shall preside at all meetings of the members. He/She shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and in general shall perform all duties incidental to the Office of President.
- B. VICE-PRESIDENT- The Vice-President shall perform such duties as may be assigned to him/her by the President. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the event of his/her death, resignation, removal, or upon his/her inability to perform his/her job as President.
- C. SECRETARY- The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of all meetings and shall receive and care for all business records and papers belonging to ASAFS. He/She shall maintain a record of all members' attendance at regular meetings.
- D. TREASURER – The Treasurer shall be responsible for all of the financial transactions of ASAFS. He/She shall bill, collect, and keep account of, and properly safeguard, all funds of ASAFS.

### **ARTICLE IV - ACCESS TO RECORDS**

The files, books, and records of ASAFS shall, at all reasonable times, be open to inspection and examination by any voting member. Upon vacating office for any reason, the past office holder must turn over all files, books, and records to his successor in office.

### **ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES**

SECTION I. Designation. In addition to the Executive Committee, consisting of the current President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, ASAFS shall have the following standing committees, with each chairman annually appointed by the President, unless otherwise states below: A. Membership, B. Historical, C. Nominating, and D. General Programs. Each standing committee shall present a report of its activities at the Annual Business Meeting. The membership of each committee shall be comprised as listed below, solicited during each Annual Business Meeting. If, for whatever reason, a committee's membership is not filled at the dismissal of the Annual Business Meeting, the newly appointed chair for the upcoming year of each unfilled committee shall be responsible for soliciting the necessary membership.

The functions and composition of these committees are:

A. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - The Membership Committee shall consist of a chairman and two (2) other voting members. It shall fulfill and monitor compliance with all requirements concerning the membership of ASAFS as stated in this Constitution. The Membership Committee shall present, from the applications received since previous deadline to submit timely applications, at the Annual Business Meeting, a roster of proposed new members. Unless approved by a majority of the active, present members at the Annual Business Meeting to approve the roster en masse, the Membership Committee shall present each new member individually for approval by the active, present members at the Annual Business Meeting, as provided in this Constitution.

B. HISTORICAL COMMITTEE- The Historical Committee shall consist of a chairman and two (2) other voting members. The Secretary shall serve as an ex officio member. The Historical Committee shall maintain all records, files, and exhibits relative to the history of ASAFS, as well as any other duties provided herein.

C. NOMINATING COMMITTEE – The Nominating Committee shall consist of a chairman and four (4) voting members. The nominating Committee shall be responsible for presenting nominations for President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer at each biennial business meeting, or otherwise required. This Committee will be appointed biennially to coincide with the term of office for the ASAFS Officers.

D. GENERAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE - The General Program Committee shall consist of the President (or his or her designee) and four (4) voting members. The General Program Committee shall be responsible for selecting the location, to include negotiations with prospective meeting host providers and the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, and preparing the program for each annual meeting. The Committee shall assist in the determination of fees to cover expenses for the meeting. The Committee shall have the authority to form any necessary subcommittees for the planning and execution of the annual meeting.

SECTION II. Special Committees, other than the standing committees, shall be formed, as necessary, as follows:

A. ETHICS COMMITTEE - The Ethics Committee, consisting of the Executive Committee and three (3) voting members appointed by the President shall be activated by the President when action against a member or Officer is initiated according to the regulations as set forth in Article III, Section IV-C and/or Article IV, Section IV of this Constitution.

The Ethics Committee shall:

1. Investigate all such claims of unprofessional conduct as enumerated.

2. Allow the accused and the accuser a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to be confronted.
3. Give a report and recommendation to the membership as provided.

If the motion for removal involves any members of the Ethics Committee, the involved member(s) shall not participate in the process. If the motion for removal involves the President, the line of succession shall be used to determine the proper initiating party. Should no proper, non-involved party be available, the chairperson of each succeeding standing committee, as listed above, shall join the line of succession.

B. OTHER COMMITTEE - Authority to appoint other committees. The President shall have the authority to appoint all other necessary and appropriate committees.

## **ARTICLE VI – EXPENDITURES**

SECTION I. Payment of Funds – Any and all expenses chargeable to ASAFS must be approved through the Executive Committee. No member of the Executive Committee or any Committee shall receive directly or indirectly any salary or compensation for services rendered. Generally accepted accounting principles shall be used to maintain the financials of ASAFS.

