

OHIO VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER  
(OHIO VOAD)  
BYLAWS  
Revised: November 2023

**ARTICLE I. NAME AND RELATIONSHIP**

- Section A.** The name of this organization is the Ohio Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster hereafter referred to as Ohio VOAD. It is chartered as a State Member of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, Inc. hereafter referred to as (NVOAD).
- Section B.** Ohio VOAD is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, and for the receiving of resources and their distribution to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code, or are contractual members of Ohio VOAD.
- Section C.** The business address will be the address of the current secretary as provided on the attached roster of elected officials and organizational membership representatives.
- Section D.** All volunteer organizations that do not conflict with the rules and regulations of Ohio VOAD, active in disaster are eligible for inclusion in Ohio VOAD.
- Section E.** Ohio VOAD complies with the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) and the Ohio Revised Code (ORC).

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization shall be to coordinate voluntary organizations active in disaster response to foster more effective response to the people of Ohio in time of disaster through:

Cooperation (creating a climate for cooperation, information, and meeting together)

Coordination (fostering a common understanding and providing a liaison with public offices)

Communications (publishing and disseminating information)

Collaboration (develop goals and strategies to actively work together)

Ohio VOAD seeks to facilitate the availability of needed services and to encourage uniform, impartial provision of these services.

### **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIPS**

**Section A.** Ohio VOAD is not intended to be a competing agency but should be thought of as an umbrella organization of existing agencies. Each member agency maintains its own identity and independence yet works closely with other agencies to improve service and eliminate unnecessary duplication.

**Section B.** Organizations eligible for membership are those with not-for-profit structures with a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by a disaster without discrimination.

**Section C.** Membership Level, Definitions and Dues  
Membership in Ohio VOAD shall be at least, but not limited to, one representative from each of the agencies present in the state that are members of NVOAD. Additional volunteer organizations in Ohio that do not conflict with the rules and regulations of Ohio VOAD may be accepted as approved by the membership. Any number of representatives may attend regular and annual meetings, with voice, with the provision that each member organization will have only one (1) vote.

A. Membership will be divided into five levels: full, associate, partner, affiliate and contractual memberships

B. Membership Level Guidelines:

1. Full Member

- a. Maintains its own identity and independence yet works closely with other agencies to improve service and eliminate unnecessary duplication.
- b. Is a not-for-profit agency/organization, qualified under the Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c) (3), with a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by a disaster without discrimination.
- c. Shall have a voice and one vote on all issues.
- d. Shall receive all communications (newsletters, emails, letters, fliers, etc.)
- e. Shall be permitted to add a link on the Ohio VOAD website to their organization/agency.

- f. Shall be eligible for scholarships (as available) to attend national meetings and trainings.

## 2. Associate Member

- a. Maintains its own identity and independence yet works closely with other agencies to improve service and eliminate unnecessary duplication.
- b. A state incorporated organization serving the State of Ohio and functioning as a not-for-profit agency/organization not having an independent Internal Revenue 501 (c) (3) status or may be operating under the umbrella of a parent corporation having Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c)(3) but does with a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by a disaster without discrimination.
- c. Shall have a voice and one vote on all issues.
- d. Shall receive all communications (newsletters, emails, letters, fliers, etc.)
- e. Shall be permitted to add a link on the Ohio VOAD website to their organization/agency.
- f. Shall be eligible for scholarships (as available) to attend national meetings and trainings.

## 3. Partner Member

- a. May or may not qualify as a not-for-profit agency/organization under the Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c) (3) but does with a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by a disaster without discrimination – examples: individual churches, committees, commissions, offices (not individuals).
- b. Shall have a voice and one vote on all issues.
- c. Shall receive all communications (newsletters, emails, letters, fliers, etc.)
- d. Shall be permitted to add a link on the Ohio VOAD website to their organization/agency.

## 4. Affiliate Member

- a. Governmental agencies such as, but not limited to, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA), and county emergency management agencies (EMA).
- b. Shall have a voice on all issues but no vote.
- c. Shall receive all communications (newsletters, emails, letters, fliers, etc.)
- d. Shall be permitted to add a link on the Ohio VOAD website to their organization/agency.

