



BY-LAWS
OF THE
Mexican-American Bar Association
Of
Houston

AMENDMENTS FOR ADOPTION
ON
June 16, 2008

**ARTICLE 1
NAME AND TITLE OF ASSOCIATION**

The name and title of this organization is the "Mexican-American Bar Association of Houston" (MABAH).

**ARTICLE 2
PURPOSE**

MABAH's purpose is to maintain and elevate standards of professional conduct, to increase professional skills through continuing legal education, to improve the opportunities for and promote recognition to the capabilities of Hispanic attorneys, to encourage its members to participate in pro-bono legal services, to speak on behalf of the Hispanic community on legal issues affecting the community, and to promote a better understanding of the legal profession to the Hispanic community and the public.

**ARTICLE 3
MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 **Active Members.** Any attorney, licensed by the State Bar of Texas, or member of the judiciary, upon payment of dues, becomes an active, voting member of MABAH.

3.2 A law student is eligible for membership only if currently enrolled in an accredited law school. An Associate Member is a person who elects Associate Membership and is a graduate of any accredited law school. Associate Members and law students are entitled to all privileges of a regular member except the right to vote or hold office.

3.3 **Honorary Members.** Individuals who have contributed outstanding service to MABAH, or have made a significant contribution to the Hispanic community, may be selected for honorary membership by a two-thirds vote of the active membership present at MABAH's Annual Meeting. An Honorary Member is entitled to all privileges of a regular member except the right to vote or hold office.

3.4 **Membership Fees.** The following annual membership fees shall be due and payable on or before the date of MABAH's Annual Meeting:

- o Members practicing fewer than 5 years \$ 75
- o Members practicing 5 - 10 years \$ 100
- o Members practicing more than 10 years \$ 125

- o Full-time members of the Judiciary and government employees \$ 75
- o Law Students (while enrolled in an accredited law school) \$ 0
- o Members who are 65 years or older \$ 0
- o Associate Members \$ 50
- o Honorary Members \$ 0

3.5 **MABAT.** The MABAH shall assess each member for membership fees for the Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas (MABAT) and remit such fees to MABAT when received.

3.6 Unless otherwise determined by MABAH, a member suspended from the practice of law by an order or decree of any court shall operate to deprive such member of all the rights and privileges of active membership during the suspension period. An Active Member suspended from the practice law may not elect to be an Associate Member without the MABAH board approval.

3.7 If a member's membership fees are in arrears for less than three months, membership may be reinstated by the payment of dues to date, except as provided under Section 4.6.

3.8 Any member whose membership fees are more than three months past due will cease to be a member and must submit a new membership application.

3.9 MABAH's Fiscal year is January 1 to December 31. Anyone applying for new membership after September 31 and until January 1 will pay half of the applicable dues. However, payment of full dues will entitle that person to membership for the subsequent fiscal year.

**ARTICLE 4
MEETINGS**

4.1 **Regular Meetings.** MABAH will meet every month at a time and place designated by the Executive Committee.

4.2 **Annual Meeting.** MABAH's Annual Meeting shall be held in March.

4.3 **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the President, or shall be called by the President on the written request of ten (10) Active Members.

4.4 **Notices.** Notice to any of the following meetings will be given to all members in good standing as follows:

(a) If by "written notice," by sending a written copy in a properly addressed and stamped envelope or electronic transmission through facsimile or e-mail:

- (1) Annual Meeting: 15 days.
- (2) Regular Meeting: 7 days.
- (3) Special Meeting: 3 days.

(b) If by posting on the MABAH webpage:

- (1) Annual Meeting: 30 days.
- (2) Regular Meeting: 14 days.
- (3) Special Meeting: 6 days

(c) "Day" means calendar days.

4.5 **Quorum.** A quorum of the general membership exists when at least twelve (12) members are present. Once established, the quorum will exist for the entire meeting.

4.6 **Voting.** Voting shall be by a simple majority of the active members who are present and in good standing for at least 60 days prior to any vote. Members may vote by written proxy (including a facsimile or e-mail).

4.7 **Procedures.** MABAH meetings will be governed by parliamentary procedure as governed in the most current version of "Robert's Rules of Order."

4.8 **Meetings By Telephone Or E-mail**
The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or any Standing Committee may participate in a meeting by conference telephone or similar communication equipment and by electronic mail ("e-mail") by which all participating may conduct MABAH business. Participation by such means constitutes presence at such meetings.

**ARTICLE 5
OFFICERS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

5.1 **Officers.** MABAH will elect and be represented by the following Officers:

- (1) President
- (2) President-Elect
- (3) Vice-President
- (4) Corresponding Secretary
- (5) Recording Secretary
- (6) Treasurer
- (7) Parliamentarian
- (8) Webmaster

5.2 **Board of Directors.** The Board of Directors will consist of ten Active Members elected to serve as Directors plus the Immediate Past President.

5.3 **Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee will consist of the Officers and the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee may neither incur nor expend more than \$500.00 in any period between Regular Meetings without membership approval. The Executive Committee will meet at the discretion of the President.

5.4 **Duties of the Officers.** The officers will perform the duties as custom and parliamentary procedure require. After serving a one-year term, the President-Elect will serve as President during the next service year.

