

**THE MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION  
OF FORENSIC SCIENTISTS, INCORPORATED  
BYLAWS**  
(Revised May 2023)

**1. ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION**

**1.1. GENERAL**

- 1.1.1. Name. The name shall be the Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists Incorporated; hereinafter referred to as the Association.
- 1.1.2. Objectives. The objectives of the Association shall be to:
  - 1.1.2.1. Encourage the exchange and dissemination of ideas and information within the fields of recognized forensic sciences through improving contacts between persons and laboratories engaged in the forensic sciences.
  - 1.1.2.2. Stimulate research and the development of new and/or improved scientific techniques for forensic application.
  - 1.1.2.3. Promote high standards of performance, professional ethics and to acknowledge persons working in recognized forensic sciences.
- 1.1.3. Bylaws Provisions. May contain any provisions for the regulations and management of the affairs of the Association and shall not be in conflict with the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Articles of Incorporation.
- 1.1.4. Parliamentary Guide. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern all meetings of the Association.
- 1.1.5. Dissolution. Should the Association be dissolved, the Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall dispose of any assets remaining after all existing liabilities have been paid. Such assets may go only to another organization with purposes as prescribed in these Bylaws.

**1.2. MEETING AND OTHER NOTICES**

- 1.2.1. Meeting Notices. For meetings of either members or the Board, notice shall be delivered in writing at least ten days prior to the meeting. Notice of any special meeting shall include the purpose(s) of the meeting.
- 1.2.2. Waiver of Notice. Whenever any notice of a meeting is required to be given under the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Association, a written waiver signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time slated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Further, attendance of any member at any meeting time slated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Further, attendance of any member at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a member attends the meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the meeting.
- 1.2.3. Delivery. The Association shall use electronic means, fax, U.S. Postal Service, or hand delivery, to deliver information to members. All items will be sent to members at the electronic or mailing addresses shown in the Association records.

Responsibility for notifying the communications officer of any change of address rests with members.

## **2. ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP**

### **2.1. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1.1. Classes. Charter, Regular, Life, Emeritus, Retired, Corresponding, Student Associate, Distinguished and Associate.
- 2.1.2. Dues. The Association shall prescribe annual dues on the recommendation of the Board. Changes in dues shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at the annual business meeting.
- 2.1.3. Term. Membership continues through the end of December each year.
- 2.1.4. Voting Member. Shall apply only to charter, regular, life, emeritus, retired, corresponding, and distinguished members in good standing.
- 2.1.5. Good Standing. Members or student associates shall remain in good standing provided that they are not in conflict with the objectives, goals, and the Code of Ethics of the Association and that dues and other fees are paid as prescribed.

### **2.2. QUALIFICATIONS**

- 2.2.1. General. Membership shall be available only to those persons of professional competence, integrity and good moral character:
  - 2.2.1.1. Who are actively engaged in the field of forensic sciences or who have made some significant contributions to the literature of forensic sciences, AND
  - 2.2.1.2. Who satisfy the requirements for membership of the class for which they applied.
  - 2.2.1.3. Members in good standing prior to May 2005 are eligible to maintain their membership.
- 2.2.2. Charter. Forensic scientists attending any meeting of this body prior to the adoption of the initial constitution (March 1973) and who otherwise meet the requirements for regular membership shall be classified as a charter members. This membership classification shall be held as long as members continuously maintain their membership in the Association.
- 2.2.3. Regular. Regular members must register and attend at least one annual MAAFS meeting, including the business meeting, or any other MAAFS-sponsored workshop during a four-year period. Participation as a workshop instructor will also fulfill this requirement. A regular member who fails to meet the meeting attendance requirement will have their membership downgraded to associate member status. A new four-year cycle begins each time the meeting requirement is met. Regular members must pay the dues and meet the following criteria:
  - 2.2.3.1. Work in a forensic science laboratory doing or having done examinations and interpretations of physical evidence and must have completed a documented training program in a forensic discipline. A forensic science laboratory is defined as one that has, as its primary

