

**Psychologists in the Department of Veterans Affairs**  
**A SECTION OF DIVISION 18, AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**  
**Section Bylaws**

**ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE**

1. The name of this organization shall be the Veterans Affairs Section of the Division of Psychologists in Public Service of the American Psychological Association.
2. The members of this section are principally involved in public service through their common responsibilities to carry out publicly legislated programs, publicly funded, and accountable to the public.

(a) As psychologists, we share these missions common to all organized groups of psychologists to:

- (1) provide a forum for psychological information exchange,
- (2) develop psychological knowledge to research,
- (3) communicate psychological knowledge through education and training,
- (4) apply psychological knowledge through services to the public,
- (5) develop and maintain standards, and
- (6) advance psychology and psychologists in public interest.

(b) As psychologists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, we have specific additional missions to:

- (1) promote the ability of psychologists in the Department of Veterans Affairs to serve the public interest,
- (2) communicate within, APA about professional issues and programs in the Department of Veterans Affairs that concern all psychologists,
- (3) study the psychological effects of Veterans Affairs policies on various sectors of veterans' beneficiaries as well as on individuals,
- (4) use psychological knowledge to develop and implement Department of Veterans Affairs policies in the public interest, and
- (5) serve as advocate for the health care of veterans and for psychologists in the complex Department of Veterans Affairs bureaucracy.

**ARTICLE II: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

As an integral part of the Division of Psychologists in Public Service, this section is governed by the By-Laws and policies of the Division and of the American Psychological Association.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

1. Introduction:

(a) Membership in the Section shall be comprised of Fellows, Members, or Associates of Division 18 who:

- (1) are employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs;
- (2) are paid consultants to the Department of Veterans Affairs;
- (3) have been appointed to, are currently serving in, or have successfully completed department of veterans affairs psychology internships;
- (4) have been appointed to, currently hold, or have successfully completed postdoctoral fellowships in psychology in the Department of Veterans Affairs;

- (5) are Veterans of a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces; or
- (6) have retired as psychologists or consultants from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) On all matters calling for action by the membership of the Section, voting eligibility shall be in accordance with the provisions of the By-Laws of the American Psychological Association.

## 2. Members and Associates:

(a) Members and Associates must meet the minimum standards . prescribed by The American Psychological Association.

(b) Members and Associate Members of the Section shall be elected by a majority of the members present at any annual meeting of the Section upon nomination by a majority vote of the Membership Committee of the Section.

(c) Secretary-Treasurer of the section shall notify members of their election immediately after the annual meeting.

(d) Failure to pay annual dues shall be considered as resignation from the section.

## **ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS**

1. The officers of the Section shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, Immediate past Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and as many Section members who serve as Division Representatives to the Council of Representatives of the American Psychological Association as provided in the By-Laws of the Association and the Division. The Chair of the Section shall serve as Section Representative to the Board of Directors of Division 18.

2. The terms of office for the Chair, Chair-Elect, and for the Secretary-Treasurer shall be two years. Newly elected officers will assume office at the close of the annual APA Convention and shall serve through the annual meeting which occurs at the end of their term of office.

3. It shall be the duty of the Chair to preside at all meetings of the Section; in the absence of the Chair, the Chair-Elect will preside. The Chair shall exercise supervision over the affairs of the Section with the approval of the Executive council, and perform such other duties as are incident to his/her office or as may be required by him/her by vote of the Executive Council, the Section membership, or the President of Division 18.

4. It shall be the duty of the Secretary-Treasurer to keep all records of the meetings of the Section, to issue calls and notices of meetings, and to file minutes of Section business meetings with the Division's Secretary. The Secretary-Treasurer shall have custody of all funds and property of the Section; collect such special dues or assessments as may be voted in accordance with the By-Laws; make disbursements as authorized by the Section Executive Council; and serve as a member of the Section Executive Council.

5. As Section Representative to the Division Executive Committee, the Chair shall perform such duties and accept responsibilities as specified in the Division By-Laws, and to keep the Section informed of Division action and activities.

6. In the event that a newly elected officer is unable to serve out his/her term, the Executive Council will appoint a replacement to serve until the office is filled by regular election.

## **ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES**

1. There shall be an Executive Council of the Section consisting of the Chair, Chair-Elect, Immediate Past Chair and the Secretary-Treasurer.

2. The Section Executive Council shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Section, performing the duties and abiding by the limitations specified in these and the Division 18 By-Laws. All actions of the Section Executive Council are subject to approval by a majority vote of the voting members at an annual meeting, or by special mail ballot.
3. The Chair shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the Section Executive Council.
4. Committees: The Chair shall appoint the Nominations Committee, the Membership Committee, and any other standing or special committee considered to be useful to the purpose of the Section. All committee appointments must be ratified by the majority vote of the Executive Council before committee business may be executed. Standing and special committees report to the Executive Council.

#### **ARTICLE VI: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

1. The Nominations Committee shall solicit nominations of Fellows or Members of the Section for the offices of Chair-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer, terms of which are to expire with the next annual meeting of the Section. This will be done by a polling of the membership of the Section. The Committee shall report to the Secretary-Treasurer the final list of at least three nominees for the office of the Chair-Elect and at least two nominees for the office of Secretary-Treasurer.
2. The Secretary-Treasurer shall prepare and mail an election ballot to each Member and Associate Member of the Section in time for the election to be completed prior to the annual APA Convention.
3. The official count of election ballots shall be by the Section Executive Council. The candidates for office will be notified of the results as soon as they are ratified by the section executive council. The election results will be announced at the annual business meeting of the Section.

#### **ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS**

The annual meeting of the Section shall take place during the annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. The Section shall seek to coordinate its program with and participate in the program of Division 18.

#### **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

1. These By-Laws may be amended upon recommendation of the Executive Council and by a two-thirds-majority vote of members responding to a mailed polling of the membership.
2. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for mailing the ballots.
3. The official count of ballots resulting from such a poll will be by Executive council. Results will be announced at the annual business meeting.

#### **ENABLING ACTION**

These By-Laws will go into effect upon approval by a majority of those members present at the annual meeting.

**Adopted: August 23, 1986**