

Constitution and By-Laws of the
New York State Association
of Fire Chaplains, Inc.



DISCLAIMER: The use of the word "HE" is in no way indicative of Sex or Gender. It is used only in the sense of universal language.

ARTICLE I

NAME

Section 1 – The name of this Association is the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains, (NYS AFC) Inc., and is incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

ARTICLE II

MISSION STATEMENT

Section 1 – The mission of this Association is to unite all Chaplains of the State of New York in order to promote a deeper and wider knowledge of one another in the true ecumenical spirit and to establish statewide procedures of standardization in serving our fellow firefighters, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and God, our supreme Chief.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP AND REGIONS

Section I – Only Chaplains, duly elected or appointed of Fire Departments, Fire Companies and, Fire Department Associations of the State of New York and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies, including clergy and laity, are to be admitted to membership.

Section II – Honorary Membership may be awarded only on the recommendation of the Executive council of this Association and vote of the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Section III - All members of this Association, active in the fire department where he is authorized by the department to serve as a chaplain will also hold the position of delegate to the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains. The Chaplain is to insure a copy of this authorization letter is on file in the department's records.

Section IV - All members of this Association, and not applying as a Fire Department Chaplain, but as a Chaplain for a fire association local, county or state shall submit with the membership application a letter signed by the Chief of the Chaplain's department stating the Chaplain represents the fire department (name) and stating the Chaplain represents the fire department in membership to the Fire Association named, and holds the membership classification of Delegate to the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains.

Section V – Once a person becomes a Fire Chaplain and a member of the State Association he may continue his Association membership even though his status as a

Chaplain may change. He will have full rights of membership except the rights and privilege to hold any office or a membership on the Board of Directors.

Section VI – Any member in good standing for a period of ten (10) consecutive years will receive a Ten Year Recognition Award.

Section VII – Active Chaplains living outside the State of New York, who have never held membership in the NYSAFC, Inc. may upon submission of an application and payment of dues be enrolled as ASSOCIATE members. They may attend all meetings of the Association but will have no voting or office holding privileges.

Section VIII – There are six (6) regions covering all of New York State. These regions with their respective counties are:

- A. Region 1 – South
Bronx, New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Nassau, Suffolk
- B. Region 2 – East
Schenectady, Schoharie, Albany, Rensselaer, Greene, Columbia, Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Westchester, Rockland
- C. Region 3 – North
St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Herkimer, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren, Essex, Saratoga, Washington
- D. Region 4 – Central
Oswego, Cayuga, Onondaga, Madison, Tompkins, Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Tioga, Broome, Delaware
- E. Region 5 – West Central
Monroe, Wayne, Livingston, Ontario, Yates, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Chemung
- F. Region 6 – Western
Niagara, Orleans, Erie, Genesee, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany

Section IX – Members are by virtue of their county of Chaplaincy, members of one of the six regions.

ARTICLE IV

COMMITTEES

Section I – Committees are to be formed to promote the interests and mission of the Association.

Section II – There shall be the following committees and their purpose:

- A. **Memorial Committee** – to study and standardize all memorial ceremonies; and to plan the Annual Memorial Service.
- B. **Training Committee** – to see to the adequate training of chaplains as chaplains and actual fire fighting, and EMS chaplains.
- C. **Program Committee** – to propose, develop, and implement interesting and purposeful programs for all meetings or conventions, and to promote mutual understanding in ecumenicity; at the Annual Meeting in consultation with the training committee.
- D. **Publicity Committee** – to make known by whatever media will best serve the existence, mission and achievements of this Association.
- E. **Finance Committee** – to study ways and means to provide funds to carry on the work of the Association; and prepare annually a guideline budget;
- F. **Membership Committee** – to recruit and retain chaplains. The second Deputy Chief Chaplain shall be the chairperson of this committee.
- G. **Nominating Committee** – composed of all active ex-chief chaplains, with the chairperson being the most recent ex-chief Chaplain.
- H. **Good & Welfare** – The executive Secretary and one other chaplain chosen by the Chief Chaplain.
- I. **Supply Committee** – to maintain an inventory and to prepare items of need and interest.
- J. **By-Law Committee** – to accept and review any By-Law changes proposed by membership, and to review the By-Laws every (5) five years.

