

**By-Laws of**  
**MAINE SPEECH LANGUAGE HEARING ASSOCIATION**  
*Revised 2023*

**ARTICLE I NAME**

**1.1** The name of this organization shall be the Maine Speech Language Hearing Association (MSLHA).

**ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

**2.1 Vision:**

The vision of the Maine Speech Language Hearing Association (MSLHA) is to serve as the bridge between speech-language pathologists, audiologists, students and other communication professionals and those they serve to enhance their quality of life for the public good.

A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is central to our mission as a professional entity to ensure that each member of our community has full opportunity to thrive in their environment. We believe that DEI is key to individual growth, educational excellence and the advancement of knowledge.

**2.2 Mission:**

The mission of the Maine Speech Language Hearing Association (MSLHA) is to serve speech-language pathologists, audiologists, students, and other communication specialists by providing resources, information, advocacy, networking, educational programs, and public awareness to deliver the highest quality of care for the individuals they serve.

**2.3 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statements (DEI):**

**Diversity:** We value heterogeneity through the unique contributions of all people who need, provide, promote and advocate for the highest quality of care for the multiple populations that speech, language, and hearing professionals serve. This includes, but is not limited to, people of all races and ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, cultures, national origins, religious commitments, ages, (dis)abilities, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities, and political perspectives.

**Equity:** We commit to equality through equal opportunity for all persons and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, (dis)ability, ethnicity, religion, political perspective, or veteran status. The Association does not accept that a person's status listed in these (and potentially other) categories demote their value, abilities, or rights within the organization. All programs and activities of the Association shall be conducted in furtherance of this policy.

**Inclusion:** We strive to ensure that all of our members' perspectives are respectfully made and heard. We encourage open dialogue on all topics to allow important views and experiences to be thoughtfully recognized and considered. This culture of inclusion will effectively advance the mission of MSLHA.

**ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

**3.1 Membership Classifications**

(A) Membership shall be divided into the five classes of: Active, Associate, Student, Honor, and Life.

### 3.2 Eligibility

- (A) Full members must hold: (1) a Graduate degree with major emphasis in speech-language pathology, audiology, or speech and hearing science. Full members are eligible to vote.
- (B) Associate members must hold: (1) a Bachelor's degree (in the field of speech pathology) and (or) a school certificate as a Speech-Language Clinician; (2) or a Speech Language Pathology Assistant (SLP-A) license. Associate members are eligible to vote.
- (C) Student members shall be: (1) majoring in speech, language and/or hearing at an accredited college or university, or (2) majoring in an allied area at an accredited college or university, and (3) be a current member of NSSLHA.
- (D) Honorary members shall be individuals, who, having performed distinguished services in the speech, language and hearing professions or for the Association, are (1) recommended for Honorary membership by the Membership Development Committee, and (2) approved for such membership by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council and (3) will not be required to pay dues for up to two years.
- (E) Life members are those individuals who have (1) reached the age of 65, (2) been a member of the association for five years or more and (3) will not be required to pay dues.
- (F) The requirements for membership may be waived in special instances by recommendation of the Membership Services Committee and a majority vote of the Executive Council.

### 3.3 Privileges of Membership

- (A) An Active or Honor member will have the right to vote on all Association business; to hold elected office; and to serve as a committee member or as committee chair.
- (B) An Associate or Student member will have the right to participate in all of the Association's regular and special business meetings; and to serve on committees.
- (C) All members in good standing will receive all publications of the Association.
- (D) All members will be entitled to special registration fees, as approved by the Executive Council, for Association sponsored conferences.
- (E) Honorary members will have the right to have free membership for two years.

### 3.4 Termination or Suspension of Membership

- (A) Any member who is alleged to have violated the Code of Ethics of this Association shall be afforded a due process hearing on the allegations with the individual's membership being maintained, terminated, or suspended by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council.
- (B) Any member who fails to pay dues in a timely manner will lose membership privileges.

## ARTICLE IV DUES

### 4.1 Amount of Dues

- (A) The amount of dues shall be determined by the Executive Council with ratification by two-thirds of the Active membership present and voting at a regular or special business meeting.

### 4.2 Date Payable

- (A) Dues shall be payable by September 1 of each year. Dues paid between September 1 and September 30 shall be in the amount established by the Active membership as outlined in part 4.1 of this article.
- (B) Members who have not renewed membership will lose all membership privileges until their membership is renewed by payment of dues.

## ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

### 5.1 Business Meetings

- (A) There shall be at least one Business Meeting of the Association each year unless determined otherwise by the Executive Council.
- (B) Initial notification of the Business Meetings shall be provided to members at least one month before the meeting.
- (C) An agenda shall be provided to members at the annual business meeting. Members are invited to email the secretary with any items they wish to discuss at the annual business meeting.

