

# BYLAWS of the Association for Specialists in Group Work

*(A Division of the American Counseling Association)*

Approved by the Board July 1994 and amended: July 1995; October 1996; March 2002, January 2013, and July 2018

This version given final approved by the ACA Governing Council (February 2020)

## ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this Association shall be the “Association for Specialists in Group Work” (hereinafter referred to as "ASGW" or "Association"), a Division of the American Counseling Association (hereinafter referred to as "ACA").

**Section 2. Affiliation.** This Association shall be organized and governed in accordance with the current bylaws of ACA.

**Section 3. Mission Statement.** The Association for Specialists in Group Work – a division of the American Counseling Association - exists so that members and other helping professionals are empowered with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to practice effective, socially just, and ethical group work in a diverse and global society. We value the creation of community; service to our members, their clients, and the profession; and group leadership as a process to facilitate the growth and development of individuals and groups.

## ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1. Types of Membership

- a) The Association shall have only individual membership, which shall be categorized as Student, New Professional, Regular, Professional, Retired, and Fellow.
  - Student members are those who are enrolled in a graduate program in counseling or a field in which group work is used. Student members have all rights and benefits of membership in ASGW, except holding elective office.
  - New professional status is applicable for one year post graduation to members who have held a student membership the previous year. New professional members have all rights and benefits of membership in ASGW and may hold elective office if they are members of ACA.
  - Regular members are individuals who have an interest in group work but are not members of ACA. Regular members have all rights and benefits of membership in ASGW except holding elective office.
  - Professional members hold a graduate degree in counseling or closely related field and are engaged in the teaching, practice or research of group work. Professional members must concurrently be members of ACA. Professional members have all rights and benefits of membership in ASGW.
  - Fellows are Professional members who are conferred this honorary status by action of the

Board for extraordinary professional achievements compatible with and enhancing the Association and practice of group work. Fellow status will be revoked if the Fellow is permanently expelled from membership in ACA.

- Retired members are individuals who are retired from counseling or a related profession and have been active ASGW members for 5 consecutive years prior to retirement.

**Section 2. Membership Requirements.** All ASGW members must abide by the ACA Code of Ethics, whether or not they are members of ACA, and must be supportive of the mission of ASGW.

**Section 3. Procedures for Membership.** The ASGW Governance Process Committee (GPC) shall prescribe the form and procedures for approving applications for membership via the Membership/Nominations Committee.

**Section 4. Dues.** The Governance Process Committee shall establish annual dues.

**Section 5. Severance of Membership.**

- a) ASGW members expelled permanently from ACA membership shall also be expelled from ASGW membership and will not be eligible to join ASGW under any membership type.
- b) ASGW members who are not members of ACA shall be expelled from ASGW if they are sanctioned for legal or ethical violations by a state, national, or professional organization or certification/licensing body.
- c) A member may be removed from membership for conduct that is injurious to ASGW or adversely affects its reputation, or that is contrary to or destructive of its mission according to the ASGW Bylaws and the ACA Code of Ethics.
- d) Removal of a member may be determined by vote of a majority of the Governance Process Committee. The GPC members must provide the member with at least ten days' notice of the proposed removal and the member shall have the opportunity to address the Board prior to a final vote of removal from membership.
- e) A member shall be automatically dropped from membership for nonpayment of dues.

**Section 6. Voluntary Resignation from Membership.** Members in good standing may voluntarily resign from ASGW. The Association will not refund any part of the dues that have been paid by the member. Former members of ASGW that were members in good standing at the time of resignation or were severed from membership for nonpayment of dues may rejoin ASGW at any time without penalty.

## ARTICLE III - OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

**Section 1. Officers, Committee Chairs, and Terms of Office**

- a) The elected officers of the Association shall be the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Treasurer, and Secretary, and the ASGW Representative to ACA's Governing Council.

- b) The committee chairs of the Association shall be for the six major ASGW Committees: Strategic Communications, Special Initiatives, Membership & Nominations, Research, Product Management, and Conference & Awards Committees.
- c) Qualifications: All officers and members of ASGW's governing body must be members in good standing of ASGW and the American Counseling Association.
- d) Term of Service: Regular terms of office begin on the first day of the ASGW fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup>) and continue for the period of one year for the President, President-Elect, and Immediate Past President, and for a period of three years for the other elected officers. Committee chairs are appointed by GPC and serve for two years.
- e) Term Limits: Service in the same elected office is limited to two consecutive terms and no member shall serve as an officer of ASGW for more than 9 consecutive years.
- f) Vacancies in Office: Elective offices that are prematurely vacated shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by appointment of the Board. Persons filling unexpired terms are still eligible to run for office unless expressly made ineligible elsewhere in these Bylaws.
- g) Removal of Officers and Committee Chairs. Any member of the board may be removed from office if the officer is: derelict in their duties as defined by the ASGW volunteer guide, unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the position as defined by the ACA Code of Leadership, when the officer exhibits conduct that tends to injure ASGW or adversely affect its reputation, or for behavior that is contrary to or destructive of the mission of ASGW according to the ASGW Bylaws and the ACA Code of Ethics. Removal will require a majority vote of the ASGW GPC members, defined as 2/3 of the voting members. The Board must provide the officer with at least ten days' notice of the proposed removal and the officer at issue shall have the opportunity to address the Board prior to a final vote for removal.