5.5 **Term.** The term of office for all Officers and Directors shall be one year.

5.6 **Election of Officers and Directors.** The Officers and Directors will be elected at the Annual Meeting where a quorum has been established as provided in Section 4.5. Nominations shall be from the Nominating Committee Report and from the floor.

5.7 **Vacancies.**

(a) If the office of the President becomes vacant during the tenure of the holder thereof, whether by death, resignation, or otherwise, the Vice-President will automatically become President for the remainder of the term.

(b) If the office of President-Elect becomes vacant during the tenure of the holder thereof, whether by death, resignation, or otherwise, the successor will be chosen by a majority vote of the Active Members

at the next Regular or Special Meeting where a quorum has been established as provided in Section 4.5.

- (c) If any office or position, other than President or President-Elect, become vacant during the tenure of the holder thereof, whether by death, resignation, or otherwise, the successor will be an Active Member, appointed by the Executive Committee upon the affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE 6
COMMITTEES.**

6.1 **Standing Committees.** Within ten (10) days after assuming office, the President will appoint chairs and members of the following standing committees and make the information available to be published in the next newsletter and on the MABAH website:

- (1) Judicial Screening
- (2) Nominating
- (3) Continuing Legal Education
- (4) By-Laws
- (5) Membership
- (6) Law School Liaison
- (7) Entertainment
- (8) Consejos Legales
- (9) Civil Rights
- (10) Leadership 2000
- (11) Website and Newsletter/Publicity

6.2 **Special Committees.** The President may appoint such Special Committees as are necessary to conduct MABAH business.

6.3 **Committee Procedures.** The committees shall submit their recommendations to the general membership at the Regular Meetings. A majority vote by the membership will serve to adopt a committee's recommendation. The individual committee members will not be bound on the floor of the MABAH meeting by their votes in those committees.

6.4 **Committee Chairs:**

- (a) The President-Elect will serve as chair of the Law School Liaison Committee.

- (b) The Parliamentarian will serve as chair of the By-Laws Committee.
- (c) The Webmaster shall serve as chair of the Website and Newsletter/Publicity Committee.
- (d) The President will designate all other committee chairs.

6.5 **Alternates:** The Vice-President shall serve as alternate to the President-Elect to the following committees:

- (a) Judicial Screening Committee, as full voting member, and
- (b) The Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas.

6.6 **Website and Newsletter/Publicity Committee.** Duties include maintaining the MABAH website, preparing and mailing the MABAH newsletter (to be sent as determined by the committee members), and maintaining a current directory of all MABAH members (consisting of the name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and any other contact information)

6.7 **Entertainment Committee.** The committee will handle the following events: Golf Tournament; Newly Licensed Attorney Reception, Softball Tournament and Picnic (with local law schools); Holiday Party, and special events and receptions.

6.2 **Ad-Hoc Committees**

(a) The President may create other committees, as necessary.

(b) The President shall designate a director or officer to serve as liaison of these committees.

6.7 **Committee Liaisons:**

(a) The President-Elect will serve as liaison to the following:

- (1) Judicial Screening Committee, as a full voting member, and
- (2) Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas.

(b) The Vice-President will serve as liaison to the following:

- (1) Website and Newsletter/Publicity Committee, as full voting member;
 - (2) MABAH-PAC.
- (c) All Committee Liaisons shall report to the general membership at the September and February meetings.

6.8 **Resignations Of Committee Members.** In the event of the resignation or disqualification of any chair of any of the above named committees, the President shall immediately appoint a successor to serve out the unexpired term of such resigned or disqualified member.

**ARTICLE 7
PROCEDURES FOR THE SCREENING AND
ENDORSEMENT OF JUDICIAL CANDIDATES
FOR PUBLIC OFFICE**

7.1 Only Active Members in good standing are eligible to vote for the endorsement of judicial candidates.

7.2 For purposes of this article, "good standing" shall mean:

- (a) An Active Member whose dues were paid at least 60 days prior to the date of any vote for the endorsement of a candidate, and
- (b) The member is in good standing with the State Bar of Texas.

7.3 MABAH hereby adopts the rules and procedures for the screening of and endorsement of candidates dated February 14, 2005. These rules and procedures may be amended in the same manner as these bylaws.

**ARTICLE 8
OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS**

8.1. No MABAH member may officially make any pronouncement or declaration on a question of policy on behalf of or in the name of MABAH until the Board of Directors has authorized the same.

8.2. Any official pronouncement by any active member must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of MABAH.

**ARTICLE 9
FISCAL MATTERS**

9.1 The fiscal year shall be January 1 to December 31.

9.2 No salary or compensation shall be paid to any member. Officers, board members, and members may be reimbursed for actual expenses on behalf of MABAH as approved by the Executive Committee.

9.3 MABAH funds shall be used and expended under the direction of the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE 10
AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

These By-Laws may be amended at any Regular Meeting or Special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Active Members present, provided that written notice has been ~~mailed~~ sent to all Active Members as provided in -Article 4 ~~at least thirty (30) days in advance of such meeting.~~ The notice shall include the date, time, and place of the meeting and a copy of the proposed amendment(s).