SECTION II. Funding for Special Classes or Meetings – Any member of ASAFS, upon written request and by approval of the Executive Committee, may receive funds from ASAFS for the furtherance of Forensic Science. Any fund balance not expended pursuant to the stated purpose will revert to the ASAFS Treasury.

SECTION III. Fiscal Year – The fiscal year shall be from the first (1<sup>st</sup>) day of October through the thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) day of September of the following year.

## **ARTICLE VII. Meritorious Service Honor Roll**

Upon approval from the Director of the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, there is to be a plaque at the Headquarters of the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences to be named “The Meritorious Service Honor Roll”.

SECTION I. Qualifications for the names of the individuals on the Meritorious Service Honor Roll are one of the following:

A. Qualifications

Qualifications for the names of the individuals to be considered for the Meritorious Service Honor Roll are the following:

1. Retirement from the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences with a

minimum of ten (10) years of ADFS service as an ADFS employee.

OR

2. Leaving the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences for health reasons or death with a minimum of ten (10) years of ADFS service.

AND

3. Letters of recommendation from the individual's supervisor and/or Departmental Director and at least one letter of recommendation from an ASAFS member in good standing submitted to the Historical Committee three (3) months prior to the next annual meeting. Such letters should state the significant contributions of the individual, which merit inclusion to the Honor Roll. Except for good cause shown, recommendation to the Honor Roll should be made within one year of the individual leaving service with the Department. The Historical Committee will certify that all applicant names meet the above requirements.

4. An individual who does not meet the minimum years of ADFS service may still be considered for the Meritorious Service Honor Roll if supporting proof of significant contribution(s) to the Department can be given. Supporting proof must consist of at least three (3) letters of recommendation from ASAFS members in good standing submitted to the Chairman of the Historical Committee three (3) months prior to the next annual meeting.

#### B. Approval of ASAFS Membership

1. Ballots containing the names of the individuals who have met the criteria for consideration along with the letters of recommendation will be distributed to the current active membership at the Annual Business Meeting.

2. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes of the active, present membership at the Annual Business Meeting will be considered approval by the membership.

Only the names and dates of service of the individuals are to be placed on The Meritorious Service Honor Roll. Only the month and year of beginning and ending dates will be used. No titles will be used.

Although membership in the Alabama State Association of Forensic Sciences (ASAFS) is not essential to be included on the Meritorious Service Honor Roll, it is appreciated. Membership in ASAFS will be acknowledged for each individual by engraving a star in

An individual designated as the "Caretaker" will be appointed by the President to maintain the plaque and bring it to annual meetings. Adequate funds are to be provided for proper maintenance and engraving of the Meritorious Service Honor Roll.

Before a name is added to the Meritorious Service Honor Roll, it would be appropriate for the Chairperson of the Historical Committee to read a brief summary of the individual's contributions to the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences.

## **ARTICLE VIII – RULES OF ORDER**

SECTION I. Unless otherwise ordered by a majority of the voting members present, the order of business at the annual meeting shall be as follows:

- A. Reading and approval of minutes
- B. Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committee.
- C. Reports of Special (Select or ad hoc) committees
- D. Special Orders
- E. Unfinished Business and General Orders
- F. New Business

“Robert’s Rules of Order” is suggested, but not required as the procedure of the meetings. The President shall determine whether “Robert’s Rules of Order” are required.

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

SECTION I. Any part of this Constitution may be amended by a two-third (2/3) vote of the voting active members present at an annual business meeting or via electronic means, provided that copies of each proposed amendment shall have been distributed to all active, eligible voting members at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting or voting deadline at which action is to be taken.

## **ARTICLE VIII – DISSOLUTION**

SECTION I. In the event of dissolution of the Alabama State Association of Forensic Sciences, after payment or satisfaction of all debts of ASAFS, the remaining assets and funds of ASAFS shall be conveyed or transferred by the Treasurer of ASAFS to Secretary of the Southern Association of Forensic Sciences, if still in existence, or to the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences.

Previous amendments:

CONSTITUTION ADOPTED: July 12, 1986

CONSTITUTION AMENDED: July 20, 1990

September 23, 1992

July 13, 2001

June 20, 2006

December 1, 2008 (by vote, Section IV, A, 3 & 4)