

By Laws

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE MONTANA STATE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

AS AMENDED AND APPROVED 2026

SECTION I

ARTICLE 1: This organization shall be known as the Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association.

SECTION II

ARTICLE 1: The objectives of the Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association is the bringing together its departments to discuss ways and means for the betterment of the fire services and reducing unnecessary loss of life and property; to exchange ideas and all questions affecting the fire services; to develop a bond of friendship and understanding among the members of the fire service; to promote the development of the fire service through a progressive program of education, public relations and legislation.

ARTICLE 2: *Mission Statement: Bringing information to the forefront for those who volunteer to protect life and property. Providing a gateway to membership benefits, available programs, nationwide training, along with district information in order to better equip you and your department.*

SECTION III

ARTICLE 1: The Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association shall be comprised of eight districts.

ARTICLE 2: Each district shall have a Vice-President.

ARTICLE 3: The authority of the district shall be limited to the district and will be subservient to the jurisdiction of the Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association.

SECTION IV

ARTICLE 1: The President, Vice-President-at-large, must be registered delegates representing different and separate department membership.

ARTICLE 2: The Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association shall have a President, Vice-President-at-large; eight District Vice-Presidents, Legislative Vice-President and a Secretary-Treasurer and Legislative Vice-President.

ARTICLE 3: The duly elected officers ~~and the immediate past president~~ shall constitute the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 4: A majority (7 members) of the Board shall constitute a quorum to transact legal business of the Board.

ARTICLE 5: The President shall be elected by the member organizations present at the annual state convention. The nominee must be a registered delegate to be elected. The President's term of office shall be two years. The election of the President shall be held on odd numbered years. If said officer chooses not to fulfill the two-year term, the vacancy shall be filled by election of delegates to the next annual convention. Nothing herein shall be construed to mean that the President will be prevented from serving succeeding terms.

ARTICLE 6: The Vice-President-at-large shall be chosen in the same manner and under the same restrictions as the President. The term of office shall be two years. Election of Vice President-at-large shall be held on even numbered years. If said officer chooses not to fulfill the two-year, the vacancy shall be filled by election of delegates to the next convention. Nothing herein shall be construed to mean the Vice President-at-large shall be prevented from serving succeeding terms.

ARTICLE 7: The President shall appoint the Secretary-Treasurer from within this fire service organization subject to Executive Board approval.

ARTICLE 8: There shall be one Vice President from each of the eight (8) districts in the state. District Vice-Presidents shall be elected by only those member organizations within their own respective districts attending the annual [Volunteer](#) State Convention. The term of office shall be two years. Election of odd numbered Districts Vice-Presidents shall be held on odd numbered years, election of even numbered Districts Vice-Presidents shall be on even numbered years. If said officer chooses not to fulfill the two-year term, the vacancy shall be filled by election of delegates to the next convention. Nothing herein shall be construed to mean the Districts Vice-President shall be prevented from serving succeeding terms.

SECTION V - DUTIES

ARTICLE 1: President: It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Association and its Executive Board; to appoint all committees not otherwise provided for and perform such duties as may be required of the office by the annual convention or the Executive Board, and shall be [or an appointed](#) delegate to the National Volunteer Fire Council ([NVFC](#)), [911 Board or any other boards](#), if so needed.

ARTICLE 2: Vice-President-at-large: In the absence of inability of the President, the Vice-President-at-large shall perform all duties of that office and when the President is presiding, shall assist that officer in every way possible. Should a vacancy occur in the office of President, the Vice-President-at-large shall at once assume all the duties and responsibilities of that office.

ARTICLE 3: Districts Vice-Presidents: It shall be the duty of the Vice-Presidents, that sometime within ten (10) months after taking office, shall set up a district meeting centrally located within their respective district, for a day or evening meeting, whichever is more convenient. They shall mail out a notice of such a meeting to all departments in their district at least thirty (30) days prior to such a meeting, and a notice of such meetings is to be mailed to the Secretary/Treasurer of this organization. These meetings shall be for the purpose of hearing comments or other suggestions for the good of this Association. It shall also be the duty of the District Vice-Presidents to preside at all district meetings called in their respective areas. Each shall sit as a member of the Executive Board and in the event of vacancies in the office of State President and Vice-President-at-large, shall select a successor at the earliest possible convenience after the vacancy occurs, and to perform such other duties as shall be prescribed by the Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association in annual convention.

