



**NEW JERSEY VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER  
(NJVOAD)  
BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I  
Organization**

- (1) **Name**  
The name of the organization shall be the New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (hereinafter referred to as NJVOAD).
- (2) **Business Office**  
The official business and mailing address of the NJVOAD shall be: 3150 Brunswick Pike, Suite 300, Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648.
- (3) **Code of Rules**  
These bylaws constitute the code of rules adopted by the NJVOAD for the regulation and management of its affairs. A formal review will be conducted every three years to ensure the bylaws are reflective of the needs and structure of the organization. Amendments to these bylaws may be made at a formal meeting of the membership through a majority vote.

**ARTICLE II  
Mission and Purpose**

***NJVOAD – a coalition of organizations that contribute to developing and sustaining community resiliency throughout the disaster cycle – facilitates and fosters cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration among members and partners to improve preparedness, resilience, response and recovery resulting in more effective outcomes.***

The foundation of the VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) movement is relationships. VOAD builds partnerships to improve outcomes for people and communities affected by disasters by facilitating cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration among nonprofit organizations, community-based groups, government agencies and for-profit companies. NJVOAD is a statewide partnership of organizations and entities that have a role in preparedness, resilience, response or recovery. Membership in NJVOAD provides the benefit of accumulated expertise of local, regional and national partners to deliver more effective and efficient response services.

Direct service to impacted communities is provided by member organizations of the NJVOAD, not by NJVOAD itself. NJVOAD is the statewide coordinating agency formed with the purpose of enhancing

planning, training and communication between organizations which are active in disaster mitigation, preparedness, resilience, response and recovery. More effective and efficient service delivery is accomplished through focus on the following priorities:

**Cooperation:** recognizing that we need each other, acknowledging that each member organization adds value, and understanding that our common goals for the community are best achieved when we work together.

**Communication:** fostering a climate of openness which promotes sharing of information among members, and actively disseminating information to partners through social media, newsletters, directories, research and demonstration, case studies, and critique.

**Coordination:** establishing processes to work together in a non-competitive manner to effectively utilize resources among member organizations and state and national partners.

**Collaboration:** identifying shared goals and developing strategic partnerships to actively work together to accomplish the mission of NJVOAD.

**Education:** providing and sharing training resources to increase awareness, preparedness, response and recovery efforts among member organizations.

**Mitigation:** supporting the efforts of federal, state, county, and local agencies and governments, and working with community organizations to establish resources and infrastructure which will minimize the impact of future disasters.

**Convening Mechanisms:** organizing and sponsoring informational meetings, regional conferences and workshops, and educational opportunities to benefit member organizations and foster cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration.

**Advocacy:** supporting appropriate legislation and policy changes which will positively impact communities throughout New Jersey; serving as a liaison, advocate, and unified public voice in disaster management.

**Outreach:** encouraging the formation of, and providing guidance to, County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and Long Term Recovery Groups.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Membership**

##### **(1) Eligibility**

All organizations involved in disaster preparedness, resilience, response and/or recovery in the State of New Jersey are eligible to apply for membership in the NJVOAD. Each organization will be represented by one Designated Representative: the organizational leader / NJ state leader or their appointed designee. Organizations are expected to select and maintain an Alternate Representative, in the event the Designated

Representative is unavailable. When an organization has multiple divisions serving in NJ, one representative will be selected by the organization to represent all NJ divisions. Membership in NJVOAD belongs to the organization, and the Designated and Alternate Representatives' ongoing involvement in NJVOAD is dependent upon their continued connection with the member organization. There are two types of membership as outlined below:

- a. Full Member: Full member status may be granted to an organization, institution or other entity pursuant to the following qualifications:
  - i. The organization shall have New Jersey statewide or multi-county capacity to respond to disasters and a presence and investment in disaster preparedness, response and/or recovery;
  - ii. The organization shall consist of voluntary memberships or constituencies and shall operate as a not-for-profit with tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code;
  - iii. The organization shall have a disaster response program with a policy for commitment and/or distribution of resources and services without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, national origin, age, marital or civil union status, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation.
  - iv. The organization's governing body or regional headquarters shall acknowledge involvement and support of membership in NJVOAD and name the Designated and Alternate Representatives in writing.
- b. Associate: Associate member status may be granted to organizations with the capacity or interest in responding to disasters on a statewide, regional or local level.
  - i. The organization shall have a disaster response program with a policy for commitment and/or distribution of resources and services without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, national origin, age, marital or civil union status, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation.
  - ii. County or regional Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) or Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) located in New Jersey are eligible for Associate membership.