## 5. Contractual Member

- a. Definition of Contractual Member
  - i. Have not independently secured 501(c) (3) status.
  - ii. Shall have a stated policy of commitment of resources to meet the needs of people affected by a disaster without discrimination
  - iii. May be an informal organization with elected officers, bylaws and mission statement
  - iv. If applicant seeks to be a long term recovery committee (LTRC) with Ohio VOAD 501(c) (3) approval, it must function in keeping with the National VOAD and Ohio VOAD LTRC (long term recovery organization LTRO) guidelines shall be included with membership application form.
- b. Application Procedure
  - i. Original application form is to be submitted to the Ohio VOAD Membership Chair with all supporting documentation to include:
    - (1) Contact person with:
      - (a) Name
      - (b) Position in organization
      - (c) Address
      - (d) Home & cell phone
      - (e) E-mail address
    - (2) Elected officers
    - (3) List of membership
    - (4) By-laws
    - (5) Mission statement
  - ii. Membership application is subject to final review and consent by Ohio VOAD membership chair and Ohio VOAD board of directors and approved by the Ohio VOAD Membership
- c. Members Privileges
  - i. Shall be eligible for 501(c) (3) status under the Ohio VOAD umbrella, upon application and recommendation of board and acceptance by membership
  - ii. Shall have a voice and one vote on all issues except any that may have a conflict of interest.
  - iii. Shall receive all communications (newsletters, emails, letters, fliers, etc.)
  - iv. Shall be permitted to add a link on the Ohio VOAD website.

- v. Shall be eligible for scholarships (as available) to attend national meetings and trainings.
- d. Financial Responsibilities
  - i. Annual dues shall be paid as set by Ohio VOAD as well as any other organization fees (e.g. audit fees)
  - ii. Annual dues shall be paid no later than 4 weeks following the summer Ohio VOAD quarterly meeting to maintain contractual membership in good standing.
  - iii. Nonpayment of dues for a period of two (2) consecutive years and no attendance at any general meeting, the member will be dropped from membership.
  - iv. Annual financial report to be submitted to Ohio VOAD Finance Director to be included in the organization's annual financial review and subsequent tax filings.
  - v. When a contractual organization opens a bank account, the bank signature card must include the Ohio VOAD treasurer or a board approved designee.
- e. Reporting Obligations- (to be made to the Ohio VOAD LTRC chair- e-mail submission is acceptable).
  - I. Roster of membership and officers submitted after each election with identified contact person and contact information.
  - ii. Minutes of all meetings.
  - iii. Other reports as outlined in the National VOAD LTRC guidelines and as requested by the Ohio VOAD LTRC
- f. Contractual organizations shall have a representative present at each Ohio VOAD quarterly meeting prepared to offer a verbal report on status of activities.
- g. All contracts and agreements established by a contractual member are subject to review and consent by the Ohio VOAD LTRC committee.
- h. Failure to faithfully follow these guidelines shall be:
  - First two (2) violations-
    - (1) Ten (10) days to correct any portion(s) of violation(s). In the event of an unforeseen event, a petition to the Ohio VOAD LTRC committee requesting an extension of time may be requested.

(2) If reported violation(s) are not corrected within this time period, termination recommendation of Ohio VOAD membership with no refunds from the Ohio VOAD treasury, shall occur.

- i. Upon the third (3) violation immediate termination from Ohio VOAD membership, with no refunds from Ohio VOAD treasury, shall occur.
- ii. Immediate termination recommendation if adherence to above notice provisions could result in jeopardy to Ohio VOAD's 501(c) (3) status.
- iii. Upon notification of termination from Ohio VOAD membership, former contracted members shall IMMEDIATELY cease the usage of Ohio VOAD's 501(c) (3) identification in ANY form, e.g., but not limited to, banking accounts and grant acquisition. Failure to comply may result in legal consequences.
- iv. Any infraction that shall result in jeopardy to Ohio VOAD's 501 (c) (3) shall be cause for immediate termination recommendation.

