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**Constitution and By-Laws of the  
New York State Association of Fire Chaplains, Inc.  
(As approved April 27, 2014)  
(Updated – May 1, 2017)  
(Updated – June 17, 2020)**



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12 **ARTICLE I**

13 **ASSOCIATION NAME**

14

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

18 **ARTICLE II**

19 **MISSION STATEMENT**

20

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

26 **ARTICLE III**

27 **MEMBERSHIP AND REGIONS**

28

29 Section I – Only Chaplains, duly elected or appointed by Fire Departments, Fire  
30 Companies, Firematic Associations or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies  
31 within the State of New York, including clergy and laity, are to be admitted as a Full  
32 Member.

33

34 Section II – Honorary Membership may be awarded only on the recommendation of the  
35 Executive Board of this Association and by a majority vote of the membership at the  
36 Annual Meeting.

37

38 Section III - All members of this Association, active in the Firematic or Emergency  
39 Medical Services Associations where they are authorized to serve as a Chaplain, will  
40 also hold the position of delegate to the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains,  
41 Inc. The Chaplain is to ensure a copy of this authorization letter is on file in the  
42 department’s records.

43

44 Section IV – Anyone interested in becoming a member of this Association must submit  
45 with the approved membership application, a letter signed by the appointing officer of  
46 the organization that they represent. The NYSAFC, Inc., has the right to accept or  
47 reject any application for membership.

48  
49 Section V – Once a person becomes a Full Member of the NYSAFC, Inc. they may  
50 continue their Association membership even though their status as a Chaplain may  
51 change. If their status as a Chaplain changes, they will have the right to continue as a  
52 Member, but would be ineligible to hold any elected or appointed office on the Executive  
53 Board.

54  
55 Section VI – Any member in good standing for a period of ten (10) consecutive years  
56 will receive a Ten Year Recognition Award.

57  
58 Section VII – Active Chaplains living outside the State of New York, who have never  
59 held membership in the NYSAFC, Inc. may upon submission of an application and  
60 payment of dues be enrolled as an ASSOCIATE Member. They may attend all  
61 meetings and trainings of the Association, but would be ineligible to (1) vote (2) hold any  
62 elected or appointed office on the Executive Board.

63  
64 Section VIII – There are eight (8) regions covering all of New York State. These regions  
65 with their respective counties are:

66 **A. West Region**

67 Niagara, Orleans, Erie, Genesee, Wyoming, Chautauqua,  
68 Cattaraugus, Allegany

69 **B. West Central Region**

70 Monroe, Wayne, Livingston, Ontario, Yates, Seneca, Schuyler,  
71 Steuben, Chemung

72 **C. North Region**

73 Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, Essex

74 **D. North Central Region**

75 Oswego, Oneida, Herkimer, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren

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**E. Central Region**

Cayuga, Onondaga, Madison, Tompkins, Cortland, Chenango,  
Otsego, Tioga, Broome

**F. East Region**

Delaware, Schoharie, Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga,  
Washington

**G. South East Region**

Greene, Columbia, Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam,  
Westchester, Rockland

**H. South Region**

Bronx, New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Nassau, Suffolk

Section IX – Members are assigned to one of the eight regions by virtue of the county of their Chaplaincy;

Section X – There are four categories for membership in the NYSAFC, Inc.:

1. Full Member – Met the eligibility criteria on the official NYSAFC, Inc., application. A Full Member can participate in all training, hold any office and will have voice and vote at the Annual Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. To be a Full Member in good standing, the member must have their current year’s dues in the Association paid in full.
2. Member – A Full Member who has given up their role as Chaplain but wishes to remain as a member of the Association. The Member can participate in all training and will have a voice and vote at the Annual Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. The Member is ineligible to serve in any capacity on the Executive Board. To be a Member in good standing, the Full Member must notify the Executive Secretary of their status change and must have their current year’s dues paid in full.
3. Associate Member – Met the eligibility criteria on the official NYSAFC, Inc. Application, but lives outside of the State of New York. The Associate Member can attend trainings but will not have voice/vote at the Annual

108 Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. To be an Associate  
109 Member in good standing, the member must be currently appointed as a  
110 Chaplain and have their current year's dues in the Association paid in full.

111 4. Honorary – an individual recognized for their contributions to this Association.  
112 There will be no dues, nor will they have a voice/vote at the Annual Meeting  
113 or any Special Meeting of the association. The Honorary Member is ineligible  
114 to hold any elected or appointed office of this Association. The Executive  
115 Board will recommend to the annual meeting for approval those people  
116 deserving of Honorary Membership.

