

BYLAWS OF THE TEEN COURT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

As approved in 10/26/2015 General Membership Meeting

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Teen Court Association of Texas, Inc., hereinafter sometimes called TCAT or the Association, and is incorporated in the State of Texas.

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVE

This Association is a non-profit organization whose objective is to encourage, sponsor and promote the facilitation of Teen Court Programs throughout the State of Texas. Said Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future deferral tax code.

- Section 1. To develop and implement *Education and Training* as it pertains to Teen Courts in Texas.
- Section 2. To facilitate *Interaction and Communication* between Teen Courts and local, regional and state community members.
- Section 3. To *Promote and Develop* Teen Courts in Texas.
- Section 4. To enhance the *Potential to Reduce Juvenile Crime*.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSE

The purpose of the Organization is to lend Teen Courts all possible support in harmony with the objectives and principles set forth in the Bylaws.

- Section 1. No part of the net earnings or the assets of TCAT shall be used to benefit an individual, and no part of the activities of TCAT shall carry propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation. TCAT shall not participate in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- Section 2. TCAT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
- Section 3. It is intended that TCAT be exempt from federal tax under the Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and that all contributions to TCAT be tax deductible under Internal Revenue Code sections 170(c)(2), 2055(a) and 2522(a). No part of the net earnings of TCAT shall inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual except for reasonable compensation for services rendered in carrying out the purposes of TCAT and distributions and furtherance of its stated purposes. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, (A) TCAT shall not carry on any activities which are not permitted by a corporation exempt from Federal Income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or by a corporation's contributions which are tax deductible under sections 170 (c)(2), 2055(a) of the Code, and (B) if TCAT is required to make distributions of its income for each taxable year at such time and in such manner as not to subject the foundation to tax under section 4942 of the Code, and TCAT is prohibited from engaging in any act of self-dealing.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

- Section 1. There shall be three (3) classes of membership: Full, Associate and Honorary. Membership shall be open to all persons interested in the objectives of this Association.
- Section 2. Full Membership – Any established and operating Teen Court Program in the State of Texas shall have an unlimited number of full memberships and shall become a member upon full payment of dues. Each member shall be entitled to one vote on any matter as set out in these bylaws.
- Section 3. Associate Membership – Any individual associated with an organization engaged in an allied field may become an associate member upon full payment of current dues as established by the voting membership if unqualified for a full membership class. An associate member shall not have the right to vote or hold office. Associate members may be appointed to serve on committees. Associate memberships shall not be used as the primary membership of any established Teen Court program.
- Section 4. Honorary Membership – Any person who has made a significant contribution to a Teen Court or rendered distinguished service in related fields may be elected to Honorary Membership by the majority vote of the membership in attendance or by the unanimous vote of the Executive Committee. Honorary members may not hold another class of membership in this Association and do not have the right to vote or hold office.
- Section 5. The annual dues for Full and Associate Memberships shall be set by a majority vote of members in attendance at the annual meeting.
- Section 6. The annual dues for Honorary Membership shall be waived.
- Section 7. Dues shall be paid by October 1st and shall be considered past due as of October 31st. Membership will run concurrently with the fiscal year. (See Art X). Past due memberships shall be automatically suspended from the Association.
- Section 8. The membership year shall begin October 1st and end September 30th.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION

- Section 1. The Officers of the Organization shall consist of the President, President Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past President. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by TCAT. Each officer shall exercise only one (1) vote.
- Section 2. A full voting member in good standing (membership dues are current), may hold an office. Any nominee for office must have attended a minimum of one previous TCAT conference and have a general knowledge of the organization along with the TCAT Mission Statement.
- Section 3. Resignation of any officer must be in writing.
- Section 4. Officers shall be elected at the annual general membership meeting by a majority of the full membership present.
- Section 5. An office becomes vacant, if an officer dies, resigns as a board member, is removed, is not re-elected or is no longer a coordinator or staff of an operational teen court program.

- Section 6. When an office becomes vacant, a majority of the Executive Board may appoint an eligible member of the organization to fill the unexpired term. An office may remain open until the next annual meeting if a majority of the Executive Board agrees.
- Section 7. The length of term of office shall be designated by policy, with each officer assuming their duties January 1 after the election. No officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, with the exception of the Treasurer. An incumbent who has already served two terms may be nominated if there are no nominations on the ballot by the deadline set by the nominations committee.

ARTICLE VI - DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND PAST PRESIDENT

- Section 1. President – The President shall be the principal executive officer of the Association and shall in general supervise all of the business and affairs of the Association. Additionally, the President shall preside at all regular meetings of the membership or any other meetings and shall appoint committees, other than the Nominating Committee.
- Section 2. President-Elect – The President-Elect shall succeed to the Presidency the year following election; during the year elected.
- Section 3. Vice President – In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall carry out the duties of the President.
- Section 4. Secretary – The Secretary shall keep and record all minutes of meetings of the Association, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.
- Section 5. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall collect, receive, disperse and have custody of all funds of the Association. The Treasurer shall make a written financial report at all Executive Committee/Board of Directors meetings and at the annual conference. In addition, the Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all membership dues paid and outstanding.
- Section 6. Past President – The Past President shall serve as Parliamentarian during the annual conference meeting(s) and any meetings of the Board of Directors and a mentor to the current President and Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEES

- Section 1. The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the Association and the Past President. The Executive Board is also known as the Executive Committee or as the Board of Directors. The Executive Board shall have as its chairperson the President of TCAT. The Executive Board shall have and exercise, in the intervals between meetings of the general membership, all the powers of the management of the business and affairs of TCAT, or such lesser powers as may, in said vote of the membership, be specified. Four members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum. It shall meet at the call of the President. The secretary of TCAT, or in his/her absence a secretary chosen by the President, shall keep a true record of all proceedings, which records shall always be open to the inspection of any member, and at each meeting of the membership such records of the meetings of the Executive Board for the period since the last prior meeting of the Board shall be presented.

