

**SAMPLE  
BY-LAWS OF THE  
AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**ARTICLE I**

**This Association shall be known as the AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. \_\_\_\_\_ CHAPTER.**

**ARTICLE II**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: Membership is open to the general public.

Section 2: Term of membership shall be from 1st January to 31st December of each calendar year.

Section 3: Dues for membership shall be determined by the executive committee. Dues must be paid by December 31st of each calendar year.

**ARTICLE III**

**OFFICERS**

The elected officers of the Society, who shall serve on the Executive Committee, shall be President, Vice-President, Recording/Correspondence Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 1: To hold any office and/or vote, you must be financial by the last day of the calendar year.

Section 2: The following officers shall be appointed, if necessary: Parliamentarian, Historian, Editor of the Newsletter, Public Relations Liaison and Fund-Raising Chairperson. Any elected officers missing three (3) consecutive scheduled meetings without prior notification can be subject to removal of position based on decision of the Executive Committee.

Section 3: The duties of the officers shall be:

**A. The President shall:**

1. Preside over all meetings of the AAHGS, Utah Chapter and Executive Committee.
2. Offer all motions for consideration.
3. Call special meetings.
4. Appoint committee chairpersons, subject to approval of Executive Committee.
5. Be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the

Election Committee.

6. Enforce observance of the By-Laws.
7. Present a detailed report of the proceedings and accomplishments of his/her administration at the end of his/her term.
8. Be responsible for filing annual reports, which shall include financial reports, by April 30 of each year to the National Chapter.

**B. The Vice-President shall:**

1. Serve in the absence of the president.
2. Serve as a member of the Finance Committee.
3. Be responsible for special projects relating to genealogy and history.
4. Chair the Program Committee.

**C. The Recording/Correspondence Secretary shall:**

1. Keep minutes of all business and special meetings.
2. Prepare and forward minutes of previous meeting to the Recording/Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Historian and President within 7 days of prior meeting.
3. Prepare reports and summaries.
4. Prepare minutes and annually present those of the previous year to the AAHGS for inclusion in the Society's archives.
5. Answer all correspondence received from the membership and public inquiries.
6. Maintain record of membership.
7. Be responsible for all outgoing and incoming correspondence.
8. Inform membership of the meeting times and place and maintains a log of all correspondence received.
9. Assure that written correspondence should be received by the membership 10 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
10. Pick up all mail from the Post Office Box.
11. Notify the President immediately of New Members. President then sends welcome letter to member followed by a New Membership Packet prepared and mailed by Recording/Correspondence Secretary.
12. Packet is to include the following items:

Chapter Establishment & History 2006 - present

By-Laws

Current Officers & Members Directory

Membership Card

Application (for distribution)

Membership Profile Sheet

**D. The Treasurer shall:**

1. Maintain a log of all financial correspondence and monies received, and the disposition of each.
2. Manage all receipts and disbursements of monies.
3. Receive all checks for processing and assure proper disposition.
4. Be entrusted with the custody of the funds.
5. Be bonded for a sum sufficient to protect the Society.
6. Receive all monies and deposit same in bank or other institution.
7. Make all withdrawals and disbursements by check counter-signed by the Treasurer and President or Vice President. Two signatures are required on all checks.
8. Issue checks upon receipt of requested vouchers.
9. Obtain all receipts and documentation necessary for reimbursement.
10. Keep a proper set of books and present them annually for audit.
11. Prepare quarterly and annual reports for the general membership.
12. Serve as a member of the Finance Committee.

**F. The Parliamentarian shall:**

1. Be versed in parliamentary procedure and guide the presiding officer.
2. Ensure that meetings and proceedings of the Society are in accord with its Articles of Incorporation, its By-Laws, and Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.
3. Serve as chairperson of the Committee on By-Laws.

