

# VERMONT LACROSSE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of the association shall be the “Vermont Lacrosse Officials Association” (VLOA)

### ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE

The purpose of the association shall be:

- a) To promote the game of lacrosse.
- b) To develop and maintain the highest degree of lacrosse officiating.
- c) To promote the uniform interpretation and administration of the rules of lacrosse by all officials.
- d) To encourage the spirit of safe, fair play and sportsmanship.
- e) To have available at all times an adequate number of thoroughly trained, capable officials for secondary-school field lacrosse at the varsity and sub-varsity levels.

### ARTICLE 3 – ORGANIZATION

#### Section 1. Qualification

This association shall be composed of all qualified and approved members in good standing with the association.

#### Section 2. Eligibility

This association shall be composed of individuals who meet the following qualifications:

- a. All candidates for membership must be at least eighteen years of age;
- b. Except as provided herein in sub-section c, all candidates must be recommended for membership by a member of VLOA, an active/retired lacrosse coach or a secondary school or college athletic director who is familiar with the individual’s officiating ability;
- c. A candidate who is a recognized member in good standing of another state or regional lacrosse officials’ association shall be eligible for membership in VLOA; All candidates for membership shall submit a letter or email expressing a desire to join VLOA which summarizes his/her experience with the sport of lacrosse to the Secretary/Treasurer of VLOA and pay the applicable first-year dues/processing fee.

### Section 3. Active Membership Requirements

Annually, each active member of VLOA shall:

- a. Tender the required annual association dues to the secretary treasurer as provided herein;
- b. Complete an open book exam offered by the National Federation of High Schools (“NFHS”) or such other certifying entity as may be approved by the Board of VLOA;
- c. Carry NFOA, USLacrosse or other insurance which provides coverage for officiating high school lacrosse.
- d. Successfully complete all courses or trainings as may be required for referees of Vermont High School lacrosse by NFHS, Vermont Principals Association (“VPA”), or other applicable accrediting agencies or as mandated by applicable state law or regulation.
- e. **Satisfy any and all additional criteria for assignment as a referee that has been or may be required by the school districts served by VLOA.**

### Section 4. Types of Membership

- a. Probationary: Those new members who have completed the Federation exam and paid the applicable first-year dues. The probationary term shall be one year from the date of completion of their first exam following admission into VLOA. Probationary members are strongly encouraged to attend a pre-season mechanics class.
- b. Active: Those members who have successfully completed their probationary period, paid annual dues equal to one varsity game fee, taken the annual lacrosse officials examination, and actively officiate lacrosse under the auspices of VLOA.
- c. Inactive or Associate: Those members who are interested in the welfare of lacrosse and who have paid annual dues equal to half of the dues required of active members. Inactive members are not required to take the annual lacrosse officials examination. Inactive members shall not have the right to vote or hold office in VLOA, or to officiate lacrosse under the auspices of VLOA. Former active members who move to inactive status may return to active status upon provision of written notice to the President and compliance with all requirements of active membership.
- d. Life: May be awarded by the Board of Directors of VLOA to those who are or have been active members of VLOA for at least ten (10) years and who have distinguished themselves in the interest of lacrosse. Life members are not required to pay annual dues but will have all other privileges of active membership including the right to vote. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a life member will not have the right to officiate under the auspices of VLOA unless the Life Member has taken the annual examination and is otherwise qualified to do so. Any active member of VLOA may nominate a member for Life Membership by submitting a written request to the President. A nomination for life membership which is

approved by the Board of Directors will be presented to the VLOA membership at the annual business meeting and must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the members in attendance.

#### ARTICLE 4 – DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

- a. Board of Directors: shall be made up of the officers and the outgoing President who shall be a member of the Board of Directors for two years following his term in office.
- b. Nomination Committee: shall consist of three members at large as appointed by the President and will present a slate of officers consistent with the terms in Article 4, to be voted upon by the membership at the first meeting of the year.
- c. Grievance Committee: The VLOA President shall appoint annually a three-member Grievance Committee.
- d. Education Committee – The Board shall appoint an education committee which shall have the responsibility to schedule and provide adequate training programs to ensure the continued improvement of the VLOA membership. The Committee shall consist of one member appointed as Training Coordinator, and other members-at-large as appropriate (minimum two). Scheduling of joint membership/education meetings shall be the shared responsibility of the Training Coordinator, Assignor, and President or designee.
- e. Evaluator – The Board shall appoint senior experienced officials in good standing with VLOA to the position of Evaluator. The Evaluator(s) will be assigned to observe game crews by the Assignor. Evaluators will provide verbal feedback based on their observations to the officials, with a written report sent to the Assignor and Training Coordinator. The Assignor may use the evaluations, in addition to other information, when scheduling assignments. The Training Coordinator may use the evaluations, and other information, to develop programs focused on common areas in need of improvement. The budget for Evaluators will be voted on and approved by the membership annually. Evaluators will be paid a fee equal to one varsity game per game observed.