Section III – The chairperson of the standing committees shall be appointed by the Chief Chaplain of the Association.

Section IV – Each committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least one other member chosen by the chairperson of that committee.

Section V – The Chief Chaplain may appoint any other committee as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS

Section I – The following officers are to be elected: Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chaplain, Second Deputy Chaplain, and nine (9) Directors.

Section II – Of the nine (9) directors, three (3) will be at-large, with one being elected each year, and the remaining six (6) will be elected to represent their home county region.

Section III – These shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the corporation.

ARTICLE VI

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section I – The Chief Chaplain shall preside at all meetings. The Chief Chaplain shall be an ex-officio, member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

Section II – In the absence of the Chief Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief will assume the responsibilities of the Chief Chaplain's office. If both are absent, the Second Deputy Chief will assume these duties.

Section III – The Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Executive Council immediately following each yearly election of officers. This officer will be in charge of the central office (wherever it might be located) of the Association and will act under the immediate direction of the Executive Council. He would be expected to recommend plans of work for the Association and would conduct the day to day business of the organization. The Executive Secretary will be responsible for the work that would otherwise be exercised by the Chief Chaplain but this arrangement would not change the duties of the Chief Officer as Presiding Officer and spokesperson for the organization.

Section IV (a) – The nine elected directors shall assist the Chief Chaplain in fulfilling their responsibilities of office, particularly by keeping the Chief Chaplain informed of all important conditions, facts, needs and problems pertaining to firefighters and emergency medical workers in New York State.

Section IV (b) - The six regional directors shall be responsible for:

- a. Regional meetings of the association
- b. In consultation with the Training Committee, arrange training programs for their respective regions.
- c. Organize a regional committee for carrying out meetings and training with one member from each county, if possible.

Section V – The Treasurer will be appointed by the Executive Council immediately following each yearly election of officers. The Treasurer shall have charge of all moneys of the Association, collected by the Executive Secretary or otherwise, and shall give his/her receipt to the Executive Secretary for same when required.

Section V (a) – The Treasurer shall keep a correct account of all receipts and disbursements and submit these accounts to the Executive Council when requested to do so.

Section V (b) – The Treasurer shall pay bills as approved by the Executive Council

Section V (c) - The Treasurer shall report the state of finances of the Association at each regular meeting of the Executive Council, and submit a written annual report, as of the end of the Fiscal year, at the annual general meeting.

Section V (d) – The Treasurer shall cause to have prepared by an outside independent CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM a compiled financial statement for the previous Fiscal year. Such financial statement shall be presented to the Executive Council at the annual general meeting.

Section V (e) – The Fiscal year of the Association shall be the Julian Calendar Year

ARTICLE VII

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

Section I – The nominating Committee shall be composed of all active ex-chief Chaplains. The chairman shall be the most recent ex-chief Chaplain.

Section II – The Nominating Committee shall submit a roster of candidates to the Chief Chaplain two months prior to the annual general election. Each member is to receive a copy of this roster by mail prior to the general election.

Section III – Nominations shall remain open up to the actual election for each office to allow for further nominations.

Section IV – All elections shall be by ballot with the majority of those present who are currently members in good standing and prevailing.

Section V – The Chief Chaplain, First and Second Deputy Chaplains are to be elected for a term of one year and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Chief Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes the office of the Chief Chaplain with the Second Deputy Chaplain assuming the office of First Deputy Chief Chaplain, with the office of Second Deputy Chaplain remaining open until the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. Should a vacancy occur in the office of First Deputy Chief Chaplain, the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes the office of the First Deputy Chief Chaplain, with the office of Second Deputy remaining open until the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. If a vacancy occurs in all of the above named officers, the Executive Secretary shall serve as temporary Chief Chaplain along with his secretarial duties. If the Executive Secretary; is unable to continue, the Executive Council shall appoint an Executive Secretary as provided in ARTICLE VI, Section III, and the above shall pertain. When an officer fills an unexpired term of another office, this shall not count against the requirement above which states, "Officers shall not serve more than two consecutive terms."

