



Alabama Optometric Association, Inc.
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

NAME, INCORPORATION AND LOCATION

- Section 1. Name and Location. The name of this organization shall be ALABAMA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION, INC., hereinafter referred to as the "Association," whose offices shall be in Montgomery, Alabama.
- Section 2. The ALABAMA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION, INC. is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, incorporated in the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Book I, Page 24, in the year 1905.

ARTICLE II

OBJECTIVES

- Section 1. The objectives of the Association shall be:
- (a) To advance the science and practice of optometry, a learned profession.
 - (b) To cooperate with schools and colleges of optometry and to disseminate knowledge in all aspects of eye health and vision care.
 - (c) To establish and promote standards of practice for the improvement of the eye health and vision care of the public, and the prevention of blindness.
 - (d) To cooperate with other health care professions for the promotion of the public's health, safety and welfare.
 - (e) To advise the Alabama Legislature, the Congress of the United States, and other state and national agencies regarding laws and regulations governing the profession of optometry.
 - (f) To cooperate with the American Optometric Association, the Southern Council of Optometrists and other organizations whose purpose is to advance the science and practice of optometry for the benefit of the public.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Membership Qualifications. Membership in the Alabama Optometric Association is available to individuals who have earned a Doctor of Optometry degree from a school or college that has been accredited or pre-accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education or by an accrediting body that the Board of Directors determines to be equivalent and has his or her principal place of optometric-related employment located in Alabama or otherwise associated with the profession of optometry.

Section 2. Membership Categories.

- (a) Active membership is limited to optometrists who have earned a Doctor of Optometry degree from a school or college that has been accredited or pre-accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education or by an accrediting body that the Board of Directors determines to be equivalent and who pay annual dues.
- (b) Special Class membership is limited to optometrists who do not have their principal place of optometric-related employment located in Alabama. Special class members have no vote and are not eligible to serve as directors or hold office in the Association.
- (c) Honorary membership is limited to individuals who have rendered outstanding significant contribution to aid the public's health, safety or welfare. Such membership must be approved by the Board of Directors and by the membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present. Honorary members have no vote and are not eligible to serve as directors or hold office in the Association.
- (d) Life membership is limited to optometrists who have been a member of this association for 45 years and have retired or are permanently disabled and no longer practice optometry. Members who provide medical certification of terminal or other serious debilitating illness may request that age and/or years of membership requirements be waived for life membership.
- (e) Federal Services membership is limited to licensed optometrists who are on fulltime active duty in the armed forces of the United States or on active duty in the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service or are a full-time employee of the Veteran's Administration or other federal government entity and who pay annual dues. Such membership shall continue until the end of the calendar year in which the federal services member is released from federal service, retires or leaves full-time federal service.
- (f) Partial Practice membership is limited to optometrists who work 16 hours or less per week in compensated optometrically related activities who pay annual dues.
- (g) Student membership is limited to students currently enrolled in a school or college of optometry or graduates of a school of college of optometry currently engaged in postgraduate studies, research and training or residency in an accredited institution and who submit an annual application. Student members have no vote and are not eligible to serve as directors or hold office in the Association.
- (h) Optometric Educator membership is limited to optometrists who are full-time educators primarily engaged in school related activities such as teaching, research and administration at a school or college in the United States, accredited or pre-accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, and who is directly compensated by such school or college and who pay dues. Such optometric educator members are permitted to engage in the practice of optometry for no more than 20 (twenty) hours per week.
- (i) Retired Members. An optometrist who has attained at least 55 years of age and who has been an active, partial practice, federal services or optometric educator member and is no longer engaged in compensated optometrically related activities, and has not been approved for life membership in the Association shall be a retired member of this Association.
- (j) Post Graduate Members. An optometrist who is a resident or intern in a program accredited or pre-accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education or by an accrediting body that the Board of Directors determines to be equivalent, shall be eligible for classification as a Post Graduate member. Membership classification as a Post Graduate member may continue until the end of the calendar year in which an eligible Post Graduate member has completed the qualifying residency or internship.

