

# **Reenactment Guild of America Bylaws**

## ***Revised February 2025***

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Mission Statement**

An organization of Living Historians, Educators, Entertainers and Reenactors dedicated to preservation of and education regarding the History of America's 19th century, primarily but not restricted to the American Old West.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **RGA Goals**

The Reenactment Guild of America and its members are dedicated to preserving the History of the 19th Century and the "Old West".

1. RGA will help communities in creating new events to help educate the public about the history of the settlers and founders of their communities.
2. RGA will promote Living History events and "Old West" reenactment competitions to help increase tourism in Historical communities and celebrate their heritage.
3. RGA will work with historical sites, museums and other venues to help them with events and Living History Programs to educate the public about our nation's history and the struggles the first settlers endured.
4. RGA will apply for grants to perform Living History programs to educate people on the history of the West and the 19th century.
5. RGA will provide talent and production assistance to film companies that are in need of actors and production supplies.

RGA and its members reenact history from all of the 19th century. The trappers and fur traders were some of the first to see the new country called the West. They saw a new land and as word spread, many more followed. Men and women searching for wealth and gold made the trip to the gold fields. After the Civil War, many came West looking for a new start after the war had destroyed so many homes and lives. To settle a country all alone, the settlers endured hardships that most cannot conceive. The cattlemen came to a hard country with no law and natives that did not want them on this land. This gave birth to the American Cowboy and all that comes with him. Hard work....a little pay. The Indian fighter, Buffalo hunters, outlaws and heroes that make up the history of the 19th century are so important to America. These are the men and women that the Reenactment Guild of America want to keep alive and to be remembered.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Members**

1. Membership in RGA is open to all who reenact or perform living history in the time period that covers the 19th century. RGA is a living history organization, and members must dress period correct for the time period they choose to portray. Members need to research their chosen time period and dress accordingly.
2. Membership fees will be set by the board according to the needs and expenses incurred to operate RGA.
3. RGA reserves the right to turn down membership to anyone the board does not feel meets the standards and Living History goals of RGA.
4. Membership in RGA will include insurance for members. Members will be required to follow all safety rules to be eligible for coverage.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Board of Officers**

1. There will be a State Director and a State Safety Officer for each state having ten (10) members. Any state with less than ten (10) members will be affiliated with a state that has a State Officers. On Dec. 31st of each year, each state's membership will be verified. If it is determined that an affiliated state reached the ten (10) member minimum, the Board of RGA can appoint interim State Directors and Safety Officers until an election can be held for that state. This will ensure that the membership in that state can vote for their choice of officers.
  - 1(a). Once a state has reached the minimum of ten (10) members, that state will have a State Director and State Safety Officer. If a State falls below ten (10) members, when membership is verified on December 31st preceding the State Director's Election year, that state will elect its officers for one term. If, when membership is verified on December 31st preceding the next State Director's Election year, and that State has NOT reached the minimum of ten (10) members, they will forfeit all State Officers.
2. There will be a National Board of Officers consisting of a National Director, Associate Director, Treasurer, Secretary, Safety Officer and five (5) board members from organized RGA states. These five (5) Board members will represent the areas of the RGA membership and work with the State Directors and State Safety Officers. The National Board of Officers will be responsible for establishing rules and guidelines, RGA National budget approval and RGA policies. No National elected voting officer will be able to cast a vote from a state held position. Any Board member holding more than one voting position will only have one vote.

3. The National Director, Associate Director, Treasurer and Secretary will be responsible for ensuring RGA's legal fitness compliance.

4. No Director, Board Member or Safety Officer will receive a salary for their services to RGA membership. Reimbursement of the Board of Officers approved expenses will be permitted with the submission of proper and correct receipts.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Duties of Officers**

1. National Director: The National Director must be a member of RGA in good standing and may reside in any state. The Director will preside at all meetings of the Board of Officers; appoint such committees as they deem expedient for the carrying out of the goals of RGA, all subject to and with the approval of the board of officers; call meetings whenever they deem it necessary. The National Director will only vote on issues before the Board in case of a tie vote. The National Director will have signature approval for RGA business. The National Director will be elected by RGA membership to serve a four (4) year term.

2. Associate Director: The Associate Director must be a member of RGA in good standing and may reside in any state. The Associate Director will serve as an assistant to the National Director. The Associate Director will assume the duties of the National Director in the event of absence, resignation or incapacitation until a national election can be held. The Associate Directors duties will be assigned by the National Director. The Associate Director will be eligible to vote on all issues before the board. The Associate Director will have signature approval for RGA business in absence of or at the direction of the National Director. The Associate Director will be elected by the RGA membership to serve a four (4) year term.

