

Southern New York Volunteer Firefighters Association
Constitution & By-Laws



**SOUTHERN NEW YORK VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION
EXCERPTS From ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

We, the undersigned citizens of the United states, and residents of the state of New York, and in the counties of Kings, Queens, Bronx, Suffolk, Richmond, Nassau, Westchester, New York and Rockland, do hereby certify that we desire to form an association for purposes hereinafter mentioned, in pursuance of an act of the Legislature of the state of New York, entitled "An act relating to membership corporations constituting chapter 43 of the General Laws passed May 8th, 1895, and known as Chapter 559, Laws of 1889", and do hereby declare:

FIRST- The particular object for which the said association is formed is to promote the advancement of the Volunteer Firemen of Southern New York. **Second-** The corporate name or style by which said association shall be known is the "Southern New York Volunteer Firemen's Association."

Third- The territory in which the operation of said association is to be principally conducted is the Counties of Kings, Queens, Suffolk, New York, Richmond, Nassau; Westchester, Bronx and Rockland in state of New York.

Fourth- The number of directors who shall manage such corporation shall be (18) eighteen.

Fifth- The time for holding the annual meeting of said association is in the month of June, in each year.

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CONSTITUTION ARTICLE 1

SECTION 1. The title and name of this association shall be the "Southern New York Volunteer Firefighters Association".

SECTION 2. This association shall function principally in the counties of New York, Kings, Queens, Suffolk, Richmond, Nassau, Westchester, Bronx and Rockland.

SECTION 3. The object of this association shall be for the advancement of the interests of the Volunteer Firefighters of Southern New York.

SECTION 4. Any bonafide Volunteer Fire Department, Fire Company, Fire Police, Fire Patrol, Volunteer Firefighters Association, Fire District, Fire District Association, Firefighters Veteran or Benevolent Association legally organized and within the territory of this association and any active or exempt volunteer Firefighter who is a member of any of the aforesaid Firemanic Organizations may be elected to membership in this Association. In the case of individual members, the presiding officer or Secretary of the organization of which they are a member shall certify as to the validity of their membership. A delegate who has been elected to represent his organization in this Association, and who is an Active or Exempt Volunteer Firefighter, may automatically become a member of this Association by paying the annual dues.

SECTION 5. Any member of this Association may be elected an Honorary Member by the Board of Directors at any meeting of such Board by the unanimous vote of those present. Honorary Members shall be entitled to all privileges of the Association except voting.

SECTION 6. Each President at the completion of his term of office shall be considered a paid-up life member, be presented with a Past President's badge and a gold membership card at the annual dinner.

SECTION 7. All members shall be presented with a paid-up life membership card upon becoming a member of the Firemen's Home, Hudson, New York.

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ARTICLE II

SECTION 1. Organizations which are members of this Association shall be entitled to two delegates to meetings of the Association. Credentials for each delegate must be signed by the Presiding Officer and Secretary of the organization he represents and be filed with the secretary of this Association prior to the annual meeting or presented to the Secretary at the annual meeting.

SECTION 2. Every delegate or member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote on each proposition at all meetings. Any organization or member failing to pay the annual dues shall forfeit membership and shall be restored to membership only by paying its entire arrearages.

SECTION 3. Any person who attends a meeting or Convention of this Association as a member or delegate, or combination thereof shall be entitled to one vote upon each proposition.

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1. The Officers of this Association shall consist of a President, First and Second Vice Presidents, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors composed of said Officers and 18 members elected as Directors. No one shall be eligible for election to the above-mentioned Officers or Board of Directors until they have been a member in good standing of this Association for two years. Officers and Directors shall be elected by the members of this Association at the annual meeting / convention and shall hold their office for two years or until their successors shall be elected and qualified. The terms of all Officers and Directors shall begin on the first Saturday after their election. Directors from the various counties shall number as follows: 3 from Nassau County, 3 from Suffolk County, 2 from Westchester County, 1 from Rockland County, 1 from the 5 counties of the City of New York and 3 Directors at large. The 4 Junior Past-Presidents shall also serve as Directors. A plurality of the votes of members present and entitled to vote shall constitute an election.

SECTION 2. The delegates and members from each county shall at the annual meeting / convention present the names of their members for the Board of Directors. In the event that any County does not present the names of members for the Board of Directors, they may be elected at large.

SECTION 3. Past Presidents not included in Article III, Section 1 shall be members of the Board of Directors, but have no vote.

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SECTION 5. The Recording Secretary shall be Secretary of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV

SECTION 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association, both regular and special, sign all orders drawn on the Treasurer, and call special meetings whenever the President shall deem it necessary, or at the request of eight (8) members of the Board of Directors, at such time and place as said Board shall direct. The President shall annually appoint the Chaplains, and Sergeant of Arms.

SECTION 1.1 The President shall appoint standing committees of “at least” nine (9) members to be known as the Legislative Committee, a committee of nine (9) members to be known as the Topics Committee, a committee of three (3) members to be known as the Benevolent and Exempt Association Committee and a committee of three (3) members to be known as the Auditing Committee and such other committees the Association or Board of Directors may direct.

SECTION 2. In the absence of the President at a meeting, the First Vice President, and in their absence the Second Vice-President, shall preside and perform all duties of the President.

SECTION 3. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a complete record of the proceedings of the Association and of the Board of Directors; to receive and to answer all communications pertaining to the Association; to keep a list of all of its members, and to receive and place before the Association all reports of committees. They shall also make such reports as the President may from time to time require, and at the May meeting / convention they shall make a full report as to all matters pertaining to their duties as secretary. They shall notify each member by email or card of every regular and special meeting, giving at least fifteen days’ notice of said meeting, and upon the expiration of their term of office, deliver to their successor all books, papers, and other property of the Association, which they may have in their possession.