C. Member organizations are required to pay annual dues to help cover the cost of operation, i.e., postage, printing, and other administrative costs. Ohio VOAD will notify when dues are decided and shall be due upon receipt of notification.

D. In concurrence with the annual budget, the finance chair will recommend to the board of directors for their approval and the general membership's agreement for any changes to set amounts for dues with these percentages for each membership level. The Ohio VOAD Board may waive dues on a case-by-case basis based on financial hardship. Recommendation for this action will be brought to the board by the Membership Chair.

1. Full Member – dues: 100% of set annual dues
2. Associate Member – dues: 50% of set annual dues
3. Partner Member – dues: 50% of set annual dues VOAD
4. Affiliate Member – dues: none
5. Contractual Member – dues: 25% of set annual dues.

**Section D.** Membership will be contingent upon the conditions specified in the above paragraphs and other such criteria as established by Ohio VOAD in the guidelines.

**Section E.** Member organizations are expected to have representation at each regular meeting of Ohio VOAD. This representative shall have been elected or certified by the member organization to act as such a representative. If any member of the organization is not represented at two (2) consecutive meetings without notification to the Ohio VOAD

secretary and/or membership chair, the chair of Ohio VOAD will refer this lack of attendance to the membership chair.

#### **ARTICLE IV. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

- Section A.** There will be a minimum of quarterly, regular business meetings of Ohio VOAD per calendar year. The annual meeting will take place coincident with the last quarterly regular meeting of the calendar year.
- Section B.** Notification of meetings by mail or electronic communication no less than two (2) weeks in advance to all members shall constitute proper notice for the conduct of business at any quarterly or annual meeting.
- Section C.** Decisions on any question at a meeting of Ohio VOAD shall be made by simple majority vote (51%) of the member organizations present and voting. Meeting site and date may be decided as a final act of business at each current meeting or delegated to be decided by the Ohio VOAD board of directors.
- Section D.** Unless otherwise stated by the bylaws, current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be considered the general rule for the conduct of meetings.
- Section E.** Minutes will be taken by the Ohio VOAD secretary or a member designated by the chair in the secretary's absence and shall be distributed by mail or electronic communications and approved at the next quarterly meeting.
- Section F.** A quorum for the purposes of conducting business is defined as two members of the board of directors included in the twenty five percent (25%) of the representation from those groups in attendance and certified by the membership director on the basis of paid dues and regular attendance in accordance with Ohio VOAD Guidelines established annually.
- Section G.** Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the board of directors with as much notice as is practical noting the purpose of the gathering.

#### **ARTICLE V. FUNCTION IN DISASTER**

- Section A.** Ohio VOAD, represented by the chair, or his/her designee, will see to the best of his or her ability to coordinate the efforts of the member organizations. Designee serving in the State of Ohio Emergency Operations Center at the Ohio VOAD desk must have attained the requisite training as prescribed by Ohio EMA to be approved and authorized to serve.

**Section B.** Members are expected to provide Early Response information to include contact people, phone number and description of disaster response capabilities for the Ohio VOAD desk in the Ohio Emergency Operation Center.

## **ARTICLE VI. NOMINATIONS**

**Section A.** Membership of the nominating committee shall consist of representation from three (3) member organizations of Ohio VOAD and two (2) from the Ohio VOAD board of directors appointed by the chair, at the spring quarterly meeting of Ohio VOAD for the purpose of providing the broadest representation from the state as possible.

**Section B.** The nominating committee shall serve only until an election takes place.

**Section C.** The nominating committee will propose appropriate candidates for the board of directors' positions to the larger body of Ohio VOAD for election at the fall annual meeting each year. Nominations will be to three classes of three (3) years each, and such classes shall overlap so that at no time will all terms expire at the same time. Each class will be elected every third year. The chair, vice chair, and secretary will be in separate classes. The treasurer and financial committee chair will be in separate classes. The secretary and treasurer have a six year term.

**Section D.** It is encouraged that only one person per member organization hold an officer position concurrently so as to attain as broad a representation as possible for Ohio VOAD.

**Section E.** Election is to a specific office and does not preclude any member from being elected to a different office in a consecutive election.