**G. The Historian shall:**

1. Be the custodian of all documents, artifacts, reports, official papers of the Society, and other such materials as designated.
2. Collect photographs, news-clippings, etc., which document the history of the organization.
3. Perform special assignments.
4. Prepare an annual report and present it in writing to the general membership.
5. Store, maintain, catalog and care for all books, publications and other materials donated or bought by the Society and not assigned to another officer.

**H. The Chaplain shall:**

1. Be available to open each meeting with prayer or meditation.
2. Arrange and coordinate spiritual leaders to participate in public meetings.
3. Seek to keep the group meetings positive.

**I. The Editor of the Newsletter shall:**

1. Choose, edit and prepare for printing all materials or the Society Newsletter.
2. Bring before the Executive Committee issues pertinent to the publication of the Society Newsletter.
3. Submit yearly to the National organization at least one written work of a length no less than 250 words suitable for publication in an AAHGS Publication.

**J. Public Relations Liaison shall:**

1. Prepare and deliver statements regarding AAHGS, activities and issues important to AAHGS to the media and public-at-large.
2. Prepare press releases.
3. Serve as a conduit of information to and from other organizations.
4. Serve as official spokesperson for AAHGS.

**K. The Fund-Raising Chairperson shall:**

1. Enlist and present all fund-raisers to the Society subject to approval by the Executive Committee.
2. Prepare written report preceding fund-raiser to be presented to the general membership at the next scheduled meeting.
3. Prepare written report preceding fund-raiser to be given to the Treasurer and President.

Section 4: Election and terms:

- A. The election of officers shall be held every two years.
- B. Elected officers may serve no more than two consecutive two-year terms.
- C. The Parliamentarian, Chaplain, Historian, Editor of the Newsletter, Public Relations Liaison and Fund-Raising Chairperson shall be appointed by the President.

**ARTICLE IV**

**MEETINGS**

Section 1: The Society shall hold monthly meetings of the membership.

Section 2: An annual Conference will be held at a time specified.

Section 3: The Executive Committee may call special meetings.

Section 4: The Executive Committee shall meet no less than quarterly to conduct business of the Society.

Section 5: All motions can be passed by a simple majority of the members present.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **CHAPTERS**

Section 1: Chapter dues will be set by the Executive Committee and will not exceed the amount of national dues in each membership category.

Section 2: Every chapter chartered shall follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the AAHGS Chapter Establishment Handbook.

Section 3: Failure to follow the guidelines and procedures of the AAHGS Chapter Establishment Handbook may lead to a decision by the Executive Committee to revoke a chapter's charter.

Section 4: Each Chapter must maintain a minimum of ten (10) active members.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Section 1: The standing committees of the Society shall be Executive and By-Laws.

Section 2: All standing committees shall prepare annual reports and submit them to the President.

Section 3: The Executive Committee shall:

- A. Consist of the elected and appointed officers of the Society.
- B. Appoint, upon the recommendation of the President, pro tem officers to vacancies which may occur during an administration.

Section 4: The By-Laws Committee shall be chaired by the Parliamentarian and shall:

- A. Recommend to the membership any changes in the By-Laws.
- B. Take all necessary steps to prepare the revised draft of by-laws for distribution to members and for ratification by the membership.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Section 1: Election of officers will be held 1st meeting date in January during election year.

Section 2: The Executive Committee shall appoint an Election Committee.

Section 3: The committee chair shall be appointed by the Election Committee and shall:

- A. Perform its duties in accordance with the AAHGS Election Handbook.
- B. Solicit nominations for officers.
- C. Receive and tally the votes.

Section 4: All persons nominated and holding office must be Society members in good standing with the local and national chapters.

Section 5: If any office shall become vacant during a term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint any member to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **AMENDMENTS**

Section 1: Any member may send suggested amendments to the Parliamentarian which will review the suggestion and recommend action by the By-Laws Committee.

Section 2: The membership may refer a recommendation back to the Committee for further research.

Section 3: Upon a vote of approval by the quorum of the membership, proposed amendments will then become a part of the By-Laws.

Section 4: All members must be notified by mail or email of the proposed amendments.

Section 5: All motions can be passed by a simple majority of the members present.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **RULES OF ORDER**

Section 1: The Society shall operate according to the Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or any future revision.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **GRANT PROJECTS**

Any member with no less than one (1) year of membership with both the local and national chapters and in good standing, with the approval of the membership, can submit an application for a grant under the sponsorship of the AAHGS, \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter, as the Applicant Organization.

Section 1: Applications are open to any active financial member of the AAHGS, \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter.

Section 2: Proposed project must be pertaining to areas of historical or genealogical research, and the preservation of African-American History.

Section 3: A written draft proposal in its entirety must be submitted/presentation presented to the organization for approval by a quorum, in accordance with Article IV, Section 5 of the Chapter By-Laws two (2) months prior to the grant deadline.

Section 4: A complete copy of the grant application must be submitted to the AAHGS, \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter, for its records 1 month prior to the application deadline.

Section 5: Should the grant application be approved by the funding agency, the Project Director or Fiscal Agent must keep a log of all financial correspondence in coordination with the Treasurer of the AAHGS, \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter.

- A. Accounts for funded grant projects, will be opened under the banking institution of the AAHGS, Utah Chapter (Title of Project).
- B. The Fiscal Agent shall be bonded for a sum sufficient to protect the society.
- C. It is the responsibility of the AAHGS Treasurer in conjunction with the Project Fiscal Agent to keep records and documentation of all the financial transactions and to report them quarterly to the general body.
- D. Two signatures are required on all checks, one must be the Fiscal Agent or the AAHGS Treasurer.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **FISCAL AFFAIRS**

Section 1: The fiscal year of the Society shall be 1st January through 31st December.

Section 2: The books of the Society shall be audited at the close of each fiscal year.

Section 3: The Executive Committee shall approve a budget prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. Any item, of more than the maximum established by the Executive Committee, and not approved in the budget must be presented to the Executive Committee for approval.

Section 4: No member of the AAHGS nor any member of the Executive Committee may obligate the Society for an amount in excess of \$\_\_\_\_\_ without the approval of two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE**

Section 1: The \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of AAHGS will pay the registration fee for its Chapter President to attend the AAHGS National Conference as a yearly delegate. Should the President not be able to attend, the next officer in line available to commit shall represent the organization. Travel and additional expenses will be the responsibility of the officer attending.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **DISSOLUTION OR CLOSING OF CHAPTER**

There may come a time when the chapter may be dissolved or cease to function. There may be several reasons for this to occur. Some of these issues may be:

- 1) Membership drops below the required 10 members to sustain the chapter.
- 2) Irreconcilable differences occur among officers, members, or both.
- 3) Distance to chapter meetings proves to be too far.
- 4) Chapter dues increases prove to be a financial hardship on members.
- 5) Miscellaneous issues.

In #1 above, the chapter president shall send a letter to the national Chapters Committee, who will review the problem and allow reasonable time for the chapter to recruit new members and bring the membership level to the required ten or more members.



In all instances, notification to the national Chapters Committee is required and their assistance will be provided to help resolve the issues(s) with a goal to salvage the chapter.

If all options fail, the chapter president shall send a letter by certified mail, registered receipt requested, to the national Board of Directors, with a copy to the national Chapters Committee advising of the need to dissolve the chapter. The Board of Directors may offer suggestions not considered by the Chapters Committee on how to handle the request. Should the Board of Directors decide the chapter should be dissolved, it shall direct the local chapter of its decision and request the remaining finances be forwarded to AAHGS and ask for the chapter files also to be forwarded. The files and monies will be held by national should there be a reforming of the chapter or another chapter in the same geographical area who may use those files and finances for the new or reformed chapter. If no replacement or existing area chapter is found, those finances will go into the national society's general fund and the records will go into the society's history files.

The national Chapters Committee, upon notification of the Board of Directors, will request the Board of Directors send the president of the dissolution of the existing chapter a letter confirming the official end of the chapter.