National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas

Constitution

Established May 5, 1954

Adopted October 5, 1996

Revised (March 31, 2023)

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas.

ARTICLE II: Purpose

The Purpose of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall be to advance the general welfare of the blind of Arkansas and the nation; to function as an integral part of the National Federation of the Blind; to serve as a vehicle for collective action by the blind of Arkansas; to operate as a mechanism through which the blind and interested public can come together in chapters and state meetings to plan and carry out programs to improve the quality of life of the blind; to provide a means of collective action for parents of blind children; to forward the interests of blind students and provide them with a means of joint action and expression; to promote the vocational cultural and social advancement of the blind; to achieve the integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality with the sighted; and to take any other action which will improve the overall condition and standard of living (of)for the blind.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

At least a majority of the active members of this organization must be blind. All active members of chapters or divisions shall become active members upon payment of dues and fulfillment of membership requirements as set forth by the affiliate, chapter, division, and Board of Directors. Active members shall have the right to vote, serve on committees, speak on the floor, and hold office.

Section one: Disciplinary Action

Any member may be expelled, and any chapter or division may be expelled, suspended, or reorganized for violation of this constitution for conduct unbecoming to a member, chapter, or division of the Federation by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at any regular business session of this organization, or by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. The state convention of this organization may reinstate any person who has been expelled unless such expulsions have been confirmed by the Nation Convention or by the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, in which event the person may not be reinstated except by the National Board. Any person who feels that they have been unjustly disciplined or expelled from this organization, or any chapter or division which feels it has been unjustly disciplined, reorganized, or expelled, may appeal to the Board of the National Federation of the Blind, which may (in its discretion) consider the matter and make a binding decision; but until or unless the action of discipline, reorganization, or expulsion is reversed by the National Board, it shall continue in effect.

ARTICLE IV: CHAPTERS

Any organized group desiring to become a chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall apply for affiliation by submitting the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas a copy of its constitution and a list of the names and addresses of its members and elected officers. When the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas, either in convention assembled or by action of its Board of Directors, shall have approved the application, it shall issue to the Chapter a Charter of Affiliation from the National Office. Annually, on or before January 31st (of) each chapter shall provide to the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas a current list of its members, their names and addresses, and state dues. Upon request, a chapter shall also provide the State President with a list of the names and addresses of the chapter members and with a detailed financial report of the chapter for the past year. The fiscal year of this organization shall be the calendar year. As new members enter chapters, their names, addresses, and state dues shall be sent without delay to the Treasurer of the state organization. No group shall be accepted as a chapter, and no group shall remain a chapter unless a majority of its voting members are blind. The President, Vice President (or Vice Presidents), and at least a majority of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors of the chapter must be blind.

The President of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall be an ex officio member of each chapter and division. In the event of the dissolution of a chapter, or if(for whatever reason) the chapter ceases to be a part of the organization, its assets shall become the property of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas; and it shall forthwith cease to use the name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind or any variant thereof.

ARTICLE V: DIVISION

The Board of Directors shall establish procedures for admission of divisions and shall determine the structure of divisions. The divisions shall, with the approval of the Board, adopt constitutions and determine their membership policies.

ARTICLE VI: ELECTIONS

Elections shall be held annually at the state convention. Officer and board members shall be elected in the following manner, President, Vice President (or Vice Presidents), Secretary, Treasurer, and two (2) board positions shall be elected in even-numbered years. The remaining board members shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The President, Vice President (or Vice Presidents), and majority of the Board of Directors must be blind. The terms of these officers shall begin at the close of the annual state convention at which they are elected and shall serve for a period of two (2) years.

Qualified officers and board members shall be elected by a majority vote by the active members who are present and voting. Nominations for officers and board members can be made from the floor. Voting shall be by voice vote, standing vote, show of hands, or roll call vote. There shall be no proxy voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the list of nominees, and a second ballot shall be taken. This procedure shall continue until one of the nominees has received a majority vote from the

 active members present and voting.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

The duties of the officers follow:

Section One – Duties of the President

The duties of the President shall be to preside over all meetings of the members of the Board of Directors, to appoint all committees, and to implement all programs and policies established by the membership or the Board of Directors. The President is the representative of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas and is responsible for all business transactions and is to oversee all chapters and divisions within this affiliate.

Section Two – Duties of the Vice President (or Vice Presidents)

The duties of the Vice President (or Vice-presidents) shall be to perform and or assist with all of the duties normally carried out by the President when they are unable to discharge them and to assist the President in specific assignments. The Vice President (or Vice Presidents) are representative of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas.

Section Three – Duties of the secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be to keep an accurate record of all Board Meeting Minutes, Annual Business Meeting Minutes, Records of Annual Memberships, and Records of Convention Registrations. The Secretary shall provide such information as requested by the President or Board of Directors. The Secretary is responsible for all Corporate Records.

Section Four: Duties of the Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall be to collect all money due to the Affiliate and pay all bills owed by the Affiliate at the direction of the President or the Board of Directors; to make monthly Board Meetings and Annual Business Financial Reports of receipts and expenditures; and to perform all other duties assigned by the President or the Board of Directors. The Treasurer is responsible for all money belonging to the Affiliate. The Treasurer will assist with all Affiliate and Chapter financial business and provide (finical) financial information to the National Office.

Section Five: Duties of all Officers

All officers shall, at the expiration of their term of office, deliver to their successors all books, records, and equipment belonging to the affiliate.

Section Six: Duties of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall assist the President in the implementation of the programs and policies established by the membership and may authorize expenditures in exceptional circumstances.