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SECTION 4. It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to collect all dues and monies due the Association and keep a correct account of same, and remit all money collected to the Treasurer promptly and take a receipt for same; to give a card to each member who shall have paid the annual dues according to these By-Laws, entitling such member or delegate to the rights and privileges of members of the Association. They shall report delinquent members / Organizational members to the Board of Directors and also make such reports as the President may from time-to-time request, and make a full annual report at the annual meeting / convention. Upon the expiration of his term of office, deliver to their successor all books, papers, monies and other property of the Association, which they may have in their possession.

SECTION 5. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to receive all monies belonging to the Association from the Financial Secretary and deposit same immediately with such bank as may be designated by The Board of Directors, to the credit of the Southern New York Firefighters Association; and shall pay all drafts properly drawn and presented to the treasurer for payment, signed by the President or the Recording Secretary. The Treasurer shall make a full report at the annual meeting / convention of the monies received and disbursed. All checks shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the President or First Vice President; two signatures are required. The Treasurer shall also make a report at such times as the President or Secretary shall require, and upon the term of office, deliver to their successor all books, papers, monies and other property of the Association, which they may have in their possession.

SECTION 6. It shall be the duty of the Sergeant at Arms to preserve order and decorum in the meeting of the Association, to examine membership cards and to allow none but duly qualified members to enter the meetings of the Association; they shall govern themselves and be under the direction of the President at all times.

SECTION 7. The duties of the Board of Directors shall be to contract all debts, provide means for their payment, approve or disapprove all bills against the Association, fill all vacancies in the office of the Board of Directors or other offices. They shall have the power to instruct the President to call special meetings. Eight (8) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SECTION 8. It shall be the duty of the Legislative Committee to attend to all matters referred to them by the Association, or Board of Directors.

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SECTION 9. It shall be the duty of the Topic Committee to procure speakers at the annual convention and at such other time as directed by the Association, and such meeting shall be at the call of the Chairman of said Committee.

SECTION 10. It shall be the duty of the Benevolent and Exempt Committee to protect and promote the interest of all Benevolent and Exempt members and their Associations and to actively support continuance of all statutory benefits.

SECTION 11. It shall be the duty of the Auditing Committee to audit the accounts of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and make their report at the annual Convention.

SECTION 12. Any officer or any member of the Board of Directors, or any Committee, absenting himself from two (2) meetings a year shall be declared vacant except illness or some other unavoidable cause prevents them from attending, and is so reported and excused by a vote of the meeting.

SECTION 13. It shall be the duty of the Chaplains to conduct an annual Memorial Service, in memory of the deceased members of the Association; they shall also perform such other duties as may be requested by the President, or members of the Association.

ARTICLE V

SECTION 1. The Annual meeting / convention of said Association shall be held the second Saturday in the month of May, each year.

SECTION 2. Should no place be selected at any convention to hold the next annual meeting / convention, the Board of Directors shall designate a place to hold the same.

SECTION 3. A failure to hold any annual meeting at the time designated in this Constitution shall in no wise work dissolution of this Association.

SECTION 4. The Association shall have power to alter, amend, or revise this Constitution and By-Laws, but the same shall not be altered, amended or revised except at an annual meeting by a plurality vote of the members present and entitled to vote. All proposals to alter, amend or revise this constitution or By Laws shall be submitted in writing on or prior to the March meeting.

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SECTION 5. The fiscal year of this Association shall end on the 31st day of May in each year.

SECTION 6. The regular meeting of the Association shall be held on the first Saturday of the months of October and January and the last Saturday in March unless otherwise ordered. The Board of Directors shall have at least one meeting between each of the regular meeting and the regular and annual meeting, a minimum of four (4) meetings a year. The Board of Directors shall also meet at the call of the President or upon the call of five (5) members or more in good standing of the Association.

ARTICLE VI

SECTION 1. The annual dues for organizations shall be determined by the Board of Directors

SECTION 2. The annual dues for individual members shall be determined by the Board of Directors. New membership Applications approved at the March meeting will be credited with a paid-up dues card for the following year.

SECTION 3. All Fire Organizations, once properly admitted, may remain members of this Association as provided by this Constitution and By-Laws so long as their annual dues are paid.

SECTION 4. The annual dues shall be payable on or before April 30 of each year. All individual members and organizations, whose dues are three (3) year in arrears, shall announced at the annual meeting / convention that if their dues are not paid, they shall be dropped from membership at the January meeting.

SECTION 5. Endorsement of all candidates for office in the Firefighters Association, State of New York, shall be made only at the annual convention of. the Association; exception to the rule will be made only when a vacancy occurs, and must be filled immediately. Candidates who live within the nine counties represented by this Association must have been a member in good standing for one (1) year prior to his endorsement.

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BY-LAWS

SECTION 1. The Chair shall preserve order and decorum. All questions of order shall be decided the Chair, subject to an appeal of the Association.

SECTION 2. Every member when they speak shall, standing in their place, address the Presiding Chair, giving their name and place of residence.

SECTION 3. When two or more members shall rise at once, the Presiding Officer shall name the member who shall speak first.

SECTION 4. A member called to order shall immediately sit down, unless permitted to explain by the chair. If there is no appeal, the decision shall be conclusive.

SECTION 5. Every member who is entitled to vote shall vote on any question in which they have a direct, individual, pecuniary interest, and the President shall not vote unless in case of a tie.

SECTION 6. If any member requires it, the yeas and nays shall be taken and entered on the minutes of the Association.

SECTION 7. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the rules governing the Association.

These revised By Laws were adopted at the Annual Convention of the Association on May 20, 2023 by a unanimous vote of the membership.