## **(2) Rights of Members**

- a. Each Full Member of the NJVOAD shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted by the Board of Trustees to a vote at a Regular or Special Membership meeting. No member shall be entitled to any dividend or any part of the income of the NJVOAD or to share in the distribution of the corporate assets upon dissolution.
- b. Associate Members are not voting members of the NJVOAD, but their point of view is welcomed and appreciated for the education of the membership.
- c. Full Members and Associate Members enjoy full access to the programs and activities of the NJVOAD, including committee and task force participation, trainings, conferences, meetings, events, correspondence, use of logo and inclusion on NJVOAD website(s).

## **(3) Responsibilities of Members**

Members shall meet the following requirements in order to maintain membership status in the NJVOAD:

- a. Conduct business in a manner that is consistent with the stated mission and purpose of the NJVOAD;
- b. Maintain regular attendance at regular membership meetings, special membership meetings, and membership trainings, conferences and events;
- c. Work in coordination with the NJVOAD and appropriate government entities when responding to an event;
- d. Appropriately represent the views and interests of NJVOAD.

**(4) Enrollment of Members**

Member organizations shall submit a Membership Application Form to include information about the organization, the organizational / NJ State leader, the Designated Representative and the Alternate Representative. The Board of Trustees shall review all applications for membership and shall approve new members by majority vote.

**(5) Tenure of Members**

The term of membership shall be perpetual for as long as the member maintains membership status and meets the responsibilities of membership as set forth in Article III, Section 3.

**(6) Termination of Membership**

Membership in NJVOAD may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- a. The voluntary withdrawal of the member by submission of a letter of separation to the Chairperson;
- b. Through a majority vote of the Board of Trustees for one or more of the following reasons:
  - i. Conducting business in a manner which contradicts the stated mission and purpose of the NJVOAD or which is viewed as detrimental to the NJVOAD organization;
  - ii. Failing to have organizational representation at four consecutive regular membership meetings;
  - iii. Refusal to work in coordination with NJVOAD or governmental entities;
  - iv. Misrepresenting the interests or views of NJVOAD.

**ARTICLE IV  
Partners**

**(1) Eligibility**

Partner status is available to governmental agencies with a statewide disaster management, public health focus and/or emergency support function or role, as well as for-profit corporations, foundations, educational and research institutions, associations and other non-governmental organizations with statewide or multi-county disaster preparedness, resilience, response or recovery interests. The NJVOAD Board will pursue partner relationships with trusted collaborators to provide mutual benefit to partners,

NJVOAD and NJVOAD members. The Board of Trustees shall review all potential Partners and shall approve by majority vote.

**(2) Rights of Partners**

- a. Partners are not voting members of the NJVOAD, but their point of view is welcomed and appreciated for the education of the membership;
- b. Partners enjoy full access to the programs and membership activities of the NJVOAD, including committee and task force participation, trainings, conferences, meetings, events, correspondence, use of logo and inclusion on NJVOAD website(s).

**(3) Responsibilities of Partners**

Partners must understand the importance of working collaboratively across all sectors to identify and implement more effective ways to meet New Jersey's disaster preparedness, resilience, response and recovery needs. Partners should have resources to support disaster preparedness, resilience, response and/or recovery and invest in and promote the work of the NJVOAD and its members. Partners must conduct business without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, national origin, age, marital or civil union status, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Business Meetings**

**(1) How the Membership can Legally Act**

The Membership may act only at a properly called meeting of the membership. At such a meeting, a vote of a majority of the Full Members with Designated Representatives in attendance shall be an act of the membership, except that a two-thirds majority of the members in attendance shall be required for the following: dissolution of the NJVOAD, merger or consolidation with another organization, sale of substantially all the NJVOAD's assets, or amendments to the NJVOAD's certificate of formation.

