Bylaws

Updated: 10/23/2024

Article I, Organization

The organization shall be known as "Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists Inc." and shall be incorporated in the state of Connecticut, and shall be referred to as the "Corporation" hereinafter.

Article II, Purposes

Section 1. To exchange ideas and information within the field of forensic science, and to foster friendship and cooperation among the various laboratory personnel.

Section 2. To encourage a high level of competency among professionals in the field of forensic science.

Section 3. To promote recognition of forensic science as an important component of the criminal justice system.

Section 4. To stimulate increased implementation of existing techniques, along with research and development of new techniques within the field, and to encourage financial support for these efforts.

Article III, Areas of Activity

Section 1. Establish and enforce a code of ethics.

Section 2. Lend assistance, whenever possible, in the formulation of college curricula and law enforcement training programs.

Section 3. Review and act upon pending legislation which appears to be related to the field when and where possible and so requested by competent authority.

Section 4. Organize and/or sanction meetings, symposia, training and discussions to further the exchange of information.

Article IV, Definition of Forensic Science

The field of forensic science is defined as the application of the natural sciences to matters of the law.

Article V, Geographical Area

The geographical area of the Corporation is to include the States of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Article VI, Membership

Section 1. General qualifications: Applicants for membership shall be expected to have previously demonstrated moral and ethical conduct befitting the profession. Any application may be rejected by the Membership Committee with the approval of the Board of Directors for the same reasons as termination of membership (Article VI, Section 10).

Section 2. Membership is conferred as follows:

A. Completed membership applications for Associate, Regular, Life, and Emeritus status received after May 1st and before September 1st of the current year will be considered for approval by the Membership Committee and elected with ¾ of the voting membership at the annual business meeting.

B. Completed Membership applications received after September 1st of the current year and by April 30th of following year may be considered for approval by the Membership Committee and elected on or about June 1st of that current year with ¾ of the voting membership, using a Board of Directors approved virtual platform and establishing a quorum. If a quorum is not met, completed applications approved for membership will be elected with ¾ of the voting membership at the next annual business meeting.

C. The results of the vote shall be recorded and shared with the membership at the earliest opportunity.

Section 3. **Regular Members**: A Regular Member of the Corporation is one who has met the minimum established qualifications and shall be entitled to receive all publications, to a vote at business meetings, and to hold office at the time of approval. Qualifications for Regular Membership Shall Be:

A. Hold a Doctorate, or Master's Degree, and have completed a minimum of two (2) years of experience or

B. Hold a Baccalaureate degree and have completed a minimum of three (3) years of experience or

C. Have completed a minimum of ten (10) years of experience and be active in the field or

D. Have, in the opinion of the Membership Committee, made such significant contributions to the field and or the Corporation to warrant Regular Membership.

E. Experience, for purposes of Article VI, Section 3.A., 3.B., and 3.C. is considered only in the field of forensic science:

1. Working a minimum of fifteen (15) hours per week doing examinations and/or interpretation of physical evidence or

2. Worked a minimum of fifteen (15) hours per week having done examinations and/or interpretation of physical evidence or

3. Working as a full-time professor in forensic science or criminalistics in an undergraduate or graduate program at a college or university.

Section 4. **Associate Members**: Any person who does not meet the requirements for Regular Membership may apply as an Associate Member. Such members shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of Regular Members except that they shall be ineligible to vote or hold office. Examples of Associate Members will include but not be limited to: Educators in High School Forensics or General Sciences, employees of scientific companies, practitioners, etc.

Section 5. **Life Members**: Life Members shall retain all rights and privileges of Regular Members, but shall be excused from all dues and assessments. Life membership shall be conferred upon persons who have sustained membership for at least fifteen years including a minimum of five years as a Regular Member and, who in the opinion of the Board and the Membership, have demonstrated continued dedication to the profession and the Corporation and have made significant contributions on behalf of the Corporation.

Section 6. **Emeritus Members**: Members holding emeritus status shall retain all rights and privileges of regular members, but shall be excused from all dues and assessments. A member may apply for emeritus status at any time by submitting a request to the Membership Chair. Those applying for emeritus status shall be provisionally excused from all dues and assessments beginning at the time from which their request is received. If the emeritus status of a member is not approved, the member shall be responsible for the current years' dues, without penalty for reinstatement. Once emeritus status is conferred, the member shall be eligible to continue their emeritus status and receive publications free of charge on an annual basis as long as they continue to meet the Emeritus requirements. Any member meeting the following requirements may be proposed for emeritus status by the Membership Committee. The member must:

A. Be at least fifty five (55) years of age,

B. Be retired from full-time forensic work

C. Have been a full dues paying member of the Corporation for a minimum of ten (10) years, one of which was as a Regular Member.