### 5.2 Special Meetings

- (A) Special meetings may be called by the President with the majority approval of the Executive Council.
- (B) Notification including the time, place and reason for the meeting shall be made clear to the membership by prior written notification.
- (C) Minutes of special meetings shall be reported to the membership no later than the next regular meeting.

## ARTICLE VI ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### 6.1 Designation

- (A) The members of the Executive Council will be:
  1. The elected officers: President, President Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Services Chair, 3 Continuing Education Committee Chairs;
  2. The appointed Committee Chairs: Legislative Action, Public Relations and Communication, and Professional Practice.
  3. All officers and committee chairs must be members in good standing of the Association.

### 6.2 Meetings

- (A) Meetings of the Executive Council shall be called by the President.
- (B) A minimum of 4 Executive Council meetings will be held each year.
- (C) A quorum for Executive Council transactions will consist of a majority of its members.

### 6.3 Powers and Duties

- (A) Implement and carry out the duties of the Association in accordance with the Vision and Mission Statements.
- (B) Approve the creation and termination of such special committees as necessary.
- (C) Prepare an annual report of the EC for presentation to the membership at the annual business meeting.
- (D) Approve the planning of conferences and meetings.
- (E) Approve the annual budget proposed by the Treasurer.
- (F) Review, revise, and execute the Strategic Plan of the Association.

#### **6.4 Liability**

(A) The Maine Speech-Language-Hearing Association accepts full responsibility for the actions of the Executive Council when acting on behalf of the Association.

#### **6.5 Dissolution**

(A) In the event that the Maine Speech Language Hearing Association should disband or cease to exist for any reason, any cash or other assets that may be held by said Association shall be donated, or contributed, in the name of the Association as the Executive Board shall so designate, to a single, or several, academic institutions of higher learning having a speech-language-hearing program. The recipient institution(s) must be located in Maine and be qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **ARTICLE VII ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### **7.1 Elections**

- (A) Election of officers shall take place annually at the Business Meeting of the Association.
- (B) The Membership Services Committee shall provide the voting members with a slate of officers available prior to the date of the Annual Meeting.
- (C) Nominations from the floor will be entertained.
- (D) Voting shall be by secret ballot of the Active Members present with a simple majority of those present and voting required for election.

#### **7.2 Quorum**

(A) A quorum at regular and special meetings of the Association shall consist of those Active Members voting.

#### **7.3 Election Timelines**

##### **(A) Terms**

1. The President-Elect will serve one year in that capacity, followed by a year as President, and then a year as Past President. The President-Elect must have at least one year service on the Executive Council prior to election.
2. The Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Services Chairs will serve two year terms.
3. Continuing Education Committee Members will serve (staggered) three year terms.

##### **(B) Cycles**

1. Elections for the position of President-Elect will happen annually, as will one Co-Chair of the Continuing Education Committee.
2. Election of Treasurer will be held on even numbered years.
3. Elections of Secretary and Membership Services Chair will be held on odd numbered years.

(C) All elected officers shall assume office on the first of February. All officers are eligible for reelection and may succeed themselves.

## ARTICLE VIII DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

### 8.1 Duties of Officers

(A) The President will serve as chief executive officer of the Association, will coordinate the functions of the Executive Council and will automatically become Past President at the end of the term of President. Additionally the President will:

1. Chair all meetings of the Association and the Executive Council.
2. Call emergency meetings of the Association or the Executive Council.
3. Appoint standing and special committees and their chairs, with the exception of elected committee members, with the approval of the Executive Council.
4. Fill all vacancies of the elected offices and committees with the appointments subject to majority approval of the Executive Council.
5. Be an Ex-Officio member of all standing and special committees.
6. Serve the EC in an advisory capacity as Past President for a period of one year following the completion of their term of office.
7. Assist the Treasurer and President Elect with development of the annual budget.

(B) The President-Elect will serve as chief executive officer of the Association in the absence of the President and shall automatically become President at the end of the term of President-Elect. Additionally, the President-Elect will:

1. Assist the President in promoting the interests of the Association.
2. Assume the responsibilities of President in the event of vacancy of the Office of the President and the Immediate Past President is unable to assume the role.
3. Assist with the awards and recognitions of the Association.
4. Chair special committees of the Association at the request of the President.
5. Serve as Strategic Plan Officer to track timelines and report on the progress of the Strategic Plan focus areas.

(C) The Past President will serve as the chief executive officer in the absence of the President; will serve as a liaison for the current President and act as an advisor for all board members.