117

#### 118 Section XI, Conduct Unbecoming a Member

119 Any member suspected of disorderly conduct (a broad term describing conduct  
120 that disturbs the peace or endangers the morals, health, or safety of a  
121 community) or is found to be participating in activities not becoming of a fire  
122 chaplain, upon satisfactory evidence of two of the three chief officers (the Chief  
123 Chaplain, 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Chief Chaplain and 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Chief Chaplain) that an  
124 offense might have happened, shall present to the Board of Directors the  
125 individual's name and offense(s). With a three quarters (3/4) vote of the Board  
126 of Directors the individual shall be suspended until the Board of Directors has  
127 had the opportunity to complete a thorough investigation. At the time sufficient  
128 evidence has been produced, the Board of Directors (with a three-quarters [3/4]  
129 vote) shall have the power to dismiss the member, with the member's  
130 membership dues returned on a prorated basis.

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## 132 **ARTICLE IV**

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### 134 **COMMITTEES**

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

138

139 Section II – There shall be the following standing committees and their purpose as  
140 defined:

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- 142           **A. Memorial Committee** – to study and standardize all memorial  
143 ceremonies; and to plan the Annual Memorial Service.
- 144
- 145           **B. Training Committee** – to develop and provide all aspects of training for  
146 Chaplains, including Fire and EMS training, as deemed appropriate.
- 147
- 148           **C. Program Committee** – to propose, develop, and implement interesting  
149 and purposeful programs for all meetings or conventions, and to promote  
150 mutual understanding in ecumenicity and interfaith; at the Annual Meeting  
151 in consultation with the training committee.
- 152
- 153           **D. Publicity Committee** – to make known by whatever media will best serve  
154 the existence, mission and achievements of this Association.
- 155
- 156           **E. Finance Committee** – to study ways and means to provide funds to carry  
157 on the work of the Association; and prepare annually a guideline budget;
- 158
- 159           **F. Membership Committee** – to recruit and retain chaplains. The second  
160 Deputy Chief Chaplain shall be the chairperson of this committee.
- 161
- 162           **G. Nominating Committee** – composed of all active Past Chief Chaplains,  
163 with the chairperson being the most recent Past Chief Chaplain.
- 164           **H. Good & Welfare** – The Executive Secretary and one other individual  
165 chosen by the current Chief Chaplain.
- 166
- 167
- 168           **I. Supply Committee** – to maintain an inventory of supplies and to prepare  
169 items of need and interest, in consultation with the Executive Board.
- 170
- 171           **J. Constitution and By-Law Committee** – to accept and review any  
172 Constitution and By-Law changes proposed by the membership, and to  
173 review the Constitution and By-Laws every (5) five years.
- 174

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

177  
178 Section IV – Each committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least one other  
179 member chosen by the chairperson of that committee.

180  
181 Section V – The Chief Chaplain may appoint any other committees as deemed  
182 necessary.

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## 188 **ARTICLE V**

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### 190 **OFFICERS**

192 Section I – The following officers are to be elected: Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chief  
193 Chaplain, Second Deputy Chief Chaplain, and nine (9) Directors. These officers shall  
194 constitute the Board of Trustees of the Corporation.

195  
196 Section II – Of the nine (9) directors, one (1) will be at-large and eight (8) will be elected  
197 as Regional Directors to represent their home region. All directors will be elected by the  
198 General Membership with three directors being elected every two years.

199

200 Section III – All directors shall serve without compensation.

201

## 202 **ARTICLE VI**

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### 204 **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

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

209

210 Section II – In the absence of the Chief Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief Chaplain will  
211 assume the responsibilities of the Chief Chaplain’s office. If both are absent, the  
212 Second Deputy Chief Chaplain will assume those duties.

213  
214 Section III – The Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Executive Board  
215 immediately following each yearly election of officers. The Executive Secretary will  
216 maintain the central office (wherever it might be located) of the Association and will act  
217 under the immediate direction of the Executive Board. The Executive Secretary would  
218 be expected to recommend plans of work for the Association and would conduct the day  
219 to day operations of the organization. The Executive Secretary will be responsible for  
220 the work that would otherwise be exercised by the Chief Chaplain, but this arrangement  
221 would not change the duties of the Chief Chaplain as Presiding Officer and  
222 spokesperson for the organization.

223  
224 Section IV (a) – The nine elected directors shall assist the Chief Chaplain in fulfilling  
225 their responsibilities of office, particularly by keeping the Chief Chaplain informed of all  
226 important conditions, facts, needs and problems pertaining to firefighters and  
227 emergency medical workers in New York State.

228  
229 Section IV (b) - The eight (8) regional directors shall be responsible for:

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

235  
236 Section V – The Treasurer will be appointed by the Executive Board immediately  
237 following each yearly election of officers. ‘The Treasurer shall have charge of all  
238 moneys of the Association, collected by the Executive Secretary or otherwise, and shall  
239 give a receipt to the Executive Secretary for same when required.

