

**SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC EXAMINERS, INC.**

**A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION**

**BYLAWS**

**Article 1- NAME**

The name of the Corporation shall be The Scientific Association of Forensic Examiners, hereinafter referred to as "SAFE" and shall be incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the state of Maryland.

**Article 2- PURPOSE AND MISSION**

**Section 2.01 Purpose.** SAFE is organized for the purpose of improving conditions in the forensic document examination industry by providing education and certification to document examiners from basic training through continuing education for certified members.

**Section 2.02 Mission.** SAFE is established to foster the professional needs of document examiners from basic training through continuing education for certified examiners. SAFE shall review, approve, disapprove of various educational and training programs and offer specific training where possible and supported. SAFE shall remain at all times an open organization for law-biding individuals seeking to enter the field, those who are matriculating in an approved educational or training program, and those who are practicing their forensic discipline. SAFE shall establish and maintain the highest standards for certification. SAFE shall seek the highest level of accreditation for its certifications and the Board of Directors shall be primarily responsible for pursuing this mission.

**Article 3 – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 3.01 Classifications of Membership.** There shall be the following classifications of membership:

**3.01(a) General Members.** General members are those members who have accrued a minimum number of continuing education points during the past calendar year according to the point system defined by the SAFE Board of Directors.

**3.01 (b) Certified Members.** Certified Members are those who have completed a basic training program approved by the SAFE Board of Directors, successfully passed SAFE requirements, procedures and testing for certification and have been designated as SAFE certified. SAFE Certified Members must successfully fulfill requirements for recertification when required and has not otherwise forfeited the status of SAFE Certification. They also have to accrue points, just like General Members.

**Section 3.02 Membership Application and Annual Dues.** Anyone wishing to become a member of SAFE shall complete an application and pay a non-refundable application fee. Qualifications for membership shall be provided in the standing rules. Upon admission to SAFE, members shall pay annual dues to SAFE in the amount set by the Board.

**Section 3.03 Membership Book.** SAFE shall maintain a book or file listing the name and address of each member, along with the date they became a member. The book or file shall also contain the date any member resigns his/her membership, or it is otherwise terminated.

**Section 3.04 Obligation of Members to Participate in Continuing Education.** The SAFE Board of Directors shall set forth continuing education requirements consistent with organization standards. This includes but is not limited to attending a seminar or conference in the member's stated discipline, taking a college course in the member's stated discipline, attending classes in the member's stated discipline via a virtual or non-virtual classroom, reading a book on the subject in the member's stated discipline or writing a review or conducting research on a topic related to document examination approved by the Board of Directors. All members are required to annually attain the required minimum number of continuing education points as provided in the standing rules.

**Section 3.05 Member Discipline.** The Board of Directors may suspend, expel or discipline any member if the member is found guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction of a crime punishable by more than one year in prison, a felony or any crime involving a moral turpitude. A crime of moral turpitude includes but is not limited to offenses such as fraud, bribery, corruption, conspiracy, embezzlement, theft by a fiduciary or trustee, or theft by trick, deceit or false pretenses. Also included are offenses based in misrepresentation and perjury. The Board of Directors may also in its sole discretion, expel, suspend or discipline a Member if it determines a member has:

- Failed to abide by the corporation's governing rules, including bylaws
- Has committed any act discreditable to the Corporation or its membership
  - Provided false information on his/her application as to credentials, education, training or work history or criminal background
- Has been declared incompetent or insane by a court of competent jurisdiction
- Failed to cooperate in a SAFE internal investigation
- Used the SAFE "Certified Forensic Document Examiner" CFDE™ designation or logo or other trademark contrary to the use stated in Article 7 herein.
- Has been sanctioned for failure to disclose pertinent facts on a case where the member was acting as a testifying expert in a court of law
- Has been determined by a court of law to have testified while under the influence of one or more psychotropic drugs or alcohol
- Has failed to take any continuing education classes during the immediate fiscal year

The Board of Directors shall have the authority to address any alleged misconduct as described in this section and may adopt procedures to do so.

**Section 3.06 Termination of Membership.** Memberships may be terminated by:

**3.06(a) Resignation.** A member may resign from the SAFE at any time. Resignation must be in writing and may be presented to any Board Member.

**3.06(b) Lapsing.** Membership will be considered lapsed and automatically terminated, without notice, upon failure of the member to pay dues within 30 days after dues are due. Membership may be reinstated in full if dues are paid within 60 days of the due date.