**Section F.** The board of directors will be elected at the fall annual meeting and will begin their terms immediately upon the close of the meeting. New officer(s) shall assume their office at the beginning of the new year. Except being if the office has been vacant in the election year or earlier.

## **ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section A.** The board of directors shall consist of nine (9) officers: chair, vice chair, treasurer, secretary, education, finance, long term recovery, membership and communication.

**Section B.** With the exception of Secretary and Treasurer, term of offices are for three (3) years with a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. To aid in the concern for continuity Secretary and Treasurer will be six (6) years with a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. However, because of the concern for continuity with a wide variety of agencies and individuals, officers' terms, with the exception of Secretary and Treasurer, may be

extended by vote of the majority of those organizations present and voting at the annual meeting. No officer shall be eligible to serve for more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same office. The Secretary and Treasurer, are limited to two (2) consecutive six-year terms.

**Section C.** No person shall hold two officer positions at the same time.

**Section D.** The board of directors shall have the responsibility to fill a vacancy in its elected membership that may occur between annual meetings. The vacancy shall be filled by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the officers. The person shall complete the unexpired term and have the opportunity to run for consecutive term(s).

**Section E.** Removal of Board of Director member:  
A board member may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the board members present and voting. Recall elections, held by the membership, shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of the presentation to the chair of a petition signed by one-half of the organization's members qualified to vote. Board members under consideration for removal shall be notified no less than two (2) weeks before the vote. Such removal or recall of a board member shall be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the person so removed.

**Section F.** Meetings of the board of directors may be called by the board chair, vice-chair, or any two (2) board members.

Meetings of the officers may be held at the appointed place, including by means of mail and/or electronic communication, constituting a presence at the meeting.

A. Each board member will present a written report at the quarterly and general membership meeting.

B. The board of directors at their quarterly meetings, shall include, but not be limited to

1. Plan for the general membership quarterly meetings.
2. Develop training components under the guidance of the education committee chair for the general membership meetings.

**Section G.** Board of directors shall have the authority to act for Ohio VOAD between quarterly meetings within the adopted guidelines of the organization.

**Section H.** A member of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency is invited to serve as an ex officio non-voting member of the board of directors.

**Section I.** Each board member may appoint a committee, to be reported by the next scheduled meeting of the board of directors following the annual election to assist each board member in fulfilling their responsibilities of office.

**Section J.** The board of directors will be responsible for establishing a set of policies and procedures for the day-to-day operation of Ohio VOAD.

1. The policies and procedures may be reviewed and altered throughout the year under the direction of the board of directors and the approval of the general membership.
2. Upon approval the policies and procedures are authorized by Ohio VOAD and amended to these Bylaws.

**Section K.** Only board officers have a vote in board of directors meetings while all others may have a voice. A quorum of half the officers is necessary for the conduct of business in the board of directors meeting.

Participation by a voting member at a meeting as described in Section F above constitutes presence in person of that voting member at the meeting for the purpose of determining a quorum.

## **ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS**

### **Section A. Chair**

The chair shall be the principal executive officer of the Ohio VOAD and, subject to the control of the board of directors, shall in general supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the Ohio VOAD. He/she or a designee shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors. He /she may sign documents or instruments which the board of directors have authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution shall be expressly delegated by the directors or by these bylaws to some other officer or agent of the Ohio VOAD, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. He/she shall in general perform all duties incident to the office of the chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the board of directors from time to time.

### **Section B. Vice Chair**

The vice chair shall preside at meetings of the membership and of the board of directors in the absence of the chair. The vice chair shall assume the position of the chair in the event the chair fails to complete his/her term of office. He/she shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the chair or by the board of directors. He/she shall assume the responsibilities for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency emergency operations center desk, the response protocols, matrix, and other disaster related information or projects. He/she shall chair the bylaws, policies procedures committees. Shall advise and train all members according to the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order and provide conflict resolution at board of directors and general membership meetings.