**(2) Regular Membership Meetings**

The Membership shall meet at least four times per year, at a date and time designated by the Board of Trustees, for the purpose of transacting any business that the Board of Trustees may submit to the members. Regular membership meetings may be held at a designated location and/or via teleconference, in which instance, members joining the meeting via teleconference will be deemed in attendance.

**(3) Notice of Regular Membership Meetings**

Written notice of the Regular Membership Meeting shall be given by the Secretary or his/her designee, not less than ten calendar days before the date that such a meeting is to be held. Such written notice shall be delivered by electronic mail and shall state the place, date, and time of the meeting.

**(4) Special Membership Meetings**

Special Membership Meetings may be called at any time by the Chairperson or by a majority of the Board of Trustees. Special membership meetings may be held at a designated location

and/or via teleconference, in which instance, members joining the meeting via teleconference will be deemed in attendance.

**(5) Notice of Special Meetings**

Notice of Special Membership Meetings shall be given in the exact same manner as notice for Regular Membership Meetings as provided for above, except that the notice shall contain the purpose for which the meeting was called, the business to be transacted, and by whom the meeting was called. No business other than that specified in the notice shall be transacted at such special meeting without the unanimous consent of all present. If the special meeting is being called in response to a disaster, imminent event, or request to activate the NJVOAD, the notice period may be waived.

**(6) Order of Business**

Regular membership meetings shall follow a standard business agenda. If a member wishes to include an item for discussion and review, they shall contact the Secretary prior to the scheduled meeting. The Secretary, at his or her discretion, shall determine whether the request is consistent with the business of the NJVOAD and adjust the agenda if warranted.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Rules of Procedure**

The proceedings and business of the NJVOAD membership meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure unless otherwise provided herein.

**(1) Voting**

Voting shall take place by voice or via electronic mail, except in the event of election of Board of Trustees members or if the membership requests a vote via ballot for some other purpose. A vote shall be successful when a majority of the Full Members present cast a vote in favor of the motion.

**(2) Private and Confidential Ballot**

A confidential ballot shall be provided to all Full Members upon election of Board of Trustees members. At the request of the membership, a non-election question may be voted upon by manner of ballot. The Designated or Alternate Representative of Full Members must be present to cast a vote in a confidential ballot.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Committees**

**(1) Board of Trustees**

The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, County / Regional Representative, and up to two At Large members shall constitute the voting members of the NJVOAD Board of Trustees. The NJVOAD Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of

the Board of Trustees. The previous Chairperson shall be offered the opportunity to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.

Designated Representatives of Full Members may be considered for a position on the Board of Trustees. The County / Regional Representative position shall be filled by a designated representative of a county or regional VOAD or COAD.

A majority of the voting members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and all decisions shall be by majority vote of those present. The Board of Trustees is tasked with governance of NJVOAD and supervision of the Executive Director.

**(2) Additional Committees**

The Board of Trustees may from time to time designate and appoint additional standing or temporary committees by majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Such committees shall have and exercise such prescribed authority as is designated by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may authorize these committees to exercise any powers, responsibilities, and duties consistent with the appointed purpose of the committee and these bylaws. Membership in these committees shall be open to Designated and Alternate Representatives of Full Members, Associate Members and Partners.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Board of Trustees**

**(1) Roster of Board of Trustees**

The NJVOAD Board of Trustees shall consist of up to seven voting members: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, County / Regional Representative and two At Large members. The NJVOAD Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the previous Chairperson shall have the opportunity to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board of Trustees. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, additional Board of Trustees seats may be created and filled through the election process detailed in Article VII, Section 4.

**(2) Terms of Board of Trustees Members**

All Board of Trustees members shall serve two-year terms. Board of Trustees members may serve two consecutive terms. Terms may be extended to allow an overlap for leadership transition.

**(3) Qualification of Board of Trustees Members**

Any Designated or Alternate Representative of a Full Member organization shall be eligible for consideration of service on the Board of Trustees. The County / Regional Representative position shall be filled by a designated representative of a county or regional VOAD or COAD to represent the perspective of county and regional VOADs and COADs. Each candidate shall be responsible to ensure s/he has the support of their member organization prior to accepting a nomination to serve on the Board of Trustees.

**(4) Election of Board of Trustees Members**

Regular elections shall be conducted at the last regular membership meeting of the fiscal year.