- function, service to the criminal and/or civil justice system by the examination and interpretation of physical evidence; OR,
- 2.2.3.2. Teach forensic science at an accredited college or university. Forensic science education is defined as that which has as its primary function, education in the examination and interpretation of physical evidence; OR,
  - 2.2.3.3. Work in a managerial or support capacity such as quality assurance/quality control officer or others having a direct impact on the daily functions of a forensic laboratory.
- 2.2.4. Life. Charter, regular or corresponding members may be proposed by the Membership Committee for life member status if they are currently working in the field of forensic science and have demonstrated substantial commitment to the Association through such activities as organizational leadership, scientific presentations, meeting planning, and conducting workshops. This classification must be confirmed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of members present at the annual business meeting. As of May 2010, no additional members will be granted life member status. Existing life members shall retain all rights and privileges of members, but shall be excused from 50 percent of their dues, all assessments and all meeting attendance requirements. Life members shall be moved to emeritus status upon their retirement.
  - 2.2.5. Emeritus. Charter, regular or corresponding members may be proposed by the Membership Committee for emeritus status if they have had 25 years of service in the field of forensic sciences, a minimum of 5 years of membership in good standing, have obtained life or distinguished member status, and are retired from full-time forensic work. This classification must be confirmed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of members present at the annual business meeting. Emeritus members shall retain all rights and privileges of members, but shall be excused from all dues, all assessments and all meeting attendance requirements.
  - 2.2.6. Retired. Charter, regular or corresponding members may be proposed by the Membership Committee for retired status if they have had five years of membership in good standing and are retired from full-time forensic work. This classification must be confirmed by the Board. Retired members shall retain all rights and privileges of members, but shall be excused from 50 percent of their dues, all assessments and all meeting attendance requirements.
  - 2.2.7. Corresponding. Corresponding members are those, who because of their present geographical location, are unable to fulfill regular membership meeting attendance requirements and are therefore excused from all meeting attendance requirements. Only individuals who reside outside of the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, are eligible to be corresponding members. Corresponding members shall pay current dues. Corresponding members in good standing as of May 2005 are eligible to maintain their corresponding member status.
  - 2.2.8. Student Associate. Student associates are those who are enrolled full-time in an undergraduate or graduate program leading to a career in a natural or forensic science or a related area. Student associates shall be excused from 50 percent of their dues and are not eligible to vote. Student associates must certify

their eligibility annually. The application fee will be waived for required reapplication.

- 2.2.9. Distinguished. Distinguished members are any members who have acquired 15 points in the manner described below. A member must apply for reclassification to the Membership Committee. A distinguished member shall retain all rights of a regular member.
  - 2.2.9.1. The categories and points value for which a member may earn points are as follows:
    - 2.2.9.1.1. 5 points: Serving as an officer
    - 2.2.9.1.2. 4 points: Serving as chairman of an annual meeting
    - 2.2.9.1.3. 3 points: Serving on the Meeting Planning Committee. Organizing a training and education workshop (held at a time other than the annual meeting)
    - 2.2.9.1.4. 2 points: Presentation at a training and education workshop (either at the annual meeting or another time), presentation of a paper at an annual meeting, or serving on a committee
    - 2.2.9.1.5. 1 point: Attendance at a MAAFS annual meeting, including the business meeting
  - 2.2.9.2. To obtain distinguished member status, a regular member must:
    - 2.2.9.2.1. Accrue a total of 15 points
    - 2.2.9.2.2. The total 15 points must include contributions from at least three categories. A category may be listed more than one time. The “officer” category may be used for each time the member serves a new term on the Board. President-Elect and president are counted only once since it is a term served for two years.
    - 2.2.9.2.3. The “attendance at a MAAFS annual meeting” category is only eligible to earn a maximum of 5 of the 15 points.
    - 2.2.9.2.4. It is the responsibility of a member to apply for reclassification to this category using the Distinguished Member Application Form.
- 2.2.10. Associate. Associate members are any members who had attained regular or distinguished member status, but failed to meet the meeting attendance requirement (Bylaws, Section 2.2.3) and, thus, their membership status has been downgraded for a period not to exceed one year. Associate members must continue to pay annual association dues.

### **2.3. APPLICATION**

- 2.3.1. Application for membership must be submitted on the approved form.
- 2.3.2. Procedures. The procedures are established in the Administrative Rules.
- 2.3.3. The Membership Committee shall investigate the qualifications of each applicant and report recommendations to the Board.
- 2.3.4. The Board shall act upon the Membership Committee's recommendation. Applicants disapproved by the Board may be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the voting members present at a regular meeting.
- 2.3.5. Certificates. Membership certificates in the Association shall be issued.

