

# **BYLAWS OF THE SPINA BIFIDA ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND, INC.**

(These bylaws were approved by the General Membership on January 12th. These bylaws modify the prior bylaws that were approved in October 1997)

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## **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND PURPOSE**

- A. Name--This corporation shall be known as the Spina Bifida Association of Maryland, Inc.
- B. Purpose
1. To unite those interested in promoting social, educational and vocational development of the individual with spina bifida, and to carry out activities designed to meet those goals.
  2. To foster an exchange of knowledge and education among its members.
  3. To promote general awareness and action to inform the public about spina bifida.
  4. To promote awareness of the capabilities of the individual with spina bifida, and to discourage discrimination in employment opportunities, educational opportunities and community living.

5. To raise or otherwise acquire funds to support these goals, while operating as a nonprofit organization. As a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, the association will not attempt to influence legislation, except in compliance with the Internal Revenue Service code and related laws, regulations and rulings.

## **ARTICLE 2: MEMBERSHIP, DUES AND TERMINATION**

### A. Membership

1. Any person concerned with helping the individual with spina bifida to achieve his or her full potential, and who subscribes to the objectives and basic policies of the association, may be granted membership upon request. Membership is available without regard to race, color, creed or national origin.
2. Applications must be completed yearly in order to verify all information.
3. Timeliness of applications
  - a. Renewals--For members who are renewing their application for a new year, the applications must be completed timely, at the start of each year (in the November-January period). The exact due date will be determined by the Council and announced at the start of the year.
  - b. New members--New members can submit their initial application at any time.
4. Membership in the association shall be in the following categories:
  - a. Regular member--Regular members in the association shall be those families or individuals with spina bifida or a birth defect for which there is no national or local organization. Regular membership can also be given to concerned individuals even if they do not have spina bifida themselves.
  - b. Professional members--Professional membership in the association shall be individuals or groups in the professional sector with an interest in supporting the association.
5. Any adult who meets the requirements of 4.a. or 4.b. may vote at General Membership meetings.
6. Any member who joins timely and attends at least Two General Membership meeting per calendar year shall be considered a member in good standing for that calendar year.

B. Dues

1. The yearly dues are payable at the time the yearly application is submitted.
2. Dues may be waived by the Council for individuals for whom payment causes a financial hardship.

C. Termination

1. Membership may be terminated by just cause as determined by either the Council or by a three-fourths vote of the members present at a General Membership meeting where there is a quorum.
2. Members terminated may not participate in or receive the benefits of any activities of the association.

**ARTICLE 3: FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the association shall be a logical period established by the Council.

**ARTICLE 4: ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The association operates programs to assist in defraying medical, educational and developmental expenses for individuals with spina bifida. The expenses must be directly or indirectly related to spina bifida.

**ARTICLE 5: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

- A. Purpose--The purpose of General Membership meetings is to provide support, information and education.
- B. Regular meetings--Meetings shall be at least quarterly on a date, time and place determined convenient by the majority of the membership. Meetings may be cancelled if circumstances warrant.
- C. Special meetings--Special meetings may be called by the President. At least 7 days notice shall be given to the regular members for any special meeting. Such special meeting shall be limited to the topic for which the meeting was called.
- D. Quorum--A quorum must be present for any matter requiring a vote. Ten percent of the General Membership shall constitute a quorum.

- E. Budget--The annual budget for the association must be approved by a majority vote at a meeting of the General Membership.

### **ARTICLE 6: COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- A. Meetings--Meetings shall be at least quarterly on a date, time and place determined convenient by the majority of the Council members. Meetings may be cancelled if circumstances warrant.
- B. Quorum-- A quorum must be present for any matter requiring a vote. One-third of the Council members shall constitute a quorum.
- C. Open meetings--Regular members may attend Council meetings.

### **ARTICLE 7: OFFICERS**

- A. President
  - 1. The President shall preside over meetings with voting privilege only in case of a tie, in which case he or she may vote to break the tie.
  - 2. The President may, with the Treasurer, sign checks, contracts and other obligations.
  - 3. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees.
  - 4. The President has the power to regulate and establish guidelines for the committees.
  - 5. The President shall appoint the necessary committees with the help of the Council.
  - 6. The President shall prepare the agenda for meetings.
  - 7. The President is responsible for ensuring the budget is prepared.
  - 8. The President may authorize expenditures within the framework of the budget.
  - 9. If an elected position becomes vacant (except for the position of President), the President may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. The replacement must be a member in good standing.

B. Vice-President

1. The Vice-President shall preside over meetings in the absence of the President.
2. The Vice-President shall serve as President in the event the President is unable to finish his or her term.
3. The Vice-President shall assist the President in any duties assigned.

C. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall manage the funds of the association in a responsible manner.
2. The Treasurer may, with the President, sign checks, contracts and other obligations.
3. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring preparation of the annual financial report.

D. Recording Secretary--The Recording Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings.

E. Corresponding Secretary--The Corresponding Secretary shall acknowledge gifts made to the association and prepare correspondence as directed by the President.

F. All five Officers shall be elected for 2-year terms.

G. All five Officers shall serve on the Council.

**ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES**

A. The President appoints the chairperson who, in turn, appoints additional committee members.

B. The following committees have been established.

1. Funds--Brace Fund and Camp Fund as well as any "special" funds the association might create from time to time.
2. Fund Raising
3. Publicity/Education
4. Membership
5. Activities
6. Programs
7. Hospitality
8. Newsletter/Flyer

## **ARTICLE 9: COUNCIL**

- A. The Council shall consist of the five Officers, the committee chairpersons and the immediate past-President.
- B. The Council shall discuss all business matters to present to the General Membership for discussion and vote, as appropriate.

## **ARTICLE 10: ELECTIONS**

- A. Annually, the President will appoint a nominating committee consisting of members in good standing to present a slate of candidates to the General Membership.
- B. Elections will take place at the General Membership meeting.

## **ARTICLE 11: BASIC POLICY ON POLITICS**

The association shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (including the publishing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

## **ARTICLE 12: MODIFYING BYLAWS**

- A. These bylaws may be modified by a majority vote at any regular meeting of the General Membership or at any special meeting called for that purpose.
- B. If modifications to the bylaws are to be presented for such vote, all regular members must be notified in advance of the meeting.

## **ARTICLE 13: DISSOLUTION**

In the event of the dissolution of the association, the association's assets shall be distributed for one or more of the exempt purposes specified in Section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 as amended.