

# BYLAWS

## I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be known as the Florida Law Enforcement Public Information Officers' Association and may be known by its initials, FLEPIOA.

## II. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Association shall commence on June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and conclude on May 31<sup>st</sup> of each successive year.

## III. PURPOSE

To promote the utmost in professional standards and conduct of law enforcement public information officers. The organization shall encourage such officers to work toward consistency in their credibility, to accurately and fairly convey the goals and objectives of their agency, and to maintain a positive relationship with news organizations and with the general public.

## IV. STRUCTURE

The Florida Law Enforcement Public Information Officers' Association shall be a statewide organization comprising an Executive Committee of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and regions, each represented by a Director. The size, numbers and compositions of such regions shall be determined and may, from time to time, be adjusted by majority vote of the Executive Committee members present and voting at any meeting.

## V. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- A. To increase the number of Florida public safety public information officers.
- B. To help define their roles in their agencies as facilitators in releasing information about their agencies to the media and the public.
- C. To provide comprehensive training that effectively addresses the needs of public information officers with different levels of experience and to evaluate the effectiveness of that already offered. This training should include periodic orientations and updates on the effects of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and other pertinent state and federal statutes.

- D. To provide a media relations training program for all law enforcement recruits. To provide retraining to students at all regional training centers and police agencies that gives each law enforcement officer a basic understanding of the media's role in society and its potential harms and benefits to law enforcement.
- E. To promote and provide regional and state-level liaison with police chiefs' and sheriffs' groups.
- F. To promote and provide regional and state-level liaison with media groups.
- G. To publish a yearly directory of all Florida law enforcement public information officers and other periodic training-related publications.
- H. To hold periodic regional conferences and an annual conference with training sessions.

## VI. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Florida Law Enforcement Public Information Officers' Association shall be divided into two categories: Regular and Associate.

### A. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Regular membership shall be open to any full-time or part-time public information officer employed by any local, county, state, or federal public safety agency in Florida. Annual dues shall be determined by the Executive Committee and ratified by a majority vote of Regular Association members present and voting at the annual conference. Membership in FLEPIOA shall automatically qualify a member for a regional group.

A Regular membership shall remain in the name of the agency employing such public information officer. A public information officer leaving that position shall have the option of transferring to an Associate membership with dues pro-rated from June 1<sup>st</sup> to the date of such transfer.

### B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership shall be open to any full-time or part-time public information officer employed by any public safety agency. Associate memberships shall also be open to all retired law enforcement public information officers. Associate members shall not be eligible to hold office, nor vote, at the state or regional level. Annual dues of Associate members shall be equivalent to one-half that of Regular members.

## **VII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The FLEPIOA shall have an Executive Committee, made up of representatives from each region plus the elected officers. The Executive Committee shall be elected by the governing board of the FLEPIOA and shall make all operational decisions.

The Executive Committee shall nominate a slate of officers for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and those nominees shall stand for election among all current members. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Terms of elected office will extend for two years. The duties of the state officers shall be as follows:

### **A. PRESIDENT**

The President shall be responsible for directing and coordinating the state-level activities of the organization and for interacting with all regional directors. The President shall also be the Association's primary spokesperson, although he/she may delegate such role on an ad hoc basis to any other officer of the Association.

### **B. VICE PRESIDENT**

The Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties and shall perform those duties when the President is unavailable. In the event the President shall leave office or otherwise be unable to complete the elected term of office, the Vice President shall assume the office of President.

### **C. SECRETARY**

The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining official records of all meetings and shall distribute same as directed by the President.

### **D. TREASURER**

The Treasurer shall maintain the financial accounts and transactions of the Association and shall pay all duly authorized bills. An income/expenditure balance sheet shall be available at the annual conference for inspection by all members.

The election of officers shall be conducted at the Association's annual conference on alternating years, and voting will be among all Regular members in good standing in the Association present. Proxies will not be recognized.

## **VIII. REGIONS**

The FLEPIOA shall form regions whose numbers, sizes, and composition will, from time to time, be determined by the Executive Committee. After each change, the Executive Committee shall cause to be published a map showing such regions and shall be distributed

to all members in good standing.

Each region shall select by whatever method it chooses a Director/Chairman who shall oversee the Association's activities in that region and shall serve as the region's representative on the Executive Committee. Regional groups shall be bound by rules promulgated by the Executive Committee. In the event a region has no Director, the Executive Committee may appoint a temporary Region Director, subject to ratification by local region membership.

## **IX. MEETINGS**

The state Association shall meet annually at a place and time to be decided by the Executive Committee. This meeting shall be known as the Annual Training Conference and will be held in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Association. This meeting will also be held for the purpose of conducting such other business as may come before the membership and, on alternating years, the election of officers for the coming two-year period.

A quorum shall be required at all meetings of the Executive Committee in order to conduct official business. Such quorum shall consist of a majority of the Association's elected officers.

Regional groups shall meet at times and locations mutually agreeable to the members of that region.

## **X. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by any member of the Association and will be adopted upon the favorable vote of a simple majority of the regular membership.

- A. The Executive Committee of the Association may authorize a mail ballot to consider amendment(s) upon a favorable two-thirds majority of all members of the Executive Committee. In the event a mail ballot is authorized, the amendment(s) shall be considered adopted by a simple majority of all ballots returned to the Secretary of the Association.
- B. Any member of the Association may submit an amendment to the membership for consideration at the Association's annual conference.
  1. The Executive Committee shall formulate and publish the rules and regulations for submission of bylaws amendments by the general membership.
  2. Such proposals will be voted upon at the business meeting of the annual conference and shall be considered adopted upon a favorable vote of a simple

majority of all regular members attending said business meeting.

#### **XI. LIMITING OF POWERS**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, this organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law.

#### **XII. DISSOLUTIONMENT**

In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to one or more organizations which themselves are exempt as organizations described in Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding sections of any prior or future Internal Revenue Code or to the federal, state, or local government for exclusive public purpose.