- a. At least once every two years, the Board of Trustees shall convene a Nominating Committee to identify Designated or Alternate Representatives of Full Members for any vacancies in the following leadership roles on the Board of Trustees: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, At Large Members.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall seek nominations for the County / Regional Representative from the leadership of existing county and regional VOADs / COADs with Associate level membership in NJVOAD. In the event of multiple nominations for this Trustee role, an electronic ballot shall be held among all county and regional VOADs / COADs with Associate level membership. This vote will be held prior to the presentation of the slate of candidates for a vote of the NJVOAD Full Membership to ensure that county and regional VOADs / COADs select their own representative. In the event of a tie, the competing candidates will be listed on the slate of candidates, and the tie will be broken during a vote of the NJVOAD Full Membership.
- c. The Nominating Committee shall present the proposed slate of Board of Trustees members to the Full Membership at least ten days prior to the scheduled date of the election.
- d. The Full Membership shall have the opportunity to present additional nominees for consideration for all positions except the County / Regional Representative prior to calling for a vote.
- e. The election of Board of Trustees members shall be by majority vote of the Designated or Alternate Representatives of Full Members in attendance at the meeting in accordance with Article VI, Section 2.
- f. If a vacancy occurs during the term of office for any Board of Trustees position, the Board of Trustees shall identify and nominate a qualified Representative to fill the remainder of the term. This nomination shall be presented to the Full Membership for a vote in accordance with Article VIII, Section 4, c and d.

**(5) Removal of Board of Trustees Members**

A Board of Trustees member shall be removed for any of the following reasons:

- a. The voluntary resignation of the Board of Trustees member by submission of a letter of separation to the Chairperson or his/her designee;
- b. The Board of Trustees member is no longer associated with a Full Member organization of NJVOAD;
- c. Through a majority vote of the Board of Trustees or the Full Membership for one or more of the following reasons:
  - i. Conducting business in a manner which contradicts the stated mission and purpose of the NJVOAD or which is viewed as detrimental to the NJVOAD organization;
  - ii. Failing to attend four consecutive meetings;
  - iii. Refusal to work in coordination with NJVOAD or governmental entities;
  - iv. Misrepresenting the interests or views of NJVOAD.



**ARTICLE IX**  
**Operations**

**(1) Activation of Resources**

Activation of the NJVOAD reflects the “home rule” process utilized throughout NJ.

- a. If a disaster or event is local or regional, the county or regional VOAD or COAD shall convene to address the needs of the affected population. If the resources of the county or regional VOAD or COAD are overwhelmed or additional resources are needed, the county or regional VOAD or COAD shall contact the Chairperson with a request for assistance. The Chairperson shall convene a meeting of the Board of Trustees to address the needs, and if necessary, convene a Special Membership Meeting to address the needs of the affected population.
- b. If an event is such that it affects a region or the entire state, the Chairperson may convene a Special Membership Meeting to identify and mobilize resources needed for the affected population.
- c. At times, the NJ State Department responsible for Emergency Support Functions will contact the Executive Director, NJVOAD Chairperson or task member organizations of the NJVOAD to address certain emergent needs. In this event, the Chairperson may convene a Special Membership Meeting to provide updates on the disaster and discuss needs of the affected population.

**(2) Execution of Documents**

Unless specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees or as otherwise required by law, all final contracts, deeds, conveyances, leases, promissory notes, or legal written instruments executed in the name of and on behalf of the NJVOAD shall be signed and executed by the Chairperson (or such other person designated by the Board of Trustees), pursuant to the general authorization of the Board of Trustees.

**(3) Financial**

All financial transactions, processes and systems shall be in accordance with general accounting principles and NJ State and Federal law.

**(4) Records**

The NJVOAD shall keep correct and complete records of accounts and will keep minutes of the proceedings of the Membership and Board of Trustees meetings. The NJVOAD will keep at a location determined by the Board of Trustees, the original or a copy of its bylaws, including amendments to date certified by the Secretary of the NJVOAD.

**(5) Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year for the NJVOAD shall be the calendar year, January 1 to December 31.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that these bylaws were adopted by the Full Membership of the New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster at its meeting held on December 5, 2017.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brenda Beavers". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Secretary