ARTICLE 4: Secretary-treasurer: It shall be the duty of the Secretary-Treasurer to keep a complete record of the proceedings of the association and its Executive board and the standing committees of which he/she shall be an ex-official member. The secretary-Treasurer shall (1) keep a true and correct record between the Association and its members; (2) cause to be prepared and issue to the members and all others directed by the Executive Board a complete report of each annual convention; (3) collect all

monies due the Association from all sources and shall have custody of the funds of the Association and all monies belonging to the Association shall be deposited in a bank or banks approved by the Executive Board and deposited in the name of the Association; (4) keep a true and correct record of all monies received and disbursed and pay no money except under proper warrant and all payments of accounts shall be by Association check. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be bonded as provided and in the amount a determined by the Executive Board. The Secretary-Treasurer shall employ such assistance as may be deemed necessary (and with approval of the Executive Board) for the proper discharge of the business of the Association, which assistance shall be paid for by the Association. No officer or member shall incur any expense in the name of the Association without the authority of the Executive Board of the Association in convention except the Secretary-Treasurer for necessary expenses of that office. The Secretary-Treasurer shall close the annual report on the last day of may and shall submit the same at the next annual convention. At the expiration of the term of office, the Secretary-Treasurer shall deliver to the successor all monies, books and papers with all vouchers and other property belonging to or held in trust for the Association.

ARTICLE 5: All checks of drafts on the bank account of the Association shall be over the signature of the Secretary-Treasure or the President or such other state officer as may be designated.

ARTICLE 6: Executive Board: It shall be the duty of the executive board to conduct all business of the Association not otherwise provided for between conventions. They shall have full power to omit from the printed minutes anything, that in the opinion of the Board shall be objectionable to the Association or its members. Any action of the Executive board will be subject to a review at the membership present may override the sum paid to the Secretary-Treasurer as compensation for time and effort. The Executive board will determine the sum set aside in a fund for the Secretary-Treasurer to pay the cost of postage, stationery, supplies and other petty expenses which may be incurred in conducting the official business of the Association.

ARTICLE 7: Duties of the delegate to the National Volunteer Fire Council shall include attending the annual meeting of the Council and reporting to this Association at its next convention. The delegate shall also take any information from the Association to the annual council meeting that he/she is directed to present from the Executive Board.

SECTION VI - ANNUAL CONVENTION

ARTICLE 1: Departments inviting the Association to hold the next annual convention in their city shall understand that the Association expects and requires that they shall furnish without cost to the Association a suitable hall for holding convention sessions, committee rooms and an exhibit hall. The Executive Board is hereby authorized to amend the above requirement when in their judgment circumstances require that they do so.

ARTICLE 2: Badges for the convention shall be left up to the discretion of the sponsoring department. The annual convention shall be held on the second full week of June each year, unless otherwise voted on by the membership from the floor.

ARTICLE 3: All matters pertaining to the opening of each annual convention and shall be responsible for securing a clergyman and speakers required for the opening ceremonies and memorial service. The President or the Executive Board may, however, add to the list of speakers should they deem it advisable.

ARTICLE 4: The entire program of the opening ceremonies, memorial service and entertainment to be provided during the convention shall be submitted to the Executive Board at least three (3) months before being adopted or published ([check list](#)).

ARTICLE 5: Convention Site Guidelines

Rooms: ~~100~~ 50 Rooms within ~~a reasonable distance~~ 30 minutes from the convention site. Motor home and camper space available

Registration:

Pre Registration

\$120.00 a single no name. \$150.00 a couple \$30.00 no refundable deposit by June 1st. Late registration \$145 single. Of the \$120.00 registration, \$30.00 will go back to the Association ~~if the~~ host department ~~may~~ request ~~financial~~ assistance ~~to obtain a speaker from the board~~.

If there is an extra charge for ~~the ladies~~ any other program the price must be known before registration or pre-registration.

Put a place on the registration for deceased members of the department.

Meeting Room:

One room with seating capacity ~~of up to~~ 200 people ~~minimum~~ with a table for the E Board

Training Meeting Rooms:

Up to six rooms with seating capacity of 25 each

Transportation:

Must be available if the rooms and meetings are not in the same complex.

Storage:

A secure place for apparatus and vendor equipment

Meal Requirements:

Thursday evening meal: (Host department can charge for this with registration.) Refreshments to be furnished by the department bidding for the next convention

Friday: Cold breakfast furnished by vendors (See Note)

Friday lunch: Furnished by host department

~~Friday Evening~~ Banquet: (Host department can charge for this with registration)

Saturday: Cold breakfast furnished by vendors (see Note)

Saturday Barbecue or picnic: (Host department can charge for this with registration.) Refreshments to be furnished by the department bidding for the next convention

NOTE: Hot breakfast can also be served by the host department at a charge (This will give a person a choice)

Entertainment:

~~Friday Banquet~~ night some type of entertainment

Host Site Responsibilities:

Attend E-Board conference calls/meetings 6 months prior to convention.
Have a City Official as the speaker for Opening Ceremonies.

