

## **WESTERN KENTUCKY PARALEGALS**

### **BYLAWS (as amended 05/02/14)**

#### **ARTICLE I**

##### **NAME**

The name of this association shall be Western Kentucky Paralegals. This association shall be affiliated with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### **PURPOSES**

- 2.1 To establish good fellowship among association members, the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., Kentucky Paralegal Association, and members of the legal community.
- 2.2 To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.
- 2.3 To further education among members of the profession.
- 2.4 To cooperate with bar associations.
- 2.5 To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of Western Kentucky Paralegals and the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

#### **ARTICLE III**

##### **POLICY**

This association shall be nonsectarian, nonpartisan, nonprofit and nonunion. No actions or programs may be initiated or undertaken (now or in the future) in conflict with the bylaws of Western Kentucky Paralegals or the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., or of the policies of those Associations.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 **ACTIVE:** Active Membership is open to any individual who meets at least one of the following requirements and is currently employed as a paralegal. This is the only membership class

carrying full voting privileges. Active members are also the only WKP members who may serve as association officers, members of the Board of Directors or committee chairs. All active members must meet the requirements of the Western Kentucky Paralegals continuing legal education policy.

Active membership under paralegal training (#4, #5, #6, #7) requires a majority of duties to be of a paralegal nature (otherwise performed by an attorney and non-clerical) and requires that an attorney attest that the applicant performs such duties.

1. Any individual who has successfully completed the Certified Legal Assistant exam of NALA; or
2. Any individual who has graduated from an ABA approved program of study for paralegals; or
3. Any individual who has graduated from a course of study for paralegals which is institutionally accredited but not ABA approved, and which requires not less than the equivalent of 60 semester hours of classroom study; or
4. Any individual who has graduated from a course of study for paralegals other than those set forth in #2 and #3 above, plus not less than six months of in-house training as a paralegal, whose attorney employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal; or
5. Any individual who has received a baccalaureate degree in any field, plus not less than six months in-house training as a paralegal; or
6. Any individual who has a minimum of three years of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney, including at least six months in-house training as a paralegal, whose attorney employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal; or
7. Any individual who has a minimum of two years of in-house training as a paralegal whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal.

4.2 ASSOCIATE: Any person at the time of application for membership,

1. who has been employed as a paralegal, but who is not so employed at that time; or
2. who has graduated from a paralegal program but not yet employed as a legal assistant; or

3. who is employed as a paralegal but does not meet the criteria to become an active member and whose attorney-employer attests that such person is qualified as a paralegal, may become an associate member upon payment of dues prescribed therefor. Any associate member may, upon satisfaction of the requirements for active membership, become an active member.

4.3 STUDENT: Any student enrolled in an ABA approved paralegal training program or a traditional college paralegal training program and upon acceptance of an application for membership may become a Student Member of the Association. Student Members shall not be permitted voting privileges nor be eligible to serve as an officer or director of the Association.

4.4 SUSTAINING: Sustaining membership is available to individuals, law firms, corporations, and paralegal program representatives who endorse the paralegal concept or are actively involved in the promotion of the paralegal profession who contribute dues of at least \$50.

## ARTICLE V

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Application for membership shall be submitted to the association on forms approved by the Board of Directors. The forms should clearly state that the association is an affiliated association of the National Association of Legal Assistants and that all members are bound by the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility as adopted by this association. Approval of membership shall be noted on the forms in accordance with standing rules adopted by this association.

## ARTICLE VI

### MEETINGS

This association shall meet at not less than quarterly intervals which may include attendance at association sponsored seminars or workshops. One-fourth (1/4) of the membership of this association shall constitute a quorum. In the event of a vote of dissolutionment, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of the association.

At any meeting of the membership of the Association, any active member shall have the right to vote either in person or by individual proxy. A member may appoint another member and one alternate as proxy by an appropriate written designation and proxy. Any individual proxy shall be deemed filed by delivery from the member directly to the Secretary prior to the meeting. Any such individual proxy shall be valid only for that single meeting for which it shall have been given and not otherwise. No person shall solicit any proxies and proxies obtained by such solicitation may not be used at any membership meeting nor shall the same be accepted by the Secretary.