In the event an elected official becomes unable to fulfill their duties, they may be removed by majority vote of the Executive Board. A majority of the Executive Board present at the next meeting may appoint an eligible member of the organization to fill the unexpired term. An office may remain open if a majority of the Executive Board agrees.

- Section 2. Committees by Appointment - Such other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President of TCAT or as the Executive Board deems necessary to carry on the work of the Association. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- Section 3. Nominating Committee - The officers of the Association shall appoint a nominating committee of at least three (3) members to submit nominations for the various offices for which elections are to be held. The chair of the Nominating Committee shall be the past president, who will present the committee's report at the annual meeting. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.
- Section 4. Bylaws Committee - The President-Elect shall serve as chair of the Bylaws Committee and will present any recommendations for changes to the full membership at the annual conference.
- Section 5. Education Committee - The conference chair shall serve as the chair of the education committee. The Education Committee will determine the training agenda and assist in inviting speakers for the annual conference.
- Section 6. Communications Committee – The Executive Board shall appoint a Chairperson for the Communications Committee. The Communications Chairperson shall serve as Editor of the newsletter, “The Verdict” and the TCAT website. The Executive Board serves as the Editorial Board. The Communications Committee shall publish a newsletter, “The Verdict”, at least twice a year and maintain and update the TCAT website.
- Section 7. Legislative Committee – The Legislative Committee. The committee shall monitor any and all legislation that may affect Teen Courts in Texas or TCAT. They shall report to the Executive Board as soon as practical of any pending legislation that may affect Teen Courts in Texas or TCAT. The sole purpose of this committee is to educate Teen Courts and TCAT of pending legislation and is not allowed to lobby or solicit.
- Section 8. Terms of Office - Each member of a committee shall continue as such until the next annual meeting of the members of TCAT, or until a successor is elected or appointed.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

- Section 1. The Association shall meet annually during the TCAT conference.
- Section 2. The President may call for a winter and summer meeting of the Executive Board, one of which may be hosted by the Conference Chair, and may be held in the city of the upcoming conference.
- Section 3. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President at such time and place as the President may designate.

ARTICLE IX - QUORUM

A majority of the full membership present at the annual meeting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE X – CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS, FUNDS

Section 1. Contracts and Agreements - The membership may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of TCAT, in addition to the offices so authorized by these bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of TCAT; such authority may be general or specific. All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of TCAT shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of TCAT in a timely manner. All funds of TCAT shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of TCAT in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the membership may select.

Section 2. Board Expenditures - The Executive Board may authorize expenditures of up to eight hundred fifty and no/100 Dollars (\$850.00) for any single transaction, without requiring a vote of the full membership, an exception being the \$1,000.00 advance money for the annual conference.

ARTICLE XI – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on October 1st and shall end on September 30th.

ARTICLE XII – WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws of the corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE XIII - LIMITATION ON LIABILITY OF DIRECTORS/OFFICERS

A Director or Officer of the Association is not liable to TCAT or members for monetary damages for an act or omission in the Director's or Officer's capacity as director or officer except to the extent otherwise provided by a statute of the State of Texas.

ARTICLE XIV - INDEMNIFICATION

The Association may indemnify a person who was, is, or is threatened to be made a named defendant or respondent in litigation or other proceedings because the person is or was a director/officer or other person related to the Association as provided by the provisions in the Act governing indemnification. The Executive Board shall have the power to define the requirements and limitations of the Association to indemnify directors, officers, or others related to the organization.

ARTICLE XV - DISSOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION

Upon dissolution of TCAT, the assets of TCAT shall be distributed exclusively to one or more charitable, religious, educational or scientific organizations which then qualify under section 501(c)(3) of the Code as selected by the membership of TCAT, or if the membership fails to make the selection. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the County in which the principle office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for public purposes.

ARTICLE XVI - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised” shall govern the Organization in all cases to which they are applicable. In cases in which they are inconsistent with these Bylaws, the guidelines of the Texas University Interscholastic League and any special rules of order the Organization may adopt will be applied.

ARTICLE XVII - AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. The Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds majority of members present at a business meeting, provided the amendment has been presented in writing to the Executive Board for consideration at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting in which voting will take place by the members.
- Section 2. The Executive Board or any TCAT committee of the Association may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone call or similar communications equipment, or electronically. The Executive Board shall have the ability to authorize other methods of communication.
- Section 3. The bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a majority of the membership present at any annual meeting or through electronic means as designated by the board.