Association Meeting Requirements:

Thursday: 1700 to 1800 Executive Board Meeting/Host Department representative(s)

Thursday: 1800-1900 Break out into Committees after Board Meeting

Friday: 0800-0900 Opening Ceremonies. Nothing to be scheduled during this time.

Friday: 1200-1300 General Association Meeting, Lunch served at meeting. Nothing scheduled at this time

Saturday: 1200-1300 General Association Meeting, Lunch Served at meeting. Nothing to be scheduled at this time

SECTION VII - MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 1: Membership. Membership of this Association shall consist of: A-Active B-Associate C-Honorary

ARTICLE 2: Active Member. Active members shall comprise duly qualified members of regularly organized volunteer public or private fire department, such organized volunteer public or private fire department shall, upon filling a property executed application form together with the prescribed dues for the current calendar year to the Secretary-Treasurer of the State Association, shall be admitted membership in the Association. Such member departments shall be permitted to send as many delegates to any annual convention of the Association as they wish, however, regardless of the number of individual delegates so sent, they shall be entitled to only one (1) vote per delegation.

ARTICLE 3: Associate Members. Associate members shall consist of fire commissioners, retirees, members and individuals representing firms and corporations interested in the protection of life and property.

ARTICLE 4: Honorary Members. Honorary members shall be elected by a majority vote of the active members at a regular convention provided, however, that all names proposed for honorary membership must be first submitted to the Executive Board for approval at least 24 hours in advance of the proposed election.

ARTICLE 5: Any and all questions and disputes involving those eligible to any of the three classes of membership shall be decided by a vote of the Executive board of the Association. Their decision in such matters shall be final.

ARTICLE 6: Only active members of this Association shall be eligible to hold office or have a right to vote.

SECTION VIII

ARTICLE 1: The presiding officer shall preserve order and decorum and shall take no part in debates when presiding. All questions of order will be decided by him/her, subject to appeal to the convention, and upon such a appeal the vote shall be taken without debate. The presiding officer may state the reasons for decisions given and shall put the question as follows: "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" A two-thirds (2/3) majority of those voting shall be necessary to reverse the decision of the chair.

ARTICLE 2: Every member when speaking or offering a motion shall rise in place, state name and place of residence and respectfully address the presiding officer and when finished speaking, shall at once resume their seat. When speaking the member shall confine comments to the question under debate.

ARTICLE 3: When two or more members rise to speak at the same time, the presiding office shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

ARTICLE 4: A member called to order shall immediately cease speaking and resume their seat until the point of order in question has been decided, then the member shall again be entitled to the floor.

ARTICLE 5: A motion to take the previous question shall always be in order except when a member is in possession of the floor and must be put without debate and if supported by a majority of the members present, voting shall be declared carried and no further debate of amendments shall be in order until the main question shall have been decided.

ARTICLE 6: A motion to adjourn shall always be in order except when a member is in possession of the floor, or a vote is being taken or has been decided that a vote not be taken. A motion to adjourn is not debatable, but a motion to adjourn to a given time is open to debate.

ARTICLE 7: In any question coming before the convention for which no provision has been made in the constitution by-laws or rules of order, the presiding officer shall be guided in the decision by the rules laid down in the Robert Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 8: Order of Business

A - Call to order

B- [Pledge of Allegiance](#)

C - Opening ceremonies

D - Roll call of officers and departments

E - Welcome address

F - New business

G - Appointment of committees

H - Addresses by all officers

I - First reading of amendments

J - Guest speaker

K - Committee reports

L - Memorial service

M - Convention site committee; unfinished resolutions

N - Unfinished and/or new business

O - final reading of amendments

P- Nominations of officers and elections

Q - Good of the order

R – Adjournment

SECTION IX

ARTICLE 1: The President shall appoint special committees from time to time on any subject deemed necessary for the benefit of the Association.

ARTICLE 2: The following convention committees of the Association shall be:

A – Resolutions

B - Legislative and Lobby

C - Nominating

D - Convention Site

E - Sergeants-at-arms

F – Auditing

G- Prevention

SECTION X

ARTICLE 1: The annual dues and legislative assessments are due ~~and payable by starting~~ January 1 of each calendar year for all departments to this Association. The amount to be paid annually shall be decided upon by the Association.

SECTION XI - AMENDMENTS

ARTICLE 1: Amendments and/or changes to the By-laws of this Association shall be presented to the Secretary-Treasurer and shall be presented to all participating departments electronically, thirty (30) days prior to the annual convention.

ARTICLE 2: A two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members at the annual convention will adopt amendments and/or changes to the By-laws.

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