Special meetings may be called by the President upon fifteen (15) days written notice to all members of record.

It is required that this association hold a minimum of four educational events or a total of 10 hours of education during each fiscal year in order to maintain affiliation with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. These programs may be held in connection with a regular meeting of the membership.

Annual meetings shall be held in April or May for the purpose of electing officers, hearing reports of officers and chairs, electing a NALA Liaison and adopting a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. Notice of annual meeting shall be in writing to all members of record at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Notice will also contain the slate of officers.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

The dues of this association shall be determined on a year by year basis by the WKP Board of Directors for active membership, Associate Membership, Student Membership and Sustaining Membership per year, due June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, payable by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Should the Board not determine the dues, the last dues amounts voted on shall prevail.

Dues shall be prorated by one-half for new Active and Associate members joining between January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>. New Active and Associate members joining between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31 shall pay dues for one year and will be carried over to the next fiscal year.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The elected officers shall be the President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past-President, NALA Liaison, and KPA Liaison (whose term shall run in accordance with the KPA fiscal year).

The Board of Directors shall be composed of elected and appointed officers and most current past-president. The Board of Directors shall act as a planning committee bringing recommendations to the membership for a vote. The Board shall meet at least quarterly and at other times as called by the President.

Term of office shall be one year. Successive terms shall be limited to one year.

No officer or member shall be compensated for association duties. However, persons may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses in connection with association related activities, provided the expenses have been authorized by at least two officers.

The position of President Elect shall only be held by a person who has been an active member of WKP for at least one year prior to nomination of officers.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The President shall appoint a nominations and elections chair at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting of the association to present a slate of officers to the membership thirty (30) days prior to election. No name shall be on the slate without consent of the candidate. Nominations from the floor shall be accepted and election shall be by majority vote of members present.

Names of appointed officers must be presented by the President by the first meeting of the new fiscal year.

Names of newly elected or appointed officers shall be submitted to NALA headquarters and the Affiliated Associations Director at least thirty (30) days after election and/or appointment.

In that this association has more than one class of membership, only active members may vote and hold office.

Unfilled positions or unexpired terms of office shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors.

Any officer (elected or appointed) absent from three consecutive meetings without good cause may be removed from office by the Board of Directors.

#### **ARTICLE X**

##### **STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The President shall appoint the following committee chairs:

Educational Programs (Vice-President)  
Membership (President-Elect)  
Finance (Treasurer)  
Nominations & Election  
Audit Committee  
Public Relations/Community Service (Past President)

Special committee chairs may be appointed by the President, as needed, with the approval of the membership.

#### **ARTICLE XI**

##### **DUTIES OF ELECTED & APPOINTED OFFICERS & CHAIRS**

**President.** The President shall preside over all Board of Directors meetings and membership meetings. The President shall appoint special and standing committee chairs as provided in these bylaws. The President shall pass files to the successor immediately upon installation and shall cause all other officers' and chairs' files to be passed to respective successors. The President shall be ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees except the committee on nominations and elections.

**Vice-President.** The Vice-President shall preside and shall assume all duties assigned to the President in the President's absence. This officer shall automatically be chair of the committee on education. These duties shall include planning seminars, workshops and working with NALA in the event of co-sponsorship of any programs. The Vice-President shall also be responsible for fulfilling the educational requirements under Article VI of these bylaws and shall report such educational meetings to the NALA Liaison.

**President-Elect.** The President-Elect shall automatically be chair of the membership committee and shall be charged with the responsibility of developing programs to encourage membership in the association. This officer shall process applications for membership in accordance with the WKP Policy & Procedure Manual. Upon approval of membership, dues payment shall be delivered to the Treasurer. This officer shall also forward membership renewal dues notices to all members. The President-Elect shall encourage membership in NALA. The President-Elect is also responsible for keeping a current roster of membership and providing the NALA Liaison with the membership roster for forwarding to NALA.

**Secretary.** The Secretary shall be responsible for minutes for all meetings and keeping permanent minutes. This officer shall assist the President in any way including giving notice of meetings. Association minutes of any meeting shall be available to the NALA President upon request.

**Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall deposit all funds and make all disbursements, subject to approval of the Board of Directors and as provided in the budget. Any extraordinary expenses must be approved by the membership before obligation to pay. The Treasurer shall be chair of the finance committee, which committee shall prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year which shall be adopted by the membership at the annual meeting. (Budget shall be submitted to the Board of Directors prior to presentation at annual meeting.) The Treasurer may be bonded (premium paid by association). All disbursements of association funds must be by association check, signed by the President or Treasurer or by debit card authorized by the Treasurer. This officer shall submit a written financial report at the regular meeting following each quarterly Board of Directors meeting, to be attached to official minutes as part of permanent record.

**Past-President.** The Past-President shall be chair over the Public Relations/Community Service Committee. These duties will include promoting awareness of the paralegal profession by directing the Association's involvement in community service and charitable organizations. The purpose of the Public Relations/Community Service committee is to promote public awareness of the paralegal profession by the Association's participation in charitable and community service projects within its membership area.

**NALA Liaison.** This officer shall be a NALA active member, shall be familiar with the NALA Bylaws, shall receive minutes of all NALA meetings, and shall represent the association at the NALA annual meeting of affiliated associations. This officer shall report quarterly on association activities to the NALA Affiliated Associations Director on forms provided by NALA headquarters, and shall report all officers' names to NALA headquarters and the NALA Affiliated Associations Director.

This officer may submit items the association wishes discussed to the NALA Affiliated Associations Director and shall participate in discussion sessions at NALA annual meetings. A report to association members on the NALA annual meeting will be required.

This officer shall, within sixty (60) days of passage, notify the NALA Affiliated Associations Director of any changes in the association's bylaws.

This officer is responsible for reporting the membership annually to NALA with the renewal fee for continued affiliation with NALA.

This officer shall be the main contact between NALA and the association. This officer shall be a member of the governing body of this association.

**KPA Liaison.** This officer shall be a KPA member, shall be familiar with the KPA Bylaws and Policies, shall receive minutes of all KPA Board meetings, and shall represent the association at KPA Board meetings and the KPA annual meeting. This officer shall act as a link between WKP and the KPA. This officer shall be a member of the governing body of this association.

**Audit Committee.** The Audit Committee will be composed of a past Treasurer, excluding the immediate past Treasurer, and other members



at the discretion of the chair whose purpose is to audit the Treasurer's books at the close of the fiscal year prior to the transfer of accounts to the newly elected Treasurer. In the event the incumbent Treasurer is elected to a second term, the audit will be performed following the annual meeting and prior to the first regular meeting of the membership.

**Nominations and Elections.**

See Article IX.

**ARTICLE XII**

**FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of this association shall be from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**ARTICLE XIII**

**CODE OF ETHICS**

Every member of this association shall subscribe to and be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., as adopted by the membership of this association. Violations of the NALA Code shall be grounds for immediate dismissal from membership and/or removal from office.

Any member dismissed from membership and/or removed from office for ethical violations as listed above shall have the right to appeal such decision by a vote of the active members at the next regularly scheduled membership meeting.

**ARTICLE XIV**

**AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

Bylaw amendments (not in conflict with NALA bylaws) may be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of members present at any regular meeting. Notice of proposed Bylaw amendments shall be given to all active members thirty (30) days in advance. The NALA Affiliated Associations Director must be advised of any amendments within sixty (60) days of passage.

**ARTICLE XV**

**DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution of this association, all property and assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit charitable organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, to be selected by a majority vote of the remaining members of the association, notice having been given to members of the association and the NALA Affiliated Associations Director at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. In no event shall any of such property and assets be distributed to any member or private individual.

**ARTICLE XVI**

**RETENTION OF AFFILIATION**

Affiliation with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., is renewable each year by payment of an affiliation fee and attached to a current membership roster. In the event of suspension of affiliation, this association may re-affiliate with NALA by submitting a new application with membership roster, bylaws, sample of educational programs, petition and current initial fee.

In addition to the renewal fee, this association must comply with the required reports and requested procedures as outlined in these bylaws.

The annual renewal fee is payable on October 1 and delinquent November 1. Payment received after due date must be accompanied by a late fee penalty established by NALA.

APPROVED as amended on May 2, 2014, effective immediately.