## **Section 2. Duties of Officers and Committee Chairs**

Detailed role descriptions and responsibilities for the following positions are in the Volunteer Resource Guide. Brief descriptions of Governance Process Committee roles follow:

- a) President. The President shall be the chief executive officer, shall preside at all meetings and chair the Governance Process Committee.
- b) President-Elect. The President-Elect shall assume the duties of President at any time when the President is unable to do so. The President-Elect shall be a member of the Governance Process Committee and serve in any capacity as prescribed by the GPC or requested by the President.
- c) Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President shall be a member of the Governance Process Committee and may serve in any capacity as directed by GPC or the President.
- d) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall represent the Association in assuring the receipt and expenditures of funds in accordance with the policies established by the GPC. The Treasurer shall perform the duties customary to the office and such additional duties as may be directed

by the GPC or requested by the President.

- e) Secretary. The Secretary shall perform the duties customary to the office of secretary and such additional duties in that capacity as directed by the GPC or requested by the President.
- f) ASGW Representative to the ACA Governing Council. The Representative to the ACA Governing Council shall attend the meetings of the Governing Council and represent ASGW's interests. The Representative shall inform the Board of considerations, concerns, and actions of ACA that may affect ASGW.
- g) Committee chair responsibilities are detailed in the ASGW volunteer guide. Committee chairs of the six major committees serve on the ASGW Board as non-voting members.

**Section 3. Nomination and Election of Officers and Committee Chairs.** In accordance with written policies approved by the Board and published in the ASGW Volunteer Guide, the Past President shall supervise the nominations and elections procedures for filling the elective offices of the Association. Committee Chairs serve as non-voting members on the board.

## ARTICLE IV - BOARD

**Section 1. Composition of the Board.** The ASGW Board shall be composed of the elected officers and committee chairpersons.

**Section 2. Functions of the Board.** The Board shall be the agency through which the governance oversight, general administrative, and corporate affairs of the Association are conducted. It shall perform the responsibilities assigned to it by these Bylaws and in accordance with its framework of governance policies. The Board will determine the Association's strategic priorities and spearhead the related committee strategic planning and accountability processes.

### Section 3. Meetings of the Board

- a) The Board shall meet at least eight times per year in a financially feasible combination of in-person and electronic settings, with at least one in person meeting.
- b) The Board shall be empowered to conduct and participate in meetings by electronic communications in which the views of each participant are transmitted to all participants involved in the decision-making process.
- c) A 2/3 majority of the voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
- d) Expenses incurred by Board members to attend in person board meetings shall be paid by ASGW in accordance with the ASGW travel policy.
- e) Special meetings can be called by the president with 48-hour notice to board members by email.

## ARTICLE V - ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

**Section 1. Annual Meeting.** The Association shall hold an annual meeting of the membership during the ACA National Conference pursuant to prior written notice of 30 days. Included in this meeting shall be a report by the President of accomplishments and future challenges of the Association, a

Secretary's report with approval of the minutes of the previous year's annual meeting, and a Treasurer's report.

## **Section 2. Manner of Acting and Decision-Making.**

- a) A 2/3 majority of the votes cast on a matter where a quorum is present (in person or electronically) shall be necessary for the adoption thereof unless a greater proportion is required by law or these Bylaws.
- b) Any action that is required by these bylaws to occur at a meeting, may occur also by means of electronic communication such as email, conference call, or web-based methods, if all of those entitled to vote on the matter have access to the electronic method, can be identified, and if the votes cast can be confirmed as theirs.

**Section 3. Cancellation of Scheduled Meetings.** Scheduled meetings of the ASGW membership or the ASGW Board may be cancelled by a majority vote of the ASGW Board in the event of weather or other emergency. ASGW membership will be notified of membership meeting cancellations electronically within twelve (12) hours of the Board's decision.

## ARTICLE VI - BUSINESS AFFAIRS

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year and the governance year shall be from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Section 2. Interest of Individual Members.** No member or other individual shall have or acquire any severable or transferable interest in the property of the Association.

## ARTICLE VII - PUBLICATIONS

**Section 1.** There shall be an official Journal (The Journal for Specialists in Group Work) and such other publications as are deemed necessary or appropriate by the Board.

**Section 2.** The Board shall appoint a Journal Editor, and such other staff as may be deemed necessary in consultation with the Journal Editor.