- Section 3. Application for membership. All applicants for membership must complete the application form provided by this Association and submit the application to the principal office of the Association located in Montgomery, Alabama.
- Section 4. Admission of Members. Membership shall be effective upon the verification of a degree from an accredited school of optometry, receipt of application and dues payment in the ALOA office. New member applications will be presented to the Board of Directors and the Membership meeting for review at the following business meeting.
- Section 5. Termination of membership.
- (a) Members of any classification who fail to uphold the purposes and objectives and abide by all of the provisions of the Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the Association shall be subject to suspension or termination of membership in this Association. Charges against a member other than failure to pay dues shall be sent by registered mail to his or her last known address not less than 30 days before the date of a proposed hearing by the Board of Directors.
 - (b) Any member whose license to practice optometry in Alabama is suspended or revoked shall not be eligible for continued membership in this Association during the period of such suspension or revocation and shall not be entitled to a refund of any dues paid.
 - (c) Student membership may be terminated by the Board of Directors through written notice by registered mail to the individual at the last known address, giving not less than 30 days notice of such termination of membership.
 - (d) Membership that has been suspended or terminated may be reinstated on recommendation of the Board of Directors and by a majority vote of members present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the membership.

ARTICLE IV

DUES

- Section 1. Dues. The annual dues of each class of member shall be an amount determined by the Board of Directors and approved by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or duly called meeting of this Association and will include membership in the American Optometric Association. The Board of Trustees may increase the annual dues in any one year in an amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the previous year's annual dues, and the Board of Trustees shall report to the membership the amount of the increase. Dues are payable on January 1 of each year.
- Section 2. Delinquency. Any member whose dues are in arrears on the first day of March shall be notified by the Secretary-Treasurer. If dues are not paid within ten days thereafter, membership in this Association shall be automatically canceled.
- Section 3. The Board of Directors may waive or reduce the annual dues of a member due to economic misfortune or physical disability for a limited period of time and/or apply for reduction in American Optometric Association dues as permitted by American Optometric Association bylaws.
- Section 4. The Secretary-Treasurer may grant extended monthly payments to any member faced with economic misfortune whose dues are in arrears on March first, provided the member has submitted a letter of request along with a minimum of one-sixth of the unpaid dues balance and an agreement to make monthly payments that will cause dues to be paid in full no later than September first. The above agreement must also include a prepaid dues plan for the succeeding year's dues that begins the month following full dues payment.

- Section 5. After an active member attains the age of seventy (70) the portion of their dues retained by this Association will remain the same as for all other active members, but the portion transmitted to American Optometric Association will be reduced by an amount that is in accordance with current American Optometric Association bylaws.
- Section 6. The dues requirements for newly licensed active members shall be as follows: No dues shall be required during the calendar year in which license to practice optometry was first obtained. First full calendar year thereafter, 10%; 2nd year, 20%; 3rd year, 50%; 4th year, 75%; 5th year, 100%. A military optometrist returning to civilian practice may be eligible for the same sliding scale due to economic misfortune at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Only active members are eligible for the ascending dues scale contained in this section.
- Section 7. The dues for new members shall be prorated on a quarterly basis according to the number of full remaining months in the calendar year in which s/he joins. Proration shall not be permitted when a member terminates membership and is reinstated to membership in the same calendar year.
- Section 8. The annual dues of a special class member shall be fifty percent (50%) of the dues of an active member. Special class members are not eligible for any ascending or descending dues schedules.
- Section 9. Honorary members, student members, post graduate members, life members and retired members shall not be required to pay any dues to this Association.
- Section 10. The annual dues of a partial practice member shall be sixty percent (60%) of that of an active member's dues.
- Section 11. The annual dues of an optometric educator member shall be fifty percent (50%) of that of an active member's AOA dues amount. Optometric educators are not eligible for any the ascending or descending dues schedules.
- Section 12. The annual dues of a federal services member shall be fifty percent (50%) of the dues of an active member. Federal services members are not eligible for the ascending or descending dues schedules.
- Section 13. Members will be allowed to change membership classification only once per year. Applications for a change in membership classification submitted between January 1 and April 30 will be retroactive to the beginning of that calendar year. Applications submitted between May 1 and December 31 will be effective January 1 of the following year. No changes in classification will be accepted for prior periods or prior years.

ARTICLE V

MEETINGS

- Section 1. At least one annual meeting of the membership of this Association must be held and shall be designated by the President. Written notice of such annual meeting shall be sent to each member at least fifteen days before the meeting.
- Section 2. Special meetings of this Association shall be as called by the President of the Association.
- Section 3. Twenty-five or more active members, and a majority of the Officers of the Association and the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum of the Association.