Section 7. **Student Members**: Students who meet the below requirements shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges of a Associate Member. They will not be eligible to vote or hold office. Student members will be permitted to attend the Annual Meeting of the Corporation for a discounted fee to be determined by the Board of Directors. The students must:

A. Not have already been a member or active applicant of the Corporation

B. Not be employed in a forensic science laboratory

C. Be enrolled at a college or university in a forensic science or related program

D. Provide proof of enrollment annually at the time dues are collected.

E. Upgrade to an Associate Member after Graduation.

Section 8. Any member may apply to the Membership Committee for a change in his/her/their membership status. Membership shall not be transferable or assignable.

Section 9. Fees and Dues: Annual dues for Student, Associate and Regular Members and application fees for membership shall be set by the Membership of the Corporation. The first year of dues will be waived for members upgrading from a Student Membership to an Associate Membership. Registration fees for Members, Associate Members, Active Applicants, Student Members and Non-Members to attend the Annual Meeting shall be set by the Board of Directors.

A. An Active Applicant is an applicant whose completed application has been received by the Membership Committee Chairperson for consideration by the deadline(s) set forth by the Membership Chairperson and/or the Board of Directors.

B. The Board of Directors considering reports of the Treasurer; the Membership Committee Chairperson; the Site Chairperson; or any Member, may recommend changes in the membership fees and annual dues schedule to the Membership.

C. Any recommended change(s) to annual dues and membership fees will be presented to the Membership for a vote at the Annual Business meeting. Changes will be effected by approval of a majority of the voting membership present at the Annual Business meeting.

D. There will be no charge to attend the Annual Business Meeting.

E. The President Elect considering reports of the Treasurer; the Membership Committee Chairperson; the Site Chairperson; or any Member, may recommend changes in the Annual Meeting registration fees to the Board of Directors.

F. Any recommended change(s) to registration fees will be effected by 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 10. Termination of Membership.

A. Any member may resign his/her/their membership in the Corporation by written request directed to the Membership Committee Chairperson. The Board of Directors will inform the membership at the next Annual Meeting. A Member who has resigned in this manner shall be entitled to reapply to the Membership Committee for reinstatement without penalty.

B. Membership will be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Directors upon information supplied by the Membership Committee Chairperson that the Member has failed to pay prescribed dues or assessments by the Annual Business Meeting. A Member who has been terminated for failure to pay prescribed dues or assessments shall be entitled to reapply to the Membership Committee for reinstatement.

C. A Member may be suspended or expelled from the Corporation for any violation of the Code of Ethics, or conduct detrimental to the profession and/or the Corporation. Any person may initiate proceedings concerning unethical behavior by filing charges with the Ethics Committee in writing. Any person with membership in the Corporation may institute proceedings concerning conduct detrimental to the Corporation by filing written charges with the Ethics Committee. Any member so charged shall be notified as soon as possible, and shall be allowed to be present during the hearing on the charges against him/her/them.

D. A Member will be expelled from the Corporation following his/her/their conviction of a criminal offense.

E. A Member may be expelled from the Corporation upon recommendation of the Ethics Committee or the Board of Directors, and a 3/4 vote of the membership at the Annual Business Meeting.

F. Penalties can be waived at the discretion of the Board of Directors in extenuating circumstances. Penalty exemptions require approval by 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors.

G. Unless otherwise noted, once you become a Regular Member you shall be eligible to retain that membership regardless of current employment status or activity in the field of Forensic Science.

Section 11. Membership Upgrade/ Membership Promotion: Any Member in good standing can apply for a membership upgrade once they meet the minimum established standards for the membership level they are applying for and has been approved by the Membership Committee. Membership upgrades to these levels are conferred following Article VI Section 2.

A. Associate Member to Regular Member

B. Student Member to Associate Member

C. Regular Member to Life Member

D. Regular Member to Emeritus Member

Article VII, Officers, Board of Directors, and Executive Staff Members

Section 1. The Officers and Board of Directors of this Corporation shall be the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and three (3) Directors.