Additionally, the Past President will:

1. Assist with the election process of the Association.
2. Assist with the awards and recognitions of the Association.
3. Chair special committees of the Association at the request of the President.
4. Assist the Treasurer and President with development of the annual budget.
5. Coordinate the review of past goals and assist with the establishment of future goals for the Association (Strategic Plan).

(D) The Secretary will:

1. Record and archive all executive documents (bylaws, minutes, agendas, etc) of the Association and Executive Council.
2. Prepare correspondence as directed by the Executive Council or the President necessary to the proper performance of official duties.
3. Send relevant documents to all members of the Executive Council in advance of each meeting.

(E) The Treasurer will (in accordance with MSLHA's Financial Policy):

1. Collaborate with EC members on annual budget planning for fiscal year July 1- June 30.
2. Share quarterly reports to the President on the finances of the Association.
3. Oversee all Association revenue and expenditures.
4. Ensure the filing of State and Federal documents required of the Association.
5. Ensure archiving of financial records and official documents of the Association.

(F) The Membership Services Chair will be responsible for the recruitment and retention of membership in addition to the direction of services provided to the general membership. Additionally, the Membership Service Chair will:

1. Oversee membership services (applications, annual dues, eligibility, benefits, reminders, etc).
2. Maintain a list of current and past members and report this data to the Executive Council.

(G) The Continuing Education Committee (including ASHA Liaison) will be responsible for the planning of the annual conference as well as additional educational opportunities. Additionally, the Continuing Education Committee will:

1. Survey annually membership needs for Continuing Education.
2. Coordinate activities and programs associated with the Association's conferences and business meetings.
3. Present a conference proposal at least eight months in advance of the conference to be approved by the Executive Council.

## **ARTICLE IX COMMITTEES**

### **9.1 Standing Committees**

(A) The standing committees of the Association will be: Membership Services, Continuing Education, Legislative Action, Public Relations and Communication, Professional Practices.

(B) Standing committees shall make timely reports to the Executive Council and the membership.

### **9.2 Special Committees**

(A) Special committees may be appointed by the President, with Executive Council approval, to meet a specific Association purpose or need.

(B) Special committees will be discharged by the President, with Executive Council approval, upon completion of their assignment.

(C) Special committees shall make timely reports to the Executive Council and the membership.

### **9.3 Purpose of the Standing Committees**

(A) The Membership Services Committee will: see Article VIII (8.1, F).

(B) The Continuing Education Committee will: see Article VIII (8.1, G).

(C) The Public Relations and Communication Committee will lead the Association in the areas of marketing, public relations and communication. Additionally, the Public Relations and Communication Committee will:

1. Facilitate communications and PR between members, the University program and the general public.

2. Develop, update and maintain the MSLHA organization's website and social media accounts.

(D) The Legislative Action Committee will monitor governmental and third-party activities that may impact on the Association and its membership, as well as advocating for the Association, its members and the clients served. Additionally, the Legislative Action Committee will:

1. Act as liaison between MSLHA and the Legislature and the Maine Board of Speech, Hearing and Audiology.
2. Inform the EC and all MSLHA members of opportunities to testify on bills or to contact their Legislators for support.
3. Work with and report to MSLHA on ASHA governmental affairs actions, including the State Advocates for Medicare Policy (StAMPs), State Advocates for Reimbursement (STARs), and State Education Advocacy Leaders (SEALs).

(E) The Professional Practices Committee will provide leadership in the clinical areas of audiology and speech language pathology in hospitals, clinics, schools, private practice and rehab centers across all ages in communication disorder evaluations and treatment. Additionally, the Professional Practices Committee will:

1. Identify and promote issues for the advancement of best practices for professional topics (supervision, telepractice, diversity, etc.)
2. Respond to specific questions from the membership and the public regarding issues in communication disorders.
3. Carry out actions approved by the Executive Council that affect professional practice in all ages across all settings.

## **ARTICLE X AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS**

### **10.1 Awards of the Association**

(A) The Association may establish annual awards for members, students, or others to acknowledge their contributions or performance in the field of speech, language, or hearing.

1. The Mary K. Brandt Scholarship and Dr. Jon Petit Scholarships will be awarded annually to Maine residents for graduate study in communication disorders according to established policies administered by the Executive Council.
2. The Roberta Hansen Individual with Communication Impairment Achievement Award may be given annually to a Maine resident who has demonstrated outstanding effort to improve their communication ability and/or quality of life, according to established policies administered by the Executive Council.

(B) An award may be established by recommendation of a majority of the Executive Council members.

(C) Awards may be accompanied by a stipