

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS CHECKLIST

A constitution and by-laws articulate the purpose of your organization and spell out the procedures to be followed for its orderly functioning. **Constitutions usually require a 2/3 vote of the membership for adoption while by-laws only require a simple majority for passage.** Once you have developed your constitution and by-laws, review them often. A thorough study of the constitution and by-laws must be a part of officer training and transition. A copy of the constitution and by-laws must be available for all members to review. Making these documents available will unify your membership and keep them informed about the opportunities that exist for participation and the procedures that they should follow to be an active, contributing member. The needs of your group will change over time and it's important that the constitution and by-laws are kept up to date to reflect the current state of affairs.

Name of Organization: _____

Structure of a Constitution (Checked by Officers)

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| _____ Article I | Name of the organization |
| _____ Article II | Affiliation with other groups (local, state, national, etc.) |
| _____ Article III | Purpose, aims, and functions of the organization |
| _____ Article IV | Membership requirements (how determined, who's eligible, etc.) |
| _____ Article V | Officers (titles, terms of office, how and when elected) |
| _____ Article VI | Advisor (term of service, how selected) |
| _____ Article VII | Quorum (number of members required to transact business) |
| _____ Article VIII | Meetings (frequency, special meetings and who calls them) |
| _____ Article IX | Referendum and Recall (procedures and handling) |
| _____ Article X | Amendments (means of proposal, notice required, and voting requirements) |
| _____ Article XI | Ratification (requirements for adopting this constitution) |

What should be included in the By-laws?

By-laws must not contradict provisions in the Constitution. They generally contain specific information on the following topics:

- _____ Membership (requirements, resignations, rights and duties)
- _____ Dues (amount and collection procedures, and special fees, when payable)
- _____ Duties of Officers (powers, responsibilities, specific job descriptions, etc)
- _____ Risk Management
- _____ Election process
- _____ Procedures for filling unexpired terms of office, removal from office)
- _____ Executive Board (structure, composition, powers)
- _____ Committees (standing, special, how formed, chairpersons, meetings, power, duties)
- _____ Order of business (standard agenda for conducting meetings)
- _____ Voting procedures - quorum, who has power to cast a vote