Section 2. Officers: Description, Duties and Terms of Office

A. President: Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Chief Representative of the Corporation. Shall preside over business meetings. Appoints committees, and shall execute with the Secretary all official organizational business. Empowered to sign checks. Having two votes in all Executive Staff Member elections, with the exception of if a quorum cannot be met. Term: One Year

B. President-Elect: Shall act in place of the President in the case of temporary absence or disability of the President. Shall be Program Chairperson for the annual meeting. Empowered to sign checks. Elected by the membership. Term: One Year, after which, succeeds to the Presidency.

C. Secretary: Keeps and publishes minutes of all Board of Directors and Membership meetings. Empowered to sign checks. Elected by the Membership. Term: Two Years.

D. Treasurer: Receives all monies due the Corporation, and keeps accurate records of all transactions. Presents a statement twice yearly to the Board of Directors. Prepares the annual budget for presentation at the Annual Meeting, and reports the previous year's financial transactions at the annual meeting. All monies shall be deposited in a bank authorized by the Board of Directors as soon as possible and reasonable. Files the Corporation’s annual taxes. Empowered to sign checks. Elected by the Membership. Term: Two Years.

E. Directors: Help maintain information exchange within the Corporation. Elected by the Membership. Term: One Year.

Section 3. Executive Staff Members: Description, Duties, Terms of Office and Method of Selection.

A. Awards Committee Chairperson: Review scholarship/award applications, bestow scholarships/awards to best fit applicants, and present said awards to the Board of Directors. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One year.

B. Certification Chairperson: Liaison between the Board of Directors and the American Board of Criminalistics and other certifying organizations. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Three years.

C. Corporate Liaison: Serves as the liaison between the corporate sponsors and the Corporation. Provides reports to the Board of Directors and Treasurer as needed. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Three Years

D. Education Committee Chairperson: Investigates, organizes and oversees educational opportunities for the Membership. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One year.

E. Ethics Committee Chairperson: Oversees and organizes the investigation of any ethical violations or concerns within the Corporation and its Membership. Position should be held by the most senior Past President currently serving on the committee. Term: One year.

F. Executive Secretary: Maintains Membership files, committee reports and Corporation business. Files copies of incoming and outgoing correspondence. Serves as Chairperson of the Election Committee. Receives and tabulates all ballots regarding elections and other Corporation votes. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One Year.

G. Membership Committee Chairperson: Acts as Chairperson of the Membership Committee and presents recommendations to the Board of Directors and to the membership. Notifies the Membership, in advance, of the names and affiliations of applicants and Membership re-instatements to be voted on for Membership. Notifies the Membership, in advance, of the names of Members to be terminated for unpaid dues/assessments. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Three Years.

H. Past President: To be filled by the immediate Past President if he/she/they is willing and able to serve; otherwise, to be filled by another Past President elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Serves as a Member of the Ethics Committee. Duties to be assigned by the Board of Directors. Term: One Year.

I. Publication Chairperson: Responsible of communicating to the Members those matters prescribed in the bylaws and as directed by the Board of Directors. The manner of this communication with the Members to be determined by the Board of Directors, including overseeing the Corporation newsletter and website. Notifies the Membership of meetings. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One Year.

J. Regional Associations Committee Representative: Responsible for representing the Corporation at meetings of Regional Organizations. Provides reports to the Board of Directors as needed. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Two Years.

K. Registration Chairperson: Has the responsibility of overseeing registration for the Annual Meeting, or other events when necessary. Provides reports to the Board of Directors as needed. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Three Years.

L. Site Chairperson: Investigates potential sites for Annual Meetings and presents recommendations to the Board of Directors. Negotiates and signs contracts with selected hotels for the Corporation as directed by the Board of Directors. Serves as a liaison between the hotel and the Corporation during the annual meeting and coordinates and monitors all contracted hotel services. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: Three Years.

M. Social Media Coordinator/Merchandise Chairperson: Responsible for updating social media outlets with pertinent organizational information throughout the year and Annual Meeting information and photographs. Responsible for overseeing the sales and distribution of Corporation merchandise. Provides reports on the merchandise sales to the Board of Directors as needed. Elected by approval of 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One Year

N. Outreach Coordinator: Responsible for planning and organizing outreach events to inform the community about the benefits of NEAFS and becoming a member of the organization. Serves as a liaison between the organization and local educational institutions or laboratories. Elected by approval of ⅔ vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One Year.