**3.06(c) Expulsion.** Membership may be terminated by expulsion as a result of disciplinary procedures.

**3.06 (d) Failure to Accrue Minimum Continuing Education Points.** Membership will be considered automatically terminated, without notice, upon failure of the member to accrue the required minimum number of continuing educational points. The Board of Directors may make exceptions to this rule after considering extenuating circumstances.

#### **Article 4 – OFFICERS**

**4.01 Officers.** The officers shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and three directors-at-large. No more than one office may be held simultaneously by the same person.

**4.02 Qualifications.** To qualify for any office, an individual shall be a Document Examiner or licensed or certified professional in an allied field.

**4.03 Term of Office.** All officers shall serve for a term of three years or until their successors are elected. Terms of office shall begin on the first day of the month following elections.

**4.04 Duties of Officers.** Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws, the parliamentary authority, and in the standing rules as adopted by the Board of Directors.

**4.05 Nominating Committee.** A nominating committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The committee shall consider the qualifications of all candidates submitting applications. The committee shall nominate at least one candidate for each position to be filled, and it shall report the slate of candidates to the membership. No name may be placed in nomination without the written consent of the nominee.

**4.06 Elections.** Elections are held every three years and may be held at an in-person meeting of the membership or by electronic means as determined by the Board of Directors. A plurality of the votes cast by members shall elect.

**4.07 Vacancies.** A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

**4.08 Compensation.** Officers shall not receive any stated salary for their services; however, by resolution of the Board of Directors, an officer may be paid their expenses, if any, for attending meetings with other organizations within the Forensic Sciences arena that have impact or potential impact on the organization, and/or its members.

**4.09 Removal.** Any officer may be removed for cause by special meeting of the Board of Directors and by vote of a two-thirds vote of the entire Board of Directors.

#### **Article 5 – MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

**5.01 Annual Meeting.** The annual membership meeting for the purpose of receiving reports of officers, the board of directors, and committees, and for any other business which shall properly come before

the meeting shall be held at a time and place as determined by the Board of Directors provided that notice shall be sent to the members at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting. At the sole discretion of the Board of Directors the annual meeting may be held by means of a conference telephone or other communications equipment if all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time.

**5.02 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the membership may be called by the Board of Directors, provided that notice shall be sent to the members at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting. Notice shall include the specific items of business to be conducted at the meeting. At the sole discretion of the Board of Directors a special meeting may be held by means of a conference telephone or other communications equipment if all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time.

**5.03 Quorum.** The quorum for meetings shall be a majority of the members. If the number of members present at a properly called meeting of the members is fewer than quorum, then an additional meeting may be called by a majority of the members present for the same purpose. At the additional meeting, the members present shall constitute a quorum if all notice requirements per statute for an additional meeting have been met.

## **Article 6 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**6.01 Composition.** The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers as provided in 4.01

**6.02 Authority.** The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the management and administration of the association in all respects and for all purposes, shall have the power to adopt policies and standing rules, and shall have authority to conduct all other business of SAFE, except that which is retained by the membership as provided by these bylaws.

**6.03 Meetings.** The Board of Directors shall meet on a schedule as determined by the Board. Each member of the Board of Directors shall receive proper notice of time and date of each meeting. Meetings may be conducted by electronic means as long as all participants can hear each other simultaneously.

**6.04 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called with two days' notice by the President or any two officers. Notice may be sent by electronic transmission.

**6.05 Quorum; Voting.** At meetings of the Board of Directors, a majority of the Board of Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of a majority of members of the Board of Directors present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors.

## **Article 7- COMMITTEES**

**7.01 Standing Committees.** There shall be such standing committees as provided in the standing rules. The duties of the standing committees shall be established in the standing rules. The President may appoint a chairman and members for each committee with the approval of the Board of Directors.

**7.02 Special Committees.** Special committees shall be appointed by the Board of Directors as deemed necessary.

**7.03 Ex officio Membership.** The president shall be ex officio a member of all committees except the nominating committee.

**Article 8 – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with statutes, these bylaws and any special rules of order the association may adopt.

**Article 9 – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended by the membership at any regular or special meeting of SAFE by a majority vote by members present and voting, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing and distributed to the membership at least ten days in advance of the meeting.