# Model Constitution: Chapter of Affiliate CONSTITUTION OF THE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Revised February 23, 2021*

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter “Chapter”.

## ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shall be to advance the general welfare of the blind of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ area, of the state of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and of 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 the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ area; to operate as a mechanism through which the blind and interested public can come together 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; and to take any other action which will improve the overall condition and standard of living of the blind.

## ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

### **Section One - Active Members**

At least a majority of the active members of this organization must be blind. Any person may become an active member of this organization by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at any regular business meeting, and shall have the right to vote, serve on committees, speak on the floor, and hold office.

### **Section Two - Affiliation**

Membership in this organization automatically establishes membership in the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the National Federation of the Blind.

### **Section Three - Expulsion**

Any member may be expelled for violation of this Constitution or for conduct unbecoming to a member of the Federation by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at any regular business meeting of this organization. The state convention of this organization may reinstate any person who has been expelled unless such expulsion has been confirmed by the National Convention or by the National Federation of the Blind Board of Directors, in which event the person may not be reinstated except by the National Convention or by the National Board. Any person who feels that they have been unjustly expelled from this organization may appeal to the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, which may (in its discretion) consider the matter and make a binding decision.

(**NOTE**: Articles IV and V deal with the numbers and terms of Officers and Board Members. The suggested structure of the board recommended in this model constitution is suggested for an average size chapter, ranging from twenty to one hundred members. The larger chapters, those with more than one hundred members, may choose to add a Second Vice President and two additional Board members. As a chapter/division grows the members may amend the constitution to grow the structure of the board as needed.

## ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

There shall be elected annually a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The terms of these officers shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected and qualified. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the active members who are present and voting. Election shall be by voice vote, standing vote, or roll call vote, unless at least four-fifths of the active members who are present and voting decide that a secret ballot shall be used. 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. The duties of each officer shall be those ordinarily associated with that office. The President, the Vice President, and a majority of the Officers must be blind.

## ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of this organization shall consist of the four (4) constitutional officers and two (2) additional members. The two (2) Board Members shall be elected at the same time and in the same manner as that prescribed for the election of officers. The Board shall meet at the call of the President or on request by any three (3) of the Board Members. The Board shall advise the President and shall have charge of the affairs of the organization between meetings. At least a majority of the members of the Board must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum to transact business. The Board may be polled by telephone, electronic ballot, or mail ballot on any questions. A majority of the Board must be blind.

## ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

### **Section One - Regular Meetings**

This organization shall hold regular meetings at a time and place to be determined by the membership. At least \_\_\_\_\_ active members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business.

### **Section Two - Special Meetings**

The President of this organization may call a special meeting of the body at any time the President, or a majority of the Board of Directors, deems such action to be necessary. At such special meeting at least one-third of members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business.

## ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

The President may appoint such committees as the President deems necessary.

## ARTICLE VIII. AFFILIATION

The Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shall be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the National Federation of the Blind and shall furnish to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at least annually a list of the names and contact information of its members and elected officers. A copy of the Constitution of the Chapter and of all amendments to the Constitution shall be sent for review to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the National Federation of the Blind without delay.

The Chapter 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 shall comply with the provisions of the Constitution of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the provisions of the contract appearing on the back of the Charter of Affiliation issued to state affiliates by the National Federation of the Blind. Policy decisions of the National Federation of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (whether made by the National Convention or the National Board of Directors or the State Convention or the State Board of Directors) are binding on this organization, and this organization shall participate affirmatively in carrying out such policy decisions. As a condition of affiliation, it is agreed by this organization that the National Federation of the Blind (whether by action of the National Convention or the National Board or the State Convention or State Board) has the power to expel or discipline an individual member and to expel or reorganize a state affiliate or local chapter. In the event of reorganization, the assets of this organization shall belong to the reorganized chapter or if no reorganization occurs for a period of two years, to the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the former chapter 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, if it ceases 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.

## ARTICLE IX. DUES

The dues of this organization shall be $\_\_\_\_ per year, payable in advance and expiring on December 31 each year, necessitating renewal annually. The Chapter shall forward $\_\_\_\_ per year to the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for each member. Any member who has not paid dues for the current year will be considered delinquent until they have paid their dues for the current year. No person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of dues. If a member fails to pay dues for two (2) or more consecutive years, they will be considered inactive and the chapter will need to re-instate them with an affirmative vote at the time they choose to again be an active member.

## ARTICLE X. 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. If the members so vote, the Treasurer shall be bonded. All financial obligations of this organization shall be discharged by check or electronic processing, issued on written order of the President, and signed or approved by the Treasurer.

## ARTICLE XI. 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 of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, its assets shall be given to the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to be held in trust for a reorganized chapter in the area. In the event that no chapter is reorganized in the area for a period of two (2) years from the date this organization ceases to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the assets become the property of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular 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 and read at a previous business session and provided it is in compliance with the provisions of the Charter of Affiliation received by the state affiliate from the National Federation of the Blind and with the policies of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the National Federation of the Blind. Any amendments to this constitution that are not reviewed, accepted, and archived by the board of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_ and the National Federation of the Blind will not be considered approved policy of the chapter in accordance with the charter of affiliation. Amendments shall be forwarded for approval and reviewed in a timely fashion.

## ARTICLE XIII. CODE OF CONDUCT

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shall abide by the [National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct](https://www.nfb.org/about-us/history-and-governance/code-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.