#### ARTICLE 5 – OFFICERS

The President and Vice-President shall be elected to two year terms by the membership at the annual business meeting. The President and Vice-President shall not serve consecutive terms in the same office.

- a. The officers shall consist of the President, Vice-President and the Executive Secretary/Treasurer.
- b. The President shall chair all meetings of VLOA and fulfill such other duties as may be required by these bylaws.
- c. The Vice-President shall record the minutes of all meetings and conduct an annual review of VLOA financial records.
- d. Only active members in good standing are eligible to hold office.
- e. Any vacancy occurring during the year shall be filled by the Board of Directors.

- f. Officers shall rotate among the members bi-annually with the exception of the Executive Secretary/Treasurer who will hold office at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- g. The Board of Directors shall appoint the Rules Interpreter and shall make recommendations to the leagues and the VPA as to the appointment of the Assignor(s).
- h. The Executive Secretary/Treasurer shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred and also receive a fee as determined annually by the Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE 6 – UNIFORM

The lacrosse uniform to be worn by VLOA officials will be as printed in the NFHS Federation Rulebook. It is recommended that both officials dress alike. Black shorts and short black socks will be worn beginning with the 2013 season.

## ARTICLE 7 – MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

### Section 1. Dues

Annual dues for active members shall be equal to one varsity game fee for that season, unless otherwise voted by the membership. Any motion to change the dues structure shall be made and voted upon by the active membership at the annual business meeting (usually the first meeting of the year). Dues for the ensuing year are payable on or before the last meeting of the year. Dues not paid by said date shall be increased by an additional \$10.00 payable no later than Aug. 1. Failure to pay total dues by August 1 will result in automatic suspension from the VLOA and the Executive Secretary/Treasurer shall inform in writing any individual who falls into this category. Individuals who become suspended may regain their membership by payment of double the annual dues and compliance with all other requirements of active membership.

### Section 2. Meetings

The VLOA will hold at least two (2) meetings annually. The first meeting of the year will be the annual business meeting. In addition to attending to the business of VLOA, the first meeting of the year will also be devoted to the review and discussion of mechanics, new rules and changes to existing rules. Attendance at the annual business meeting shall be mandatory. A member who fails to attend the annual business meeting the member must, as a penalty, submit a check in the amount of the then current game fee to the Secretary within seven (7) days of the meeting date. If the member believes that there are extenuating circumstances which justified or required the member to miss the mandatory annual business meeting the member must appeal to the grievance committee either prior to the meeting or within 7 days after the meeting date. The grievance committee may excuse the member's attendance or waive the penalty for good cause shown.

The second meeting will be held at or near the end of the high school lacrosse season for the purpose of nominating and/or presenting awards, reviewing the high-lights and events of the season, socializing and related matters. VLOA members are strongly encouraged to attend all meetings.

#### Section 4. Censures, Suspensions, Expulsions, and Appeals.

- a. Any situation where a member's **physical or mental status, or a member's actions, either on or off the field, give rise to a question of the Member's fitness or ability to effectively serve** as a lacrosse official, may be brought to the attention of the Grievance Committee. **If warranted, the Committee shall notify the Member of its concerns and schedule a hearing to review the issue(s) with the Member. In all such circumstances** the member will have the right to notice of charges and the right to be heard prior to the time any **final disciplinary or other administrative** action is taken. ~~After full investigation and review~~ **Following such hearing, or if no hearing is requested,** the Grievance Committee may censure, suspend, or expel a member found to be guilty of misconduct or otherwise unfit to officiate. Suspended or expelled persons shall be notified of such action in writing by the Executive Secretary/Treasurer.
- b. **Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Grievance Committee shall also have the authority to temporarily restrict a Member's ability to be assigned games, prior to the date of any formal hearing, upon a determination that such action is necessary to protect the interests of VLOA or the schools and students it serves. By way of example and not of limitation, the Grievance Committee may consider such action in cases where the Member is charged with a crime, or in cases where there is reason to believe that the referee is unable to effectively provide competent services on the field for any reason. In the event such action is taken the Grievance Committee will provide Notice to the Member and promptly schedule a hearing on the underlying charges.**
- c. Any action by the Grievance Committee may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE 8 – WAIVER OF LIABILITY

VLOA members hereby agree to abide by these Bylaws and the rules of the VLOA as prescribed by the Board of Directors and further agree to waive any and all claims against the VLOA for any injuries or harm which would befall said members as a consequence of membership.

## ARTICLE 9- AMENDMENTS

### Section 1.

Motions to amend these Bylaws must be in writing and published to the membership at least two (2) weeks in advance of the annual business meeting. All motions to amend these Bylaws must be passed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the business meeting.

Amended May 31, 2011.

Amended June 6, 2012

Amended March 22, 2015