Section 4. Attendance at all Association meetings is limited to members, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Directors. Attendance at local society meetings is limited to members, unless otherwise approved by the President of the local society.

ARTICLE VI

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall include the President, President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Immediate Past President, six representative(s) of the local societies determined by the Association and one state-at-large member.

Section 2. All nominees for director shall have been an active or educator class member of this Association for three consecutive years.

Section 3. The term for directors shall be one year for the state-at-large position and three years for representative of local societies unless a director is elected to an officer position. Directors shall not succeed themselves; except a director who has been appointed to an unexpired term and who has served no more than two years of the unexpired term, may be elected to succeed themselves for one full term.

Notwithstanding anything herein stated to the contrary, the following schedule of elections and terms shall apply for the directors elected in 1998 and 1999 from the local societies: at the 1998 annual meeting, two directors will be elected for a term of three (3) years and one will be elected for a term of two (2) years; and, at the 1999 annual meeting, two directors will be elected for a term of three (3) years and one will be elected for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, all directors for the local societies shall be elected for a term of three (3) years.

Section 4. Election of the Board of Directors:

- (a) Beginning with the year 2000 annual meeting three directors, two representatives of local societies and one state-at-large member, shall be elected annually by the membership.
- (b) At least ninety days before the election, the President shall publicize the societies eligible to nominate a new representative on the Board of Directors.
- (c) Each eligible society may submit nominees to the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee for certification of eligibility and good standing at least thirty days before the election. Any member in good standing may also submit nominees for any open Board or officer position to the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee for certification of eligibility and good standing at least thirty days before the election.

Section 5. Duties and Powers. The Board of Directors shall have supervision, control and direction of all the affairs of the Association between membership meetings. The Board shall determine the policies of the Association and any changes therein. The Board may delegate any duties to the officers not specified in the Bylaws.

Section 6. Vacancies. In the event that a member of the current Board of Directors is elected to any office, the vacancy created on the Board of Directors shall be filled through nominations from the floor. Any director who is absent without excuse from three consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors will be replaced by a qualified member appointed by the President.

Section 7. A simple majority of the Officers and Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum of meetings of the Board of Directors.

- Section 8. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at such time and place as determined by the President.
- Section 9. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President with at least one week's notice either by telephone, facsimile, electronic mail (e-mail) or mail.

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Immediate Past President and shall be elected by the membership. The Executive Committee shall assist the President in conducting the affairs of the Association between meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Section 2. Eligibility. All nominees for the officer positions shall have been an active or educator class member of this Association for three consecutive years and shall have served for one year on the current or prior Board of Directors.
- Section 3. Tenure and Succession of Officers. The President-Elect shall automatically become President at the expiration of the incumbent President's term of office. The President going out of office shall automatically become Immediate Past President and shall continue to serve on the Board of Directors for one year or until succeeded.
- Section 4. Removal from Office. Any director, officer, agent or employee of this Association may be removed from office or discharged for cause by a three-fourths majority of the votes cast for the purpose at any annual meeting or special meeting of this Association.

ARTICLE VIII

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- Section 1. President. The President of the Association shall be the chief elected officer of the Association and shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors and membership; appoint all committees; serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; and represent this Association at all meetings designated by the Board of Directors. The President shall be the official representative and spokesperson of the Association in relations with all government, civic and professional organizations. The President shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for implementation of all policies and procedures of the Association. The President shall perform such other duties as are essential to the office of President or as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.
- Section 2. President-Elect. The President-Elect shall automatically succeed to the Presidency. The President-Elect shall perform all duties of the President in the event the President is unable to act and all other duties delegated by the President or the Board of Directors.
- Section 3. Vice President. The Vice President shall perform all duties of the President in the event the President and the President-elect are unable to act and all other duties delegated by the President or the Board of Directors. The Vice President shall serve as the Board liaison to Association committees in the absence of the President.
- Section 4. Secretary-Treasurer. The Secretary-Treasurer is the chief fiscal officer and shall be the legal custodian of all legal and fiscal documents and the securities of this Association; shall render a financial report to this

Association at each annual meeting and at other times as requested by the Board of Directors; and see that the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, membership and any standing committees are kept and that timely distribution of copies of minutes is made to members. The Secretary-Treasurer will be covered by a surety bond secured and paid for by the Association and shall perform such other duties as may be specified in the bylaws or by the President and Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Immediate Past President, a past president who is a current member and two additional members in good standing appointed by the President. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall be designated by the President. No member of the Nominating Committee shall be nominated for any office or position.
- Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall nominate one candidate for each office, except President, representatives from local societies and one state-at-large member of the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of officers to the Board of Directors and to the membership at the annual meeting. Nominations of eligible members shall then be received from the floor. Voting shall be by secret ballot, with the majority of the votes cast being necessary for election. The order of election shall be: President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer then Directors.