## **2.4. MAINTENANCE, TERMINATION, OR REINSTATEMENT**

- 2.4.1. Maintenance. It is the responsibility of all members to notify the communications officer in writing of all changes in name, address, employment and phone number as soon as they occur.
- 2.4.2. Termination of Membership. Membership shall be terminated for the following reasons:
  - 2.4.2.1. Termination upon request of member. Members may resign from membership in the Association by giving written notice to the treasurer of the Association.
  - 2.4.2.2. Termination for failure to pay dues. Members who fail to pay annual dues or other assessments will be dropped from the roll of members at the end of the calendar year. Terminated members may be reinstated only after paying all monies owed.
  - 2.4.2.3. Termination for failure to meet the MAAFS meeting requirement. Members who fail to attend one meeting (Bylaws, Section 2.2.3) over a four-year period as a regular member and one-year period as an associate member will be dropped from the roll of members. A request for waiver of the meeting requirement may be made in writing to the Board.
  - 2.4.2.4. Termination for Cause. Members may be removed from membership for cause by action as described in the MAAFS Code of Ethics as adopted by the Association.
- 2.4.3. Appeal. Terminated members may appeal the matter before the membership. Such termination may be reversed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of members present at a business meeting.
- 2.4.4. Ethics. Members are expected to adhere to the Association's Code of Ethics in their professional conduct. Additionally, when acting for the Association, members are expected to follow the Bylaws and Administrative Rules. Any ethics matters brought to the attention of the Board by any member of the Association are to be investigated by the Ethics Committee using the Association's Code of Ethics and Administrative Rules as guidelines. A report of such an investigation is to be made directly to the Board.

## **2.5. MEETINGS**

- 2.5.1. Business Meeting. The Association shall hold at least one business meeting each year.
- 2.5.2. Board Meetings. The Board shall meet at least two times per year. Additional meetings may be called by the president if necessary. Votes may be taken by telephone, provided they are confirmed in writing or by electronic communication.
- 2.5.3. General Meetings. The Association may elect to hold one or more general meetings during the year. Members, guests and those qualified for membership may attend.

- 2.5.4. Special Meetings. The president may call a special meeting at any time. The president shall notify the participating members in writing and include an agenda for the meeting.
- 2.5.5. Quorum. Ten percent of the voting members shall be considered a quorum to conduct the business meeting of the Association. A quorum of the Board shall consist of five voting members.
- 2.5.6. Proxy Voting. No proxy voting shall be allowed at the membership meetings.
- 2.5.7. Manner of Acting. Any action normally taken at a meeting of the Association may be taken without a meeting, if written consent of a quorum of the voting members is obtained before the action is taken.

### **3. ARTICLE III: MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1. GENERAL**

- 3.1.1. General Powers. The affairs of the Association shall be managed by the Board. To facilitate operations of the Association, the Board may issue and/or change the Administrative Rules governing the actions of the Association or members on behalf of the Association. Such rules shall not be in conflict with the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws.
- 3.1.2. Contracts. The Board may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) of the Association to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of the Association and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.
- 3.1.3. Books and Records. The Association shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and also keep minutes of the proceedings of meetings of its members, Boards, and committees having any of the authority of the Board and shall keep at the registered or principal office a record of the names and addresses of voting members. All books and records of the Association may be inspected by any member or his agent or attorney for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.
- 3.1.4. Public Statements. No officer or member may make statements on behalf of the Association without the approval of the Board.
- 3.1.5. Gifts. The Board may accept contributions, gifts, bequests, or devices for the use of the Association; they may not accept those items for personal use or as remuneration for services as board members.
- 3.1.6. Emergency Powers. In the case of extreme circumstances, during which it is impossible to comply with specific requirements of these Bylaws, the Board shall take actions and establish temporary policy to maintain the continued operations of the Association. These actions shall not exceed one year and every effort will be made to return to normal operations as quickly as possible. Such changes in policy shall not be in conflict with the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Articles of Incorporation or the intent of these Bylaws.