ARTICLE VIII: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of this organization shall consist of the five (5) Constitutional Officers and four (4) additional Board Members, two (2) of whom shall be elected two (2) year terms at the annual convention during even numbered years, and two (2) of whom shall be elected for two (2) year terms at the annual convention during odd number years. The four (4) Board Members shall be elected in the same manner as that prescribed for the election of officers. The Board shall meet at the call of the President or on written call signed by by any five (5) of the Board Members. The Board shall advise the President and shall have charge of the affairs of the organization between conventions. At least five (5) members of the Board must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum to transact business. A majority of the board must be blind. If for any reason, a position on the Board of Directors is vacated, the membership of the Affiliate shall be informed by the President as soon as possible. If the vacated office is neither that of the President nor the first Vice President, the President, with the advice and the consent of a majority of the remaining board, shall determine whether or not to fill the vacancy by appointment. If the position is filled by appointment, the new appointee shall remain in office until the next regularly scheduled election for that office. If the office of the President is vacated, the first Vice Present shall immediately assume the office of the President. If the office of the President and the First Vice President is vacated, the Second Vice President will assume the office of the President, and a special election shall be held to appoint new Vice Presidents at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX: MEETINGS

Section One – Annual Convention

This organization shall hold an Annual Convention, the time and place shall be fixed by the membership or (if the membership so decides) by the Board of Directors or the President. At least fifteen (15) active members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business at any annual convention.

Section Two – Special Meetings

The President of the organization may call a special meeting of the body at any time they, or a majority of the board of Directors, deems such action to be necessary. At such special meeting, at least fifteen (15) active members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business, and written notice must have been sent to the President of each chapter and division and to the members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES

The President may appoint such committees as the President deems necessary for the organization or the Affiliate Board. The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

ARTICLE XI: AFFILIATION

The National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind and shall furnish to the President of the National Federation of the Blind annually on or before January 31st of each year, a list of the names and addresses of its members and elected officers. A copy of the constitution of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas and all amendments to the constitution shall be sent to the President of the National Federation of the Blind without delay at the conclusion of the Annual State Convention.

The National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall not merely be a social organization but shall formulate programs and actively work to promote the economic and social betterment of the Blind. This organization, its chapters, and divisions shall comply with the provisions of the Constitution of the National Federation of the Blind. Policy decisions of the National Federation of the Blind (whether made by the National Convention or the Nation Board of Directors) are binding on this organization, its chapters, divisions, and members, and this organization shall participate affirmatively in carrying out such policy decisions. As a condition of affiliation, it is agreed by this organization the National Federation of the Blind (whether by action of the National Convention or the National Board) has the power to expel or discipline an individual member and to expel or reorganize a state affiliate, chapter, or division. In the event of reorganization, the assets of the affiliate. And its chapters and divisions belong to the reorganized affiliate, and the former affiliate, chapters, and divisions shall dissolve and cease to exist. The name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof, is the property of the National Federation of the Blind, and this organization or any of its chapters or divisions which cease to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind (for whatever reason) shall forfeit the right to use the name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof. The President of the National Federation of the Blind shall be an ex officio member of this organization and each of its chapters and divisions.

ARTICLE XII: DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND CONVENTION.

This Organization shall elect each year at least one (1) delegate and at least one (1) alternate delegate to attend the Convention of the National Federation of the Blind. No person shall be elected as a delegate or alternate delegate unless they are an active member of this organization in good standing. To the extent of the resources of this organization, the expenses of the delegate or the alternate delegate to attend the Convention of the National Federation of the Blind. The appointed delegate attending the National Convention should submit all expenses to the National Office for reimbursement. If the Affiliate pays for the attending delegate, then the expenses must be submitted to the National Office for reimbursement to the Affiliate.

ARTICLE XIII: DUES

The dues of this organization shall be ten dollars (10) per year, payable on or before January 31st of each year, in accordance with Article IV of this Constitution. Chapters and divisions shall remit their current year state dues by their members to the Treasurer of this organization. New members shall pay their state dues for the current year upon joining a chapter or division.

ARTICLE XIV: DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

The funds of this organization shall be deposited in a bank to be selected by the Treasurer with the approval of the President. The Treasurer shall be bonded at the request of the President or the board of Directors. All financial obligations of this organization shall be discharged by check, credit card, or electronic transfer issued on order of the President and signed by the Treasurer, approved by the membership or the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XV: DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this organization, or if (for whatever reason) it ceases to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind, its assets shall be given to the National Federation of the Blind, to be held in trust for a reorganized affiliate in the state, in the event that no affiliate is reorganized in the state for two (2) years from the date this organization ceases to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the blind

, the assets become the property of the National Federation of the Blind.

If the dissolution of this organization should occur and if at that time the National Federation of the Blind is no longer a tax-exempt organization under the provisions of the federal Internal Revenue Code or the National Federation of the Blind has been dissolved, all assets of this organization shall be given to an organization with a similar purpose which has received tax-exempt certification from the federal Internal Revenue Service.

ARTICLE XVI: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular Annual Business Meeting of this organization by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the active members present, and voting provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the membership. The proposed amendments must be read at the annual business meeting at the state convention. All amendments must be in compliance with the provisions of the Charter of Affiliation received from the National Federation of the Blind and with the policies of the National Federation of the Blind.

ARTICLE XVII: Code of Conduct

The National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas shall abide by the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct. All individuals within the organization, including all attendees at NFB-sponsored events, are expected to refrain from the unwelcome and harmful misconduct outlined in the Code, including but not limited to discrimination, abuse, misuse of power, sexual misconduct, conflict of interest, fraud, and other forms of misconduct.

OFFICIAL PLEDGE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind, to support the policies and programs of the Federation, and to abide by its Constitution.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the National Federation of the blind is to achieve widespread emotional acceptance and intellectual understanding that the real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight but the misconceptions and lack of information which exist. We do this by bringing blind people together to share successes, to support each other in times of failure, and to create imaginative solutions.