ARTICLE X

AFFILIATES

- Section 1. Affiliated associations shall be those local optometric societies as may be designated by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI

COMMITTEES

- Section 1. Committees. The President may appoint such committees or task forces as may be deemed advisable, terms of which will expire at the conclusion of the President's term, if not sooner on the completion of their work.
- Section 2. Powers of Committees. No committee or task force shall have any power to bind the Association in any manner except as expressly authorized by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XII

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Section 1. The board of directors may engage a person to serve as Executive Director of the Association. The Executive Committee shall evaluate the performance of and recommend to the board of directors the compensation of the Executive Director.
- Section 2. The Executive Director shall serve as chief executive officer of the Association in accordance with the job description, policies and procedures approved by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XIII

BUDGET

- Section 1. A budget for the fiscal year established shall be prepared by the Secretary-Treasurer with the assistance of the Executive Director and presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
- Section 2. The budget must be approved by the Board of Directors and a simple majority of the members of this Association present at each annual meeting, and shall be the basis of all expenditures of this Association.
- Section 3. Revisions to budget expenditures in the intervals between Association meetings may be made on approval by a majority of the Board of Directors.
- Section 4. Within limits established by the Board of Directors, the President may authorize expenditures not specifically provided for in the budget.

ARTICLE XIV

AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be altered or amended by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting, provided every member shall have been notified at least fifteen (15) days in advance of such meeting and furnished with a copy of the proposed changes, notice having been sent to member's last known address. If any portion of this document is declared to be illegal by properly constituted authorities, then that section shall not be used as criterion for membership in the Association.

CODE OF ETHICS

Members of this Association shall:

1. Practice optometry consistent with other learned professions in the health care field.
2. Utilize current knowledge in the science and practice of optometry for the examination, diagnosis, and treatment of the human eyes and visual system.
3. Place the health, safety and welfare of the patients above monetary gain at all times.
4. Adhere to the Code of Ethics of the American Optometric Association, published herein, as adopted by the House of Delegates of the American Optometric Association at Detroit, Michigan, June 28, 1944.

CODE OF ETHICS

It Shall Be the Ideal, the Resolve, and the Duty of the Members of the American Optometric Association:

To keep the visual welfare of the patient uppermost at all times;

To promote in every possible way, in collaboration with the Association, better care of the visual needs of mankind;

To enhance continuously their educational and technical proficiency to the end that their patients shall receive the benefits of all acknowledged improvements in visual care;

To see that no person shall lack for visual care, regardless of their financial status;

To advise the patient whenever consultations with an optometric colleague or reference for other professional care seems advisable;

To hold in professional confidence all information concerning a patient and to use such data only for the benefit of the patient;

To conduct themselves as exemplary citizens;

To maintain their offices and their practice in keeping with professional standards;

To promote and maintain cordial and unselfish relationships with members of their own profession and of other professions for the exchange of information to the advantage of mankind.

Amended by the Board of Directors on August 17, 1995 and by the membership on Saturday, October 28, 1995 at the Annual Convention held at The Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. Amended by the Board of Directors on November 7, 1997 and by the membership on November 8, 1997 at The Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. Amended by the Board of Directors on October 23, 1998 and by the membership on October 24, 1998 at The Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. Amended by the Board of Directors on July 20, 2000 and by the membership on November 11, 2000 at The Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. Amended by the Board of Directors on July 19, 2001 and by the membership on October 27, 2001. Amended by the Board of Directors on July 26, 2006 and by the membership on November 4, 2006. Amended by the Board of Directors on July 17, 2007 and by the membership on November 8, 2007. Amended by the Board of Directors on July 30, 2009 and by the membership on November 7, 2009. Amended by the Board of Directors on November 1, 2012 and by the membership on November 3, 2012.