## **3.2. FISCAL**

- 3.2.1. Fiscal Year. Shall be January 1 through December 31.
- 3.2.2. Checks, Drafts, Etc. The Administrative Rules shall contain procedures for the handling of Association funds. All such items for the payment of money, issuance of notes, or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the Association shall be signed as prescribed by Paragraph 3.1.2 of this Article, except that no such item shall be made payable to cash.
- 3.2.3. Deposits. Association funds shall be deposited to the credit of the Association in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board may direct.
- 3.2.4. Dues and Fees. The Administrative Rules shall list the amounts of the non-refundable application fee and annual dues payable to the Association within the following limitations:
  - 3.2.4.1. Emeritus members are exempt from paying dues.
  - 3.2.4.2. Life members pay 50 percent of the regular dues.
  - 3.2.4.3. There shall be no fee for application to change membership status.
- 3.2.5. Audits. Following each fiscal year, the Audit Committee shall conduct and complete an audit of the Association's books and present a report to the Board and members at the next business meeting.

## **3.3. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- 3.3.1. Composition. The officers shall be responsible for the general management of the Association. The Association Officers shall be comprised of the officers as prescribed by Section 3.3.2.
- 3.3.2. Officers and Duties.
  - 3.3.2.1. President. Presides at Association and board meetings; conducts the business of the Association, and promotes the fulfillment of the Association's objectives. To accomplish these duties, the president may issue and/or change operational guidelines relating to committee and/or other operations providing such guidelines are not in conflict with these Bylaws, the Administrative Rules, or other items controlling actions of the Association.
  - 3.3.2.2. President-Elect. Serves on Board and assists the president as required. Fulfills the president's duties should the president be absent, leave office or become incapacitated. If the president and president-elect are absent from a business meeting, the voting members shall elect a president *pro tem*.
  - 3.3.2.3. Secretary. Records the minutes of the Board and Association business meetings, maintains the Association records, record members' attendance at all business meetings, and files (or appoints an agent to file) any and all necessary documents with the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the absence of the Secretary from a business meeting, the presiding officer shall appoint a temporary Secretary to record the minutes of the meeting.
  - 3.3.2.4. Treasurer. Keeps Association financial records, safeguards its funds, keeps the membership list current, notifies the communications officer of address changes, deposits all monies received by the Association in

- accounts approved by the Board, files the Association (Corporate) Annual Report, and submits the corporate renewal fee.
- 3.3.2.5. Communications Officer. Maintains the Association’s website. Serves as the communications officer to maintain accurate membership records. Serves on the Meeting Planning Committee. This is a non- voting member of the Board.
  - 3.3.2.6. Physical Evidence Section Chair. Represents members of the Physical Evidence Section at board meetings and coordinates Physical Evidence Section activities at the annual meetings and serves on Meeting Planning Committee.
  - 3.3.2.7. Biology Section Chair. Represents members of the Biology Section at board meetings and coordinates Biology Section activities at the annual meetings and serves on Meeting Planning Committee.
  - 3.3.2.8. Chemistry Section Chair. Represents members of the Chemistry Section at board meetings and coordinates Chemistry Section activities at the annual meetings and serves on Meeting Planning Committee.
  - 3.3.2.9. Meeting Planning Committee Chair. Represents the Meeting Planning Committee at board meetings and coordinates the activities at the annual meetings and serves on Meeting Planning Committee. This is a non- voting member of the Board.
  - 3.3.2.10. Parliamentarian. Shall be appointed by the president at the beginning of each meeting of the members. Shall advise the president and members on parliamentary procedure and shall read the Bylaws at such times as requested by the president. The parliamentarian shall not be a member of the board.
  - 3.3.2.11. Additional Duties. Other duties may be assigned to any board member, either by the president or by action of the Board.
- 3.3.3. Nomination/Election.
- 3.3.3.1. Candidates. Only charter, regular, life, emeritus, distinguished, retired and corresponding voting members in good standing may hold office or serve on the Board.
  - 3.3.3.2. Elections. Will be held annually.
  - 3.3.3.3. Nominations. The Nominating Committee will propose a slate of candidates to the Board for consideration. The Board will determine a final slate from the nominees presented. Members will be notified of the slate of candidates at least 90 days prior to the annual business meeting. Once the slate is announced, interested members may be added to the slate by notifying the Board. Nominations will close 30 days prior to the annual meeting and a vote will be taken.
  - 3.3.3.4. Voting. The Association will vote online to elect the Board. Those members in good standing will be eligible to vote. Thirty days prior to the annual meeting, the ballot will be provided through email notification. All members in good standing are eligible to vote online until the Friday prior to the Annual Meeting.
  - 3.3.3.5. The president’s vote will break any ties.
  - 3.3.3.6. The president will announce the new officers at the annual business



meeting and the newly elected officers shall assume their offices at the close of the Annual Meeting.

