

**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF THE**  
**( INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME HERE )**  
**AS AMENDED IN GENERAL SESSION**  
**DATE OF RATIFICATION**

## **Preamble**

Whereas: We the members of the (INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME HERE), declare to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We unite for the good of our members and their families. To inculcate loyalty and allegiance to the United States; to improve the individual proficiency of our members in the performance of their activities among law enforcement officers; to encourage legislative, social, charitable and educational activities and change for and amongst our members; to cultivate a spirit of unity and mutual helpfulness among our members and the people we serve; to increase the efficiency of the law enforcement profession and thus more firmly to establish the confidence of the public in the service dedicated to the protection of life and property of the citizens of these United States.

## **Article I. NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Section 1.** The name of this association is, and shall be, (INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME HERE), herein referred to as "(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME ABBREVIATION HERE)." The association shall represent minority law enforcement personnel employed at the several police, corrections, and law enforcement investigations agencies within the Springfield, Massachusetts Metropolitan Area.

**Section 2.** The principle office of (INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME ABBREVIATION HERE) shall be located at the office of the Executive Secretary. Mailing address may be different than that of the principle office.

**Section 3.** The purpose of the association shall be:

- a. To unify African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American law enforcement personnel employed within the Springfield, Massachusetts area for a common cause and goal
- b. To establish effective means and strategies for dealing with both racial and social abuses in the criminal justice system
- c. To develop mechanisms that will facilitate the open exchange of information between and amongst minority law enforcement personnel and their respective agencies
- d. To develop and establish effective communications between and with the minority communities of this state and the law enforcement community
- e. To develop communication techniques and open avenues for the sensitizing of area-wide law enforcement agencies, governmental entities, institutions, and police personnel in the criminal justice system to the problems of the minority community
- f. To evaluate, recommend, and introduce legislation which enhances the quality of life of members of the minority community
- g. To articulate the concerns and issues of the minority law enforcement community

## **Article II. MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Eligibility.** Eligibility for membership shall be extended to all regularly appointed full-time, part-time, or reserve law enforcement officers employed by any law enforcement agency within the Springfield, Massachusetts area with powers of arrest, search and seizure. Members who are dismissed from service for criminal charges which are subsequently sustained by a court of law, after all appeals have been exhausted, or who do not contest the decision of the dismissing authority, shall automatically forfeit membership.

**Section 2. Classes of Membership.** The association shall have the following classes of membership, the eligibility for which shall be:

- a. Active Membership – Active Membership shall be available to: all regularly appointed full-time, part-time, or reserve law enforcement officers employed by any law enforcement agency within the Springfield, Massachusetts area with powers of arrest, search and seizure, who, upon the submission and acceptance of a formal application, and the payment of a yearly membership assessment, elect to fully, and continuously participate in the associations activities; reflects the goals and principles of the association; and does not abuse their oath of office; Retired persons who would have been eligible for membership under this Section had they continued serving in their former active capacity. Each Active Member shall have full voting rights.
- b. Associate Membership – Associate Membership shall be available to: persons and corporate entities interested in furthering the goals of the association whom do not meet the

requirements of Section 2 (a). Associate Members shall be ineligible to vote on matters submitted to the association, to hold office, or to gain any pecuniary benefit from their relationship with the association.

In any case, the Executive Board reserves the right to make final determination of membership eligibility. Membership shall be denied to anyone who is, or has been, a member of any organization or entity, regardless of its name or stated purpose, which advocates the abolition, destruction, or violent overthrow of the United States, the (INSERT APPROPRIATE STATE NAME HERE), or any political subdivision thereof.

**Section 3. Members in Good Standing**, in respect to the various classes of membership, shall mean a member who fulfills all requirements of the particular membership class; pays all dues and assessments; reflects the goals and principles of the association; and who is not more than three (3) months in arrears in their monthly dues.

**Section 4. Termination of Membership.** Members shall be terminated in any of the following methods:

- a. Any member may voluntarily terminate his/her membership by tendering their resignation, in writing, to the Executive Board.
- b. For misfeasance, nonfeasance, or malfeasance of office, either in their regular employment or as an officer, whether elected or appointed, of the association.
- c. Any member may be removed for cause when cited by a member of the Executive Board, and upon the affirmative vote of 2/3 of the members of said Executive Board.
- d. Any and all insignia, emblems or marks, certificates, or other items of membership which would serve to identify them as a continuing member in good standing shall be forfeited and returned to the Executive Secretary upon termination of membership.

### **Article III. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Section 1. General Body.** The General Body of the association shall meet a minimum of six (6) times yearly, on a date fixed by the Executive Board and at a place and time set by the Executive Board of the association. The Executive Board shall set the order of business for all meetings, and each member of the association shall be informed of the order of business not less than fourteen (14) days prior to each meeting, in the manners set forth within this Section.

**Section 2. Executive Board.** The Executive Board of the association shall meet, at a date, time and place as is set by the President of the association, not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to any General Body meeting. The purpose of the Executive Board meeting shall be to set the order of business for the General Body meeting; to make determinations regarding application for memberships; to set and establish the annual budget for the association; to discuss and conduct all matters pertaining to the administrative business of the association; to meet in Executive Session as may be required.

**Section 3. Special Meetings.** Special Meetings shall be held at such times and locations as may be designated in the notification to the members. The purpose of all special meetings shall be specified in the notification to members, and shall be held for no other purpose except as enumerated therein. Special meetings may be called by the President, or by written request of thirty-five percent (35%) of those members eligible to vote on matters before the association.

**Section 4. Notification of Meetings.** Notification of all meetings shall be made, either in writing or by electronic mail, to each member at their last known postal address or email address as shown in the official membership listings of the association. Such notices shall be provided not less than fourteen (14)

days prior to any Regular General Body Meeting; not less than seven (7) days prior to any Special Meeting; and not less than five (5) days prior to any Executive Board meeting. Every notice of a Special Meeting shall briefly state the purpose or purposes thereof, and no business other than that specified in such notice and matters germane thereto, shall be transacted at any special meeting without further notice to members not present. It shall be the specific and sole responsibility of each individual member to notify the Executive Secretary of the association as to the validity and change of any postal address or electronic mail address to be used for notification purposes.

**Section 5. Quorum and Voting.** Ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing and present shall constitute a quorum for voting. If a quorum cannot be obtained, those present may adjourn the meeting to such time and place as may be determined. At any such previously adjourned meeting, at which a quorum is subsequently established, such business may be conducted as might have been transacted at the meeting originally called. All matters coming before a meeting of the association, except as otherwise limited herein, shall be decided by the affirmative vote of the voting members present at such meeting, a quorum being present at the organization of such meeting.

All members casting votes on any matter presented to the association shall do so, in writing and on an official secret ballot, either in person when they shall deposit said ballot in the ballot box or on a voting machine at a meeting; or by sealed proxy forwarded by Certified United States Postal Service or express carriers, such proxy which shall be received by the Executive Secretary not less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to any such vote, and shall be in a form specified by the Executive Board for such purpose.

All members voting on any matter shall be financial at the time of casting their votes.

**Section 6. Rules of Order.** A current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used throughout the meetings where said rules do not conflict with the provisions of this Constitution.

## **Article IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD AND ELECTIONS**

**Section 1. Powers and Authorization.** The legislative and governing powers of the association shall be vested in the Executive Board. The final authority for matters set before the association shall be vested in the General Membership of the association, by majority vote of those members eligible to vote at the time such vote is taken.

**Section 2. Executive Board.** The Executive Board shall be the governing body of the association; vested with the power and authority to conduct all routine and sundry of its administrative business and other affairs of the association in accordance with this Constitution and the By-Laws. The President shall preside over the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall be comprised, at a minimum, of the President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer, and other officers as may be required, all of whom, shall be elected by the General Body.

**Section 3. Terms of Office.** Each member of the Executive Board shall serve for a period of two (2) years, except upon re-election, not to exceed two (2) consecutive terms. Nothing in this Constitution shall prohibit a member from being elected to the same, or different, office after a period of two (2) years has elapsed from the date of their last elective position.

**Section 4. Nomination.** Candidates for election to positions on the Executive Board shall be nominated at the General Body meeting immediately prior to the election of such officers. Nominations shall be made from the floor and, after being declared closed, such nominations shall not be re-opened. A member must be present to be nominated. No member shall be a candidate for election to more than one (1) office at the same time, and unless they are fully up-to-date in their financial status with the

association. Immediately following the closing of nominations, each candidate shall be permitted to speak to the General Body for not more than five (5) minutes.

**Section 5. Election Procedures.** During elections for the Executive Board, all elected seats will be considered vacated, at which time the chairperson of the Elections Committee, which shall be appointed during the meeting at which nominations are presented, shall assume the authority of overseeing said election. At the conclusion of the elections, all newly elected officers shall assume their elected positions.

**Section 6. Ballot.** The name and office being sought of each duly nominated candidate for office shall be placed on the ballot, alphabetically, and voting for each position shall commence in the following order: President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer.

**Section 7. Installation.** Officers shall be installed at the next General Body meeting immediately following their election, such installation being conducted by either the Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court or their designate, or by the most senior member of the Rhode Island Black Legislative Caucus or their designate. All such officers shall take an oath of office.

## **Article V. DUTIES OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS**

**Section 1. President.** The President shall be the chief executive officer of the association, and shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Board, General Body, and all others at which he shall enforce order and a strict compliance with this Constitution, and such rules and regulations as may be adopted in pursuance thereof.

- a. They shall administer and manage the business of the association between meetings of the General Body, and shall ensure that the resolutions of this Constitution and the By-Laws and amendments thereto are carried out. The President shall execute and sign all contracts and other official documents into which the association shall enter. Where such contract is of a fiduciary nature, the President, along with the Secretary/Treasurer, shall execute, sign, and enter into such contracts on behalf of the association.
- b. He/she shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the General Body, the members of the Advisory Board and other committees and name the chairperson thereof to inquire into any matter affecting or concerning the association, and shall serve as an ex-officio member of all committees of the association.
- c. To debate motions before the association, the President shall surrender the Chair to the Vice President until the vote on such motion has been taken, and the motion disposed of.
- d. He/she shall, with the Secretary/Treasurer, sign all orders for funds on the treasury or other depository for the disbursement of association funds, attest to all warrants and vouchers for disbursements, provided, however, that the Secretary/Treasurer shall attest to all warrants and vouchers for the disbursement of funds related solely to the administrative functions of the Secretary/Treasurer.
- e. He/she shall give bond to the association for the faithful discharge of his/her duties in such manner and amount as may be determined by the Executive Board. It shall also be the duty of the President to assure the bonding of such officers as specified in this Constitution.
- f. In the event of the resignation or emergency vacancy of a position, the President shall have the exclusive authority to fill said vacancy.
- g. The President shall have the deciding vote in the event of any ties.
- h. Within fourteen (14) days after the expiration of his/her term of office, the President shall convey to their successor all unfinished business, books, records, and physical property belonging to the association.

**Section 2. Vice President.** In the absence of the President, for any cause, the Vice President shall discharge the duties and office of the President.

- a. He/she shall inspect the financial records of the Secretary/Treasurer once every three (3) months, and shall assist the secretary/Treasurer whenever dues are not being collected. When he/she inspects any financial records or assists in the collection of dues, he/she shall submit, in writing, a detailed report of their activities to the President within three (3) days after the completion of such activities, stating the reason or reasons for such action.
- b. His/her report shall be read at the next meeting of the Executive Board for whatever action may be deemed necessary. He/she shall give a report to the General Body at each of its meetings, detailing their activities
- c. His/her signature shall appear on all applications for savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposit, and other fiduciary accounts, but shall not be required unless the President or Treasurer are unable to sign.
- d. He/she shall succeed to the office of President in the event of the death, resignation, incapacitation, or other permanent vacation of such office during the unexpired term thereof.
- e. He/she shall, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, appoint a minority of all committees of the association.

**Section 3. Secretary/Treasurer.** The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for the day to day clerical duties of the association, and shall maintain files on all members, in addition to maintaining current information on all state, regional and national organizations.

- a. He/she shall be responsible for the recording of minutes at both the Executive Board and General Body meetings, and their distribution to all members within seven (7) days of each meeting
- b. He/she shall keep a register of the attendance of members at all meetings and shall call the roll when required
- c. He/she shall maintain copies of all correspondence received and sent by the association, and shall submit a written report of such at the meetings of both the Executive Board and the General Body
- d. He/she shall have available at all meetings copies of the minutes of all official and special meetings for the previous eighteen (18) month period
- e. shall maintain a full and accurate account of the financial standing of all members of the association, and a receipt of all member fees, dues, assessments, and all monies properly due and coming into the possession of the association and receipts given thereafter. He/she shall have available at all meetings copies of the current Constitution, a membership roster, Robert's Rules of Order
- f. shall have general charge and responsibility for all dues, fines, assessments, and monetary earnings of the association and shall deposit and maintain all such funds in a bank account or accounts in the name of the association.
- g. He/she shall collect all membership dues and fees prior to the start of each meeting of the General Body
- h. He/she shall keep a just and accurate account of all monies received by him/her for the association and shall issue a report of the financial condition of the association at each meeting of the Executive Board and General Body
- i. He/she shall pay all bills, claims, and other indebtedness only upon receipt of a written or printed order or invoice of the person, corporation, entity or instrumentality entitled thereto, with all payments for such countersigned by the President
- j. He/she shall have general custody of all bonds and other securities in which association funds may from time to time be invested, and shall maintain same in a safe deposit box in the name of the association.

**Section 4. Appointive Officers and Committees.** The President, with the advice of the Executive Board, may appoint the following additional officers, Boards, and committees, for the purposes of conducting the business of the association:

## **Article VI. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.**

**Section 1.** A proposed amendment to this Constitution shall be submitted, in writing, to the Secretary/Treasurer not less than sixty (60) days prior to the General Body meeting at which such proposed amendment is to be considered. Such proposed amendment shall be attested to by the Secretary/Treasurer and shall bear the signature of the member submitting same, or by the Secretary/Treasurer if proposed by the Executive Board, and shall state the date of the Executive Board meeting at which it was agreed that the proposal would be submitted for consideration by the General Body. The Secretary/Treasurer shall make notification to each member, by forwarding a copy of such proposed amendment and any related materials, in the manners set forth herein in Article III, Section 4 not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the General Body meeting at which the proposed amendment shall be considered.

**Section 2.** A proposed amendment shall contain the precise and specific language of the proposed amendment, shall specifically set forth the language to be either added, deleted, and/or revised, and shall identify each and every Article and Section affected thereby. Proposed amendments shall be accompanied by a statement, not to exceed one (1) page in length, setting forth the basis for such proposal.

**Section 3.** All proposed changes to this Constitution shall only become valid upon the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of the eligible voters of the association, present at the meeting during which the proposal is submitted for vote.