

**District of Columbia - Maryland Chapter of the Association for
the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually
Impaired**

Bylaws

Revised and adopted February 2023

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the District of Columbia - Maryland Chapter of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired; and shall be known in abbreviated form as the DC-MD AER Chapter.

The DC-MD AER Chapter is a State Chapter of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AERBVI) and is subject to all of its rules and regulations.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the chapter shall be to support professionals who provide education, independent living, employment, and rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired by:

- (1) offering professional development through conferences, seminars, publications, leadership training experiences and other means of promoting professional growth and education;
- (2) promoting professionalism through encouraging university training and professional credentials, adoption of and adherence to high quality standards and professional codes of ethics for individuals and agencies, and interdisciplinary cooperation in the field;
- (3) working to improve and expand services for individuals with visual impairments by promoting:
 - (a) research,
 - (b) innovative program development,
 - (c) public policy benefiting persons who are blind or visually impaired and the professionals who work with them, and
 - (d) a forum for discussion of issues and opportunities related to service delivery.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility. The membership of the DC-MD Chapter shall be open to all persons, agencies and organizations in DC-MD, as defined by the International AER bylaws. Memberships are renewable annually.

Section 2. Non-Discrimination. No person, agency, or organization otherwise eligible shall be denied membership in the DC-MD Chapter on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

Section 3. Membership Dues. Dues for individual and corporate memberships shall be established by the International AER office.

Section 4. The membership shall elect the Board of Directors and officers of the chapter.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the DC/MD AER Chapter shall consist of a President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and an immediate Past-President.

Section 2. Succession. The office of the President of the Chapter shall be filled in succession by the President-Elect, and the President becomes Immediate Past-President.

Section 3. Vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall serve the remainder of the term as acting President and, upon completion of said term, shall assume the presidency in normal order. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President-Elect in the first 9 months of the term, there shall be a special election to replace him or her. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President-Elect in the last 3 months of the term, there shall be no replacement until the annual election at which time there shall be elected a President and a President-Elect. In the event of a vacancy in both the offices of President and President-Elect, the immediate Past President shall preside over the Board of Directors. The Board will then select a President to serve until the next election, at which time a President and a President-Elect shall be elected. In

the event of a vacancy in the office of Secretary or Treasurer or Past President, the Board of Directors may appoint a replacement from its own body or the general membership for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the chapter, the Immediate Past President, and four other elected members, known as Board Members-at-Large.

Section 2. Quorum. A quorum shall be constituted by the presence of a majority of the currently occupied seats on the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Purpose. The Board of Directors shall serve as the governing and policy-making body of the chapter between meetings of the membership.

Section 4. Elections. The membership shall elect a President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Board Members-at-Large. Terms of Board Members-At-Large shall be staggered to ensure that two new members will join the Board Members-At-Large every two years.

Section 5. Terms of office. Terms of office of newly-elected board members shall commence at the close of the annual meeting. The President, President-Elect, and immediate Past President shall serve a one-year term in their respective positions, which will total three years of service. The Secretary, Treasurer and Board Members-At-Large shall serve a term of two years.

Section 6. Vacancy. In the event that any Board Member-At-Large is unable to serve for any reason, the Board may elect from the membership a person to complete the unexpired term of that elected board Member-At-Large.

Section 7. The Board of Directors shall review and approve the budget of the chapter as recommended by the Treasurer prior to presentation to the membership.

Section 8. The Board shall report its activities and decisions to the membership at each annual meeting of the chapter or by other means of communication.

Section 9. Removal of Director(s). Any one or more of the Directors may be removed with cause by action by the Board of Directors, provided there is a quorum of the Board present and that seven days written notice of removal is given to the Director(s) concerned.

Section 10. Votes. Each member of the Board of Directors shall have the right to debate any question before the Board and other assembly of chapter. Each Board member shall have one vote. No officer or Director shall be permitted to assign his/her vote to another Board member.

Section 11: Student Representative. The board shall appoint, when applicable, a student board member, who should currently be enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral program in the field of vision rehabilitation, orientation & mobility, or education of the visually impaired. This member will not have voting rights, but will present student points of view as they pertain to chapter activities. The student board member will also disseminate chapter information to other students and attend board meetings and other chapter activities. The term would last one year. A student may be re-appointed if still a student.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The President, upon assuming office, shall appoint standing committees and special committees, with approval of the Board. All appointed committee chairpersons and committee members shall be a member in good standing of AER.

Section 2. Standing Committees are:

- Program Committee
- Membership and Nominations Committee
- Awards Committee
- Mentor Committee
- Media Committee

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

Section 1. An annual business meeting shall be held at a time and location determined by the Board of Directors. The membership will then be notified of the time and place of the meeting.

Section 2. The Chapter shall make every reasonable effort to schedule and hold its annual business meeting in a location where all members can participate and be fully accommodated without discrimination on the basis of gender, age, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. All voting members shall be eligible to vote for the offices of President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Directors.

Section 2. The Nominations Committee shall recruit candidates, prepare the ballot and conduct the election.

ARTICLE IX. CHAPTER RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. The chapter shall, as appropriate, aid in planning and support and participate in regional and international meetings sponsored by AER.

Section 2. Tax Status. The chapter is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations under Section 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding section of any future Federal tax code). As such, the chapter shall keep apprised of and follow any regulations required of organizations filed under Section 501 (c) 3.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting held during the annual meeting or by mail ballot or email ballot, or by any other forms of electronic communication involving the entire voting membership of the chapter.

Section 2. Amendments shall originate in one of the following manners: 1) submission by petition of at least fifteen voting members, or 2) submission by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Notification: Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Board of Directors at least forty-five days prior to consideration by the Board and shall, in turn, be submitted to the entire membership no less than thirty days prior to the final vote by the membership.

Section 4. Adoption of Amendments. Adoption of proposed amendments requires a quorum and affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership present at a business meeting or the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of mail ballots returned, or by the same amount - two-thirds - by a form of electronic communication.

ARTICLE XI. QUORUM

Section 1. A quorum at a regular business meeting shall be constituted by the presence or participation of at least ten percent of the voting membership.

ARTICLE XII. BUDGET AND FISCAL

Section 1. In addition to the membership fees, the chapter may accept gifts or donations from interested individuals or groups and may conduct fund-raising activities as approved by the membership and/or Board of Directors for the general purposes or special projects of the chapter.

Section 2. All income shall be handled by the Treasurer. All monies shall be deposited in accounts by the Treasurer and approved by the President and Board of Directors. All funds deposited shall be reported to the President and Board of Directors.

Section 3. Regular expenditures of the chapter shall be made in accordance with a budget prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the Board of Directors. All checks for expenditures must be signed by the Treasurer or by the President.

Section 4. Any special projects of the chapter will be maintained under the direction of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Any non-budgeted expenditure or amount(s) in excess of the approved budget shall need the approval of the Board of Directors before payment will be considered.

ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. The Chapter, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws or in rules adopted by the Board of Directors, shall be governed in all of its meetings by parliamentary law as contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Section 2. Upon the opening of the annual membership business meeting and all board meetings, the President will announce the name of a qualified member who is at the meeting and who has agreed to serve as a Parliamentarian.