### **Section C. Secretary**

The secretary shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as otherwise required. The secretary shall have

custody of the Ohio VOAD records. He/she shall maintain a registry of postal addresses for each member, official representative of each member, and board of director, which shall be furnished to him/her by such member organization and the board member. He/she shall in general perform the duties incident of the offices of the secretary, assist communication chair in website maintenance and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the chair or by the board of directors.

**Section D. Treasurer**

The treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds of Ohio VOAD. He/ she shall receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to Ohio VOAD from any source. He/she shall deposit all such monies in the name of Ohio VOAD in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with these bylaws. He/she shall work with the finance committee chair to prepare for the audit. He/she shall in general perform all of the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the chair or by the board of directors.

**ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES**

Standing Committee: the following committees shall exist as the standing committees of the organization -- education, finance, long term recovery, membership and communication.

**Section A. Education:**

This committee shall be chaired by the education chair providing opportunities for Ohio VOAD members and the general public to learn about each other's mission, their roles in a disaster, and how Ohio VOAD can assist in a disaster situation.

**Section B. Finance:**

This committee shall be chaired by the finance chair providing the fiscal policy and engagement of the auditing process.

**Section C. Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC):**

This committee shall be chaired by the LTRC chair providing assistance with the development and maintenance of LTRCs throughout the disaster cycle.

**Section D. Membership:**

This committee shall be chaired by the membership chair providing information about Ohio VOAD to prospective members, recruit new members, and follow up on inactive members.

**Section E. Communication:**

This committee shall be chaired by the communication chair providing for internal and external voice of Ohio VOAD using various forms of communication and maintenance of the Ohio VOAD website.

**Section F. Ad Hoc Committees**

An ad hoc committee is approved by the general membership when the need arises to carry out a specific task. At the completion of their work a final report is submitted to the membership and the committee disbands.

**Section G. Ex Officios to the Board**

The Board of Directors shall have the power to invite ex officios to serve as advisors on subject matters to the board. Ex officios shall not maintain a vote on the board of directors.

**ARTICLE X BUDGET AND FINANCE**

**Section A.** The finance committee chair in coordination with the treasurer will create, develop, present, and monitor the annual budget of Ohio VOAD. The budget will be approved or recommendations given by the board of directors with the concurrence of the general membership at the fall annual meeting.

**Section B.** Ohio VOAD funds shall be managed by the Ohio VOAD treasurer, accounted for under the oversight of the finance chair, reviewed by the board of directors, and presented for approval and/or recommendations by the majority of the voting members present at each quarterly meeting.

**Section C.** Ohio VOAD may conduct fund-raising, distribution of funds and grants under the policies and procedures of the Ohio VOAD 501(c) (3) non-profit incorporation policies and procedures.

**Section D.** An annual audit will be conducted upon the treasury under the guidance of the finance chair prior to the annual meeting of Ohio VOAD, reviewed by the board of directors, and presented for approval and/or recommendation at the annual meeting of the general membership. The fiscal year of the treasury will be from November 1 to October 31 of the following year.

**Section E.** No part of the net earnings of the Ohio VOAD shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, directors, or other private persons except that Ohio VOAD shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof.

**Section F.** No substantial part of the activities of the Ohio VOAD shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Ohio VOAD shall

not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which is deductible under section 170(c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code

**Section G.** Upon the dissolution of the Ohio VOAD, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

**Section H.** Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of Ohio VOAD is then located, exclusively or such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

## **ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

**Section A.** Proposed bylaw amendments must be distributed by mail or electronic communications to all member organizations no less than two weeks prior to a meeting at which the amendments will be considered.

**Section B.** Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote at a quarterly meeting.

**Section C.** Proposed amendments may be submitted by Ohio VOAD member(s) to the Ohio VOAD secretary for distribution to the board of directors for discussion and action at the next quarterly meeting.

## **ARTICLE XII. PERIODIC REVIEW**

The board of directors will conduct a review of these bylaws at least every three (3) years or assign an ad hoc committee to be convened by the vice chair for this purpose.

Formally adopted and approved at Columbus, Ohio by electronic meeting  
this 15th day of November 2023

ATTEST:

Jeff Walker  
Chair, Board of Directors of Ohio VOAD

Sister Michael Marie  
Secretary, Ohio VOAD