- 3.3.3.7. Tenure. The terms of office shall be as follows:
  - 3.3.3.7.1. President: One year.
  - 3.3.3.7.2. President Elect: One year. After one year becomes president for one year.
  - 3.3.3.7.3. Secretary: Two years with term staggered with treasurer.
  - 3.3.3.7.4. Treasurer: Two years with term staggered with secretary.
  - 3.3.3.7.5. Physical Evidence Section Chair: One year.
  - 3.3.3.7.6. Biology Section Chair: One year.
  - 3.3.3.7.7. Communications Officer: Appointed by and serves at the discretion of the Board.
  - 3.3.3.7.8. Chemistry Section Chair: One year.
  - 3.3.3.7.9. Section Chairs Elect: One year. After one year becomes section chair. The section chairs elect will assist the section chair and other members of the Meeting Planning Committee as needed. They will not be voting members of the Board.
- 3.3.4. Vacancies. The Board shall fill any vacancy, except the president and section chairs, by appointment.
- 3.3.5. Compensation. Board members shall not receive any stated salaries for their services as board members. They may receive reimbursement for expenses on the same basis as others. This section shall not be construed to preclude any board member from receiving reasonable compensation for other services provided to the Association.

#### **3.4. COMMITTEES and SPECIAL POSITIONS**

- 3.4.1. Standing. To have duties as prescribed by these Bylaws and/or the Board. Unless specifically designated by these Bylaws, members are to be appointed by the President from the membership and to serve for a term of one year or until their successors are appointed. All members serving on committees shall be in good standing. A committee may be composed of a single individual or group of individuals, as determined by the Board.
  - 3.4.1.1. Standing committees or special positions will be required, as needed, to present relevant information to the Board at Board meetings or general meetings of the members.
  - 3.4.1.2. Special or Temporary. The president shall appoint other committees or positions from the membership as required.
  - 3.4.1.3. Committee Operation. Unless otherwise provided in the appointment of the committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum and the act of a quorum shall be the act of the committee.
  - 3.4.1.4. Chair. To be designated by the president unless predetermined by these Bylaws.
  - 3.4.1.5. Rules. Each committee may adopt such operational rules as are not in conflict with these Bylaws, Administrative Rules, or extensions thereof.
- 3.4.2. Membership. The committee shall process the applications as outlined in the Administrative Rules and present a list of new members on the Association

- website.
- 3.4.3. Nominating. The committee shall propose a slate of candidates for office.
  - 3.4.4. Bylaws. The committee shall review and propose changes to the Bylaws, Administrative Rules and Code of Ethics.
  - 3.4.5. Historical. The committee shall keep a detailed history, maintain pertinent records (which are no longer needed for the current operations of the Association) and to preserve photographs and other items of ongoing interest.
  - 3.4.6. Awards. The committee shall recommend awards and their recipients.
  - 3.4.7. Ethics. The committee shall review ethics violations and make recommendations to the Board.
  - 3.4.8. Audit. The committee shall review the financial records of the Association and shall be chaired by the president-elect.
  - 3.4.9. Training and Education. The committee shall determine training needs and make recommendations to the Board regarding training opportunities for members.
  - 3.4.10. Meeting Planning. The committee shall organize and implement the annual meetings of the Association.
  - 3.4.11. ABC. The committee shall keep the Board and membership apprised of ABC activities that impact the region and shall include the MAAFS representative to the ABC Board and the MAAFS representative to the ABC Examination Committee.
  - 3.4.12. Communications. The committee shall make sure that the membership is kept up-to-date about all association business.

#### **4. ARTICLE IV: AMENDMENT**

##### **4.1. PROCEDURE**

- 4.1.1. Deadline. A proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the president at least 90 days prior to an annual business meeting.
- 4.1.2. Publication. A proposed amendment shall be distributed to members via the Association's website or by mail at least 30 days prior to the next business meeting at which the vote is to occur.
- 4.1.3. Approval. Amendments to the Bylaws shall require approval by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes received from members in good standing once a quorum of ten percent of the voting membership has been met.
- 4.1.4. Changes. After a proposed amendment has been published, changes which alter the substance of the amendment may be made only by unanimous vote of those present and voting.
- 4.1.5. Implementation. Required implementation instructions shall be a part of the motion presenting the amendment, but shall not become part of the Bylaws.