240  
241 Section V (a) – The Treasurer shall keep a correct account of all receipts and  
242 disbursements and submit these accounts to the Executive Board when requested to do  
243 so.



244  
245 Section V (b) – The Treasurer shall pay bills as approved by the Executive Board.

246  
247 Section V (c) - The Treasurer shall report the state of finances of the Association at  
248 each regular meeting of the Executive Board and submit a written annual report, as of  
249 the end of the Fiscal year, at the annual general meeting.

250  
251 Section V (d) – The Treasurer shall cause to have prepared by an outside independent  
252 individual, a financial review of the Association’s funds. Such financial statement shall  
253 be presented to the Executive Board at the annual general meeting.

254  
255 Section V (e) – The Fiscal year shall be...May 1 – April 30

256  
257 Section VI – The Supply Officer will be appointed by the Executive Board immediately  
258 following the each yearly election of officers. The Supply Officer shall serve as the  
259 Chairperson of the Supply Committee with voice, but without vote at all meetings of the  
260 Association.

261  
262 Section VI (a) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall obligate funds for  
263 prototypes of items need and/or interest, as directed by the Board of Directors.

264  
265 Section VI (b) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall place orders with vendors  
266 subject to available funds and/or at the direction of the Board of Directors to bring the  
267 inventory to an adequate level.

268  
269 Section VI (c) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall assure that orders for  
270 supplies are processed in a timely manner.

271  
272 Section VI (d) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall store and monitor inventory

273

274 Section VI (e) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall assure that supplies are  
275 transported to the annual meeting of the association and any other event, as authorized  
276 by the Board of Directors.

277

278 Section VI (f) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall make deposits of supplies  
279 purchased in a timely manner and forward the notification of the deposit to the  
280 treasurer.

281

282 Section VI (g) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall provide a report of  
283 inventory, supplies ordered, and orders processed at each meeting of the Board of  
284 Directors.

285

286 Section VII – In the event of a conflict of interest, a director must recuse themselves  
287 from voting.

288

## 289 **ARTICLE VII**

290

### 291 **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS**

292

293 Section I – The Nominating Committee shall be composed of all active Past Chief  
294 Chaplains. The Chairperson shall be the most recent Past Chief Chaplain.

295

296 Section II – The Nominating Committee shall submit a roster of candidates to the Chief  
297 Chaplain prior to the scheduled Executive Board’s winter meeting. All nominees to the  
298 Executive Board shall be Full Members in good standing. Each member of the  
299 Association is to receive a copy of the roster, at least one month prior to the general  
300 election.

301

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

304

305 Section IV – All elections shall be by written ballot, unless there is no opposition, then a  
306 voice vote may be taken. The election will be determined by the majority of those  
307 present who are currently qualified members in good standing.

308  
309 Section V – The Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a term of two years and shall not  
310 serve more than one term. The First Deputy Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a one  
311 year term and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. If the First Deputy Chief  
312 Chaplain is elected for a second consecutive term, they shall automatically move into  
313 the Chief Chaplain’s position at the end of their second term, without being elected. The  
314 Second Deputy Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a term of one year and shall not  
315 serve more than two consecutive terms. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Chief  
316 Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes the office of the Chief  
317 Chaplain and the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain assumes the office of the First Deputy  
318 Chief Chaplain. The office of the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain will remain vacant until  
319 the next Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. Should a vacancy occur in the office of  
320 First Deputy Chief Chaplain, the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes  
321 the office of the First Deputy Chief Chaplain, with the office of Second Deputy remaining  
322 open until the next Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. If a vacancy occurs in all of  
323 the above named officers, the Executive Secretary shall serve as temporary Chief  
324 Chaplain along with their Executive Secretary duties. If the Executive Secretary is  
325 unable to continue, the Executive Board shall appoint an Executive Secretary as  
326 provided in ARTICLE VI, Section III, and the above shall pertain. When an officer fills  
327 an unexpired term of another office, this shall not count against the requirement above  
328 relating to serving consecutive terms.”

329  
330 Section VI – Directors are to be elected for a three-year term with three elected each  
331 year. Should a vacancy occur due to death, resignation, or removal, of a Director, the  
332 unexpired vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Board at their next meeting.

333  
334 Section VII – The general election are to be held at the Annual Meeting. The newly  
335 elected officers will assume their duties immediately before the adjourning of the Annual  
336 Meeting.

337  
338 Section VIII – Any elected officer or director may be removed from office for any cause  
339 by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.

340

341 **ARTICLE VIII**

342

343 **MEETINGS**

344

345 Section I – There shall be an Annual Spring Meeting of this Association at a place and  
346 time designed by the Chief Chaplain.

347

348 Section II – The Chief Chaplain has the power to call a special meeting of all members,  
349 officers, and Executive Board as the need arises. The meeting must be announced at  
350 least two weeks prior to the meeting “in person”, via “USPS mail” (sent to the address of  
351 record) or by “electronic means” (send to the e-mail address of record). The purpose of  
352 the meeting shall be clearly stated in the announcement. If the meeting is to be  
353 conducted by USPS or electronically, only a motion with a “Yes”, “No” or “Abstain”  
354 option shall be provided.

355

356 Section III – The recommended order of business at any Annual Meeting and Executive  
357 Board meeting shall be:

358

A. Opening Prayer

359

B. Pledge of Allegiance

360

C. Roll Call

361

D. Minutes

362

E. Reports:

363

a. Chief Chaplain

364

b. First Deputy Chief Chaplain

365

c. Second Deputy Chief Chaplain

366

d. Treasurer

367

1. Financial Report

368

2. Finance Committee Report

369

e. Executive Secretary

370

1. Membership

371

2. Communications

- 372 3. Good and Welfare
- 373 F. Committee Reports
- 374 a. Memorial
- 375 b. Training
- 376 c. Program
- 377 d. Publicity
- 378 e. Nominating
- 379 f. Supplies
- 380 g. Constitution and By-Law Committee
- 381 h. Other Committees
- 382 G. Old Business
- 383 H. New Business
- 384 I. Adjournment & Closing Prayer

## 385 **ARTICLE IX**

### 386 **DUES**

387 Section I – The annual dues of the Association shall be set by the Executive Board  
388 unless changed by majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting or a  
389 special meeting of the Association. Dues are payable at the Annual Meeting or may be  
390 sent to the Executive Secretary prior to the Annual Meeting.  
391  
392

393 Section II – Annual dues paid by Fire Departments, Companies or Associations will be  
394 for the office of the Chaplain representing said group. If a Chaplain is changed in the  
395 course of the year, the new Chaplain’s membership is continued under the annual  
396 payment without additional dues. The resigned Chaplain may continue in the  
397 Association through personal payment of dues under ARTICLE III.  
398

399 Section III – Any member whose dues are one year in arrears shall receive a written  
400 communication from the Executive Secretary (sent to the address of record); stating the  
401 delinquency. If dues continue to be delinquent for a second year, the Chaplain’s name  
402 may be dropped from the official roster.  
403  
404

405 **ARTICLE X**

406  
407 **AMENDMENTS**

408  
409 Section I – This Constitution and By-Laws shall be amended in the following manner:

- 410       A) Any proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive  
411             Secretary prior to the regularly scheduled Fall Executive Board meeting, who will  
412             refer it to the Constitution and By-Law Committee.
- 413       B) The Constitution and By-Law Committee will submit the proposed amendment to  
414             the Executive Board. If a majority of the Executive Board approves the proposed  
415             amendment it shall be forwarded to the membership of the Association for their  
416             consideration.
- 417       C) The text of the proposed amendment shall be included in the mailing sent with  
418             the proposed roster of officers (Article VII, Section II) prior to the Annual meeting  
419             wherein a vote on the amendment will be taken.
- 420       D) The amendment shall be adopted by a majority of those voting at the annual  
421             meeting. The proposed amendment shall become a part of the Constitution  
422             and By-Laws of this Association, as of the date of the approval, unless  
423             otherwise stated in the amendment.

424  
425 **ARTICLE XI**

426  
427 **FUNDS**

428  
429 Section I – The Association shall maintain a Capital Asset Fund of ten thousand dollars  
430 (\$10,000.00) to be invested in savings accounts or certificates of deposit.

431  
432 Section II – All contributions to the Association shall be in the form of cash, marketable  
433 stocks or bonds, real or personal property.

434  
435 Section III – All loans established by the Association require Board of Directors’  
436 approval, with the resolution submitted and approval duly received at an authorized  
437 meeting of the general membership.

438  
439 **ARTICLE XII**

440

441 EXECUTIVE BOARD

442

443 Section I – The Executive Board with vote, shall consist of:

444

445 1. Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chief Chaplain, Second Deputy Chief  
446 Chaplain; Directors (9); immediate Past Chief Chaplain.

447 2. Ex-Of (without vote); Executive Secretary; Treasurer; chairpersons of  
448 Committees; All Past Chief Chaplains; and other officers elected or  
449 appointed.

450

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

455

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

457

458 Section IV – The Executive Board may recommend to the Membership at the Annual  
459 Meeting those persons the deem deserving of Honorary Membership (See ARTICLE III,  
460 Section II).

461

462 **ARTICLE XIII** – In the event of dissolution, all assets of the Association will be  
463 donated to the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York, Inc. (FASNY).

464

465 *Constitution and By-Law revisions: 1985, 1995, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2014 and 2017.*