O. Volunteer Coordinator: Responsible for soliciting volunteers for assistance at the Annual Meeting or other NEAFS sponsored events, as needed. Responsible for organizing and directing the efforts of volunteers on behalf of the organization. Elected by approval of ⅔ vote of the Board of Directors. Term: One Year

Section 4. Board of Directors

A. The Board of Directors shall be composed of the officers specified in Section 1 of Article VII, and shall have the power to assign functions to each officer for the

advancement of the Corporation within the purview of their duties, and that such assignments shall be reviewed by the membership at the next annual meeting, where appropriate.

B. Shall meet at least twice each year, once being at the Annual Membership Meeting.

C. Shall act as a Resolutions committee for the Annual Meeting, setting guidelines for the presentation of resolutions.

D. Shall be responsible for audit of financial records, either personally, or by an outside concern, and shall present said audit to the membership.

E. Shall present a budget to the Membership for ratification by majority of the voting membership at the Annual Meeting.

F. Shall recommend changes to these bylaws.

G. Vacancies on the Board of Directors to be filled by election by the remaining Board members for the remainder of the term of the vacated Board member; except that, in a Presidential vacancy, the President-Elect shall accede to the Presidency; in addition, in a Presidential-Elect vacancy, the member filling the vacancy shall not accede to the Presidency, but a special election shall be held for President at the expiration of the interim President-Elect's term.

H. Executive Staff Member terms may be altered at the discretion of the President should vacancies on the Board of Directors permit.

I. Other meetings of the Board of Directors will be held at the request of the President, or any three other Board members.

J. A majority of the officers shall constitute a quorum and shall be entitled to conduct business at Board of Directors meetings.

Section 5. The Board of Directors shall have full power and authority to obtain funds on behalf of the Corporation; to do and perform every act which the Corporation may lawfully do and perform, provided that said total indebtedness of the Corporation shall not exceed the following year's anticipated income.

Section 6. The Board of Directors and executive staff members of this Corporation shall serve without compensation, except their actual expenses, unless additional compensation has been budgeted and approved by the membership. The Board of Directors may authorize the Treasurer, by a 2/3 vote, to pay up to a $5000 non-budgeted expense if it can be considered a regular expense of doing business. The Treasurer shall make such payments thus authorized by the Board of Directors, and those payments approved by the membership within the budget, or by a special vote of 2/3 of the membership. The Board of

Directors shall provide a suitable seal for the Corporation. The fiscal year for the Corporation shall be January 1 through December 31.

Section 7. The Board of Directors may, by vote, remove from office, for any cause, any Director who has failed to perform, in a reasonable manner, the duties of his/her/their office as outlined in the bylaws, or as reasonably directed by the Board. Removal is effected by a 3/4 vote of the Directors not charged, present and voting. A minimum of four votes in favor of removal must be cast. A removal proceeding, may be initiated by any regular member of the Corporation with proper notice and an opportunity to speak and/or be represented being given to the Director so charged. Charges must be filed in writing with the President and with the Executive Secretary.

Article VIII, Standing Committees

Section 1. Awards Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 2. Certification Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 3. Corporate/Exhibit Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 4. Education Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 5. Elections Committee: Elections to be chaired by the Executive Secretary, and two others appointed by the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Ethics Committee: To be composed of three most recent Past Presidents, appointed to three-year terms, the terms to be staggered.

Section 7. Membership Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 8. Nominations Committee: To consist of the President (the Committee Chair), the President-Elect, and three other persons not on the Board of Directors, but appointed by the Board of Directors.

Section 9. Publications Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 10. Registration Committee: To be composed of a chairperson appointed by the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall appoint committee members as he/she/they sees fit.

Section 11. Resolution Committee: To consist of the Board of Directors.

Article IX, Special Committees

Special committees may be established by the Board of Directors, their duties and power to be described.

Article X, Trustees

The Board of Directors, with the approval of 3/4 of the membership, may confer Honorary Membership and Trusteeship on celebrated individuals, who have shown themselves to be interested in the advancement of the Corporation and of forensic science, and who have endeavored to assist the Corporation in achieving its goals.

Article XI, Governance of Meetings

Meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Corporation shall be guided by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, unless otherwise stated in these by-laws.

Article XII, Annual Meetings

The General Membership Meeting will be held annually in the fall of each year in a location to be determined by the Board of Directors. The attendance of five percent (5%) of the voting membership of the Corporation shall constitute a quorum (at the Annual Business Meeting).

Article XIII, Voting

Voting will be carried out either by mail, email, virtually, or in person, and all majorities herein referred to shall mean a majority of votes cast, with the participation of five percent (5%) of the voting membership of the Corporation being a quorum.

Article XIV, Elections

Section 1. Nominations:

A. The Nominating Committee will propose a slate of officers to the Board of Directors prior to the A nnual Business M eeting.

B. The slate will be announced to the Membership at the Annual Business Meeting.

C. Additional nominations can be proposed from the membership by a petition of 20 members, or 10% of the voting membership, whichever is less.

D. Nominations must be presented to the Chair of the Nominating Committee within 30 days of the Annual Business Meeting.

Section 2. Elections:

A. If additional nominations are received by the Nominating Committee, an Election will be held by mail or email.

B. Election will be by a plurality of the votes cast.

C. If no additional nominations are received, the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee at the Annual Business Meeting will become effective January 1.

D. The new officers will be announced in the first newsletter after January 1.

E. Terms of office are January 1 through December 31.

Article XV, Recommended Order of Business at the Annual Meeting

The Order of Business at the Annual Business Meeting should include:

A. Opening

B. Roll call of officers

C. Review of the Minutes of the previous meeting

D. Reports of Standing Committees

1. Elections Committee

2. Ethics Committee

3. Membership Committee and voting on new members

4. New Business

5. Nominations Committee

6. Old/Unfinished business

7. Presentation and ratification of the budget

8. Publications Committee

9. Ratification of the audit

10. Report of the President

11. Report of the Treasurer on previous year's expenditures

12. Reports of other Committees

13. Resolutions Committee

14. Adjournment

Article XVI, Education Funds

Section 1. Students:

Funding may be utilized to provide a scholarship for students enrolled in a forensic science or a related science program at an institution of higher education located within the region served by the Corporation in accordance with the following rules and guidelines:

A. That the scholarship may be given as frequently as once per year, but need only be given at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

B. That the scholarship be available to full-time undergraduate students who are in their Junior or Senior year at the time of the application; and/or to graduate students who are enrolled in a part-time or full-time program at the time of the application. The student must be enrolled in a forensic science or a related science program at the time of receipt of the award/scholarship.

C. That the Scholarship Nominations will be solicited through the Corporation Newsletter and/or by informational mailings to Colleges and Universities within the region served by the Corporation. The solicitation period and application deadline date for this award will be determined by the Awards Committee (Article VIII, Section 1).

D. That the Awards Committee develops specific criteria for the scholarship and publishes them along with the solicitation for nominations. The Awards Committee will rely on, but not be limited to, the applicant's academic course record, letter(s) of recommendation from an instructor or a professor familiar with the applicant's academic/research work, and a letter from the applicant describing their personal goals, achievements, and reasons for award consideration.

Section 2. Practitioners:

Funding may be utilized to provide a scholarship for members in good standing for training, workshop(s), or non-NEAFS meeting registration and travel expenses:

A. Individuals will only be allowed reimbursement once per application period/calendar year.

B. Any NEAFS members are ineligible to receive funding for NEAFS annual meeting expenses.

C. Reimbursement will occur for members in good standing upon receipt of a certificate within 6 months showing successful attendance and completion of the course along with an article summarizing the course for the NEAFS newsletter.

Article XVII, Amendments to the Bylaws

Amendments to these by-laws must be proposed in writing to the Resolution Committee at least three months prior to the annual meeting. The Resolution Committee shall publish the amendment(s) before the meeting, and then report at the meeting that the resolution(s) has been approved, disapproved, or that no action has been taken. A 3/4 vote of the membership present at the annual business meeting may over-rule the Resolutions Committee and cause a different action to be taken. The Board of Directors may also propose changes in the by-laws by mail or email, and such changes may be effected by a 3/4 vote of the membership by mail, email or those present at the annual business meeting.

Article XVIII, Dissolution of the Corporation

In the event of and upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payments of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in the following manner: by equal awards to each and every accredited University and/or College in the geographical area of this Corporation which offers a degree program in forensic science.

However, if it should be impossible to so dispose of these funds as stated, then the assets shall be donated to an organization whose charitable, educational or scientific purposes

shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as the Board of Directors shall determine.