3. Secretary: The Secretary must be a member of RGA in good standing and may reside in any state. The Secretary will keep minutes of all board of officer's meetings and post them in a timely fashion on the RGA website. The Secretary will have the responsibility for tracking memberships and dues. The Secretary will handle all National RGA correspondence. The Secretary is a position appointed by the National Director. The Secretary does not have voting privileges.

4. Treasurer: The RGA Treasurer must be a member of RGA in good standing and must reside in Texas. The Treasurer will oversee all finances of RGA and make quarterly reports to the board and its members. The Treasurer will have full access to and be responsible for keeping accounts current; licenses and permits current and all tax liabilities are met. The Treasurer is appointed by the National Director. The Treasurer does not have voting privileges. The Treasurer must be eligible to be bonded. In the event the National Director is unable to appoint a suitable candidate to the Treasurer position, an outside firm may be contracted to perform

the Treasurer duties after receiving approval from the board of officers, until a suitable replacement can be retained within the organization.

5. National Safety Director: The Safety Director must be a member of RGA in good standing and may reside in any state. The Safety Director will act at the direction of the National Director and Associate Director to develop and maintain RGA's safety policy. The Safety Director will provide guidance and instruction to State Safety Officers for compliance with RGA's safety rules. The Safety Director will be responsible for recommending changes to the RGA Safety Rules to the Board of Officers. These recommendations may originate from the Safety Director or be the result of recommendations from the State Safety Officer network. The Safety Director is recommended to observe as many competitions each year as possible. The Safety Director will be appointed by the Board of Officers for an indefinite term of office. The Safety Director may be removed from office for just cause by a two-third (2/3) vote of the Board of Officers. The Safety Director will not have a vote on issues before the Board of Officers.

6. State Director: The State Director will be a member of RGA in good standing and reside within their state. State Directors will represent all RGA members within their state. A State Director will have the same responsibility for RGA membership in any affiliated state until such time as the affiliated state membership qualifies to conduct its own elections during the RGA voting period. From the time of qualification to the time of election, the National Directors may appoint an interim State Director to oversee RGA activities. The State Director and interim State Director. The State Director will not have signature approval for RGA business. The State Director will be elected by their state's membership for a four (4) year term.

7. State Safety Officer: The State Safety Officer must be a member of RGA in good standing and reside within their state. The State Safety Officer will be elected by the membership of the state represented for a four (4) year term beginning for 2025 officers. The State Safety Officer will work with the National Safety Director on development and adherence to the RGA Safety Rules on both a National and State level. The State Safety Officer will also be responsible for the Youth Safety program as defined under rule number six (6) of the Junior Reenactor program in the RGA Safety Rules. The State Safety Officer or any present State Officer will be required to appoint a qualified event Safety Officer in the event the State Safety Officer is unable to attend an RGA affiliated event within the represented state.

8. National Board: The Board for RGA will consist of the National Director, Associate Director and five (5) board members appointed by the National Director to represent areas of the RGA membership. Each of the five (5) members representing these areas must be a serving State Officer. These board members will work directly with their area's State Directors and State Safety Officers and bring any issues they may feel require a response to the Board.

9. Removal of an Officer or Board Member: The removal of an Officer or a Board Member is a very serious matter and should not be considered unless ample proof is provided, i.e. theft, being charged with a serious crime, unethical action that degrades RGA members, etc. Never should a Board member or Officer be subject to removal over gossip or unpopular decisions. It

will take a 2/3 vote by all Board Members to remove a Board Member or Officer from their position.

10. Resignations are effective upon receipt by the Secretary of RGA by written notification.

11. Vacancy of Office or Board Member: If an Officer or Board Member should resign or be removed and there are more than six (6) months left on his/her term, the Board shall appoint an interim Officer or Board Member to complete the term.

12. Term of Office: The term of office for National Board members will be indefinite.

13. Officer Memberships: All Officers and Board Members (elected, appointed and interim) will be provided a full term membership at no cost. The memberships will remain valid for their full term unless they resign before their term is complete. In that case, their membership will remain active until the end of the fiscal year in which they resign. If an Officer or Board Member is removed by the Board according to Article V, Section 9, his/her membership will be revoked immediately.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Elections**

1. Elections will be held in each state for National and State offices in November of the election year. Nominations for open positions will be made in August of each election year.

1(a). Membership for each state will be determined on December 31st of the preceding year. If a state does not have sufficient membership to keep a State Board Member, that State Board Member and State Director will be notified. If a state falls below ten (10) members, please refer to Article IV, Section 1(a).

2. To help facilitate RGA elections, the RGA Board will appoint a National Election Official to preside over the elections. This Official will be appointed to serve a four (4) year term coinciding with the National Directors election and can be on any ballot. The National Election Official may reside in any state.

3. On August 1st, or the next business day if the 1st falls on a Sunday of the election year, the National Election Official will e-mail or mail if no e-mail address is provided, a nomination form for open positions to every RGA member. The National Election Official and State Directors will verify acceptance by speaking with each candidate.

4. On November 1st, the National Election Official will mail an instruction letter and ballot to every RGA member. Ballots must be in the possession of the National Election Official by November 30th. On December 1st (or as close as possible), the National Election official will tally the ballots and report the results to the National Director.

5. If there is only one candidate for an office, that office will not appear on the ballot. If there is only one candidate for every office, no election will be held.

6. RGA will reimburse the National Election Official for mailing and printing costs of the election.

7. The National Election Official will set rules for the candidates to campaign. Campaigning should never be about the opponent, but about why the candidate is the best person for the job.

8 .The National Election Official will create all files and materials needed for the administration of the election.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Meetings**

1. The Reenactment Guild of America will hold a National Conference of the RGA board at least once a calendar year . The meeting will be held to address the agenda items the National Officers feel the Board should address in a meeting setting such as but not limited to by-law changes, budgets for the year and goal setting workshops.

2. The National Board of the Reenactment Guild of America will hold on-going meetings throughout the calendar year of agenda issues by the use of electronic chat/action room meetings. This method has been deemed legal and complies with the Texas Secretary of State requirements for meetings of a 501-3-c organization.

3. The National Director may call a special meeting at any time it is deemed necessary.

4. The agenda items of the National Conference meeting will be posted on the RGA website and any other form of acceptable communication available fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.

5. A quorum of the Board must be present to hold a meeting. A quorum will consist of 51% of the voting Board Members.

6. Any member who who has concerns about the agenda may address the Board in writing or by email five (5) days prior to the meeting. The concerns will be presented before the Board at that meeting.

7. The minutes of the board meetings will be posted on the website by the Secretary once they are written.

8. Action may be taken on emergency items without a meeting of the Board by contacting all Board members available. For approval, the National Director must get a consensus of 51% of the voting members by phone.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Accounting**

1. Fiscal Year - The fiscal year for RGA will begin January 1st of each year and end December 31st of each year, but may be changed by resolution of the Board of Directors.

2. Check and Draft - The Board of Directors has given authority to the RGA National Director and Treasurer to set up a bank account for the purpose of depositing membership dues and covering expenses incurred by RGA. All checks other than normal expenses incurred by RGA shall be subject to a vote of the Board of Directors for approval. Checks to be written for business expenses and travel as needed can be approved by either the National Director or Treasurer of RGA. Receipts and bills of lading must be turned in to the Treasurer or the National Director to be eligible for reimbursement.
3. Budget - The Board of Directors will meet once a year in January to set and decide on any budgeted items for that year. The Board may amend the budget at any meeting if it becomes necessary.
4. Accounting - The Treasurer will make a quarterly financial report to the Board. A financial statement will be posted on the website. The Treasurer will compile an annual report for the members within 30 days of the end of the fiscal year.
5. Reimbursement - The National Director and other officers will serve without compensation with the exception of expenses incurred in furtherance of RGA business with prior board approval. Travel expenses for the Director will be reimbursed with receipt for all expenses incurred for RGA business. Travel expenses for officers, judges or pertinent personnel as deemed necessary for an event must be approved by the National Director beforehand to be eligible for reimbursement.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Competitions**

1. Competitions: Every group and state is encouraged to hold competitions and events in their area. RGA members are encouraged to support all events if possible. If a group in any state holds a sanctioned competition for a fundraiser, the profits must be reported to the National Director of RGA and detail how those proceeds will be used in the future. No RGA member should make a profit from hosting any event or competition. The group may use the funds as start-up costs for the next year's event, donate the funds to charity or to help support Living History Parks, etc.
2. RGA is a non-profit organization and all funds must be accounted for and used in a manner to promote Old West History or events that promote Living History of the 19th century.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Books and Records**

1. Appropriate records/books of activities of the Guild shall be kept by the Treasurer and/or Secretary of RGA. These shall include a minutes book which shall contain a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation, a copy of these Bylaws and all minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Amendment of Bylaws**

1. These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Prior notice will be given of proposed amendment/s in the notice of the meeting at which such action is to be taken.
2. Amendments must pass with a majority vote by a quorum (51%) of the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Disbursement of Reenactment Guild**

The Reenactment Guild of America's goal is to be around for the coming generations to pass on our history. These are the hopes we have for our Guild. At any time the members or Board of Directors in its entirety feels that RGA is no longer needed or supported by the membership, they can vote to disburse the Guild. It will take a 75% vote of all Board Members to disburse the Guild. Once this vote has been passed, all assets of RGA will be sold or auctioned and any funds in accounts will be donated to the charities or non-profit organization the Board of Directors and officers can agree on by a majority vote. No assets or funds can be retained by RGA, but can be purchased by members through the auction if they place the high bid.