Section VI – Directors are to be elected for a three-year term with three elected each year. Should a vacancy occur on the Board of Directors through death, resignation, or removal, said unexpired vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Council at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section VII – The general election is to be held at the Spring Meeting. The newly elected officers will assume their duties immediately before the adjourning of the Annual Meeting.

Section VIII – Any elected officer or director may be removed from office for neglect or dereliction of duty by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII

MEETINGS

Section I – There shall be, at minimum, one two-day meeting of this Association each year at a place and time designed by the Chief Chaplain.

Section II – The Chief Chaplain has the power to call a special meeting of all members, his officers, and/or the Board of Directors as the need arises.

Section III – The order of business at any meeting shall be:

- A. Opening Prayer
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call
- D. Minutes
- E. Reports:
 - a. Chief Chaplain
 - b. First Deputy Chaplain
 - c. Second Deputy Chaplain
 - i. Membership
 - d. Treasurer's report
 - i. Finance Committee
 - e. Secretary
 - i. Good and Welfare
- F. Committee Reports
 - a. Memorial
 - b. Training
 - c. Program
 - d. Publicity
 - e. Nominating
 - f. Supplies
 - g. By-Law Committee
 - h. Other Committees

- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Adjournment & Closing Prayer

ARTICLE IX

DUES

Section I – The annual dues of the Association shall be set by the Executive Council unless changed by majority vote of the members present at a general meeting or special meeting of the Association. Dues are payable at the Annual Meeting or sent to the Executive Secretary.

Section II – Annual dues paid by Fire Departments, Companies or Associations will be for the office of Chaplain representing said group. If a Chaplain is changed in the course of the year, the new Chaplain's membership is continued under the annual payment without additional dues. The resigned Chaplain may continue in the Association through personal payment of dues under Section III of ARTICLE III.

Section III – Any member whose dues are one year in arrears shall receive a written communication from the Executive Secretary; stating the delinquency. If dues continue to be delinquent to the second year, the Chaplain's name shall be dropped from the official roster.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENTS

Section I – This constitution or By-Laws shall be amended in the following manner:

- A. Any proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Chief Chaplain no later than two (2) months prior to the annual general meeting, who will refer it to the By-law committee.
- B. The text of the amendment shall be included in the meeting notice prior to the meeting wherein a vote on the amendment will be taken.
- C. If a majority is present and voting at a general meeting favor it, the amendment shall become a part of the Constitution or By-Laws of this Association.

ARTICLE XI

CAPITAL ASSET FUND

Section I – The Association shall maintain a Capital Asset Fund of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) to be invested in savings accounts or certificates of deposit at the highest current rate of interest in denominations determined by the amount available and amount required by the highest interest rate. This capital investment, once set aside, shall remain inviolate with interest used for Association needs and expenses.

ARTICLE XII

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Section I – The executive Council with vote, shall consist of:

- A. Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chief Chaplain, Second Deputy Chief Chaplain; Board of Directors (9); immediate past Chief Chaplain.
- B. Ex-Officio (without vote); Executive Secretary; Treasurer; chairpersons of Committees; Ex-Chief Chaplains; and other officers elected or appointed.

Section II – The Executive Council shall handle the on-going business decisions of the Association, and shall direct the work of the Executive Secretary and the Treasurer. The Executive Secretary will be responsible for the day- to- day business of the Association.

Section III – The Executive Council shall meet at least three (3) times per year.

Section IV – The Executive Council may recommend for vote the general membership persons for honorary membership (See ARTICLE III, Section II).

By-Law revisions: 1985, 1995, 2004, 2007, and 2009