**Section 3.** The Association shall own the copyright for the original and any renewal term for any writing that is published by the Association. The author of any such writing shall have the right to make a non-profit or non-commercial use of the work provided that there be affixed to each copy the copyright notice used by the Association when the writing was first published. The author shall have the right to make or authorize the profit or commercial use of any such writing only after first obtaining the written consent of the Association.

## ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The Association's standing committees are those stipulated in the ASGW volunteer guide. The six major committees are: Strategic Communications, Special Initiatives, Membership & Nominations, Research, Product Management, and Conference & Awards Committees. Sub-committees may reside within the structure of major committees.

**Section 2. Special Committees.** Special committees or task forces may be appointed by the board as

determined to be necessary for the best interest of the Association. Such committees shall be convened for a specific period of time, an assigned task, and a temporary purpose and may be continued subject to reappointment. The Fellows Committee is one such committee. The chair of the Fellows Committee is appointed by the GPC.

**Section 3. Committee Responsibilities.** All committees shall be listed in the ASGW Volunteer Guide along with descriptions of the purpose of the committee, operational guidelines, oversight, lifespan, and procedures for review.

**Section 4. Committee Engagement and Accountability.** Each committee and task force chair shall submit action plans and monitoring reports as specified in ASGW Volunteer Guide.

## ARTICLE IX - INDEMNIFICATION

**Section 1. Provision.** ASGW shall indemnify each of its officers, as described in Article IV and each member of its Board, as described in Article V, and each of its committees, as described in Article IX for the defense of civil or criminal actions or proceedings as hereinafter provided and, notwithstanding any provision in these Bylaws, in a manner and to the extent permitted applicable by law.

## ARTICLE X - BRANCHES

### Section 1. Issuing and Maintaining Branch Charters

- a) A proposed branch shall:
  - (1) consist of at least 20 people.
  - (2) apply to ASGW for a charter.
  - (3) submit bylaws which must be congruent with the bylaws of ASGW, ACA, and their state branch of ACA (if applicable); and,
  - (4) provide a list of officers and members.
- b) All officers of state branches must be members in good standing of the state branch, ASGW and the American Counseling Association.
- c) Charter applications shall be considered by the Board at regularly scheduled meetings.
- d) Annually, each branch shall file with ASGW: current by-laws, annual fiscal report of income and expenditures, an activity report, and membership list. These are due to the Branches Chair (or designee) of the ASGW membership committee by April 1 of each year.

### Section 2. Autonomy of Branches

- a. A branch shall be autonomous in the conduct of its affairs within the confines of its bylaws as long as activities of the branch are in compliance with the bylaws of ASGW and ACA.
- b. A branch shall have the power to elect its own officers who must be members in good standing of ASGW.
- c. A branch may levy and collect dues or other fees and shall have full control of the management and disbursement of such funds in providing its programs.

- d. The ASGW Governance Process Committee (GPC; defined in Article IV below) shall establish such policies and procedures for Branch operation necessary to ensure responsible fiscal operation. Financial records must be maintained by the Treasurer of the branch and a fiscal report must be submitted to ASGW annually. If irregularities in the fiscal report are noted, the branch may have to undergo an independent financial audit and bear the cost of this.
- e. A branch may admit persons to membership that are not members of ASGW if this policy is consistent with the bylaws of the branch.
- f. Changes in the bylaws of a branch are not effective until approved by the ASGW GPC and must be submitted in writing to the ASGW branches chair and membership chair.

### **Section 3. Involuntary Revocation of a Branch.**

- a. The GPC shall have the power to revoke the charter of a Branch in the event of noncompliance with Branch, ASGW or ACA bylaws, or in the event of unethical or illegal behavior by branch officers.
- b. Before final action may be taken with respect to the revocation of the charter of a Branch, a notice of intent to revoke must first be passed by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of the GPC present and voting, and the Branch in question must be advised in writing of the reasons for the proposed action. The Branch shall have until the next national meeting of the Association (but in no case less than nine months) to effect remedial measures.
- c. Two-thirds of the votes cast by the members of the GPC who are present at a meeting where there is a quorum shall be necessary to revoke the charter of a Branch.

## ARTICLE XI – NONDISCRIMINATION

**Section 1.** There shall be no discrimination against any individual on the basis of ethnic group, race, religion, national origin, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, and/or disability.

## ARTICLE XII - BYLAWS

**Section 1. Notification.** The membership of ASGW shall be notified of pending changes to the ASGW bylaws for 30 days prior to a scheduled vote by the Board.

**Section 2. Amendment to Bylaws.** These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the ASGW GPC at any regular or special meeting as described in Article V. All changes to these Bylaws must be approved by ACA according to the procedures described in the ACA Bylaws.

**Section 3. Policies and Procedures.** Supplementary policies and implementation guidelines for these Bylaws are to be kept current and accessible in the ASGW Volunteer Guide.

## ARTICLE XIII - RULES OF ORDER

**Section 1. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order: Newly Revised** as from time to time amended, shall govern all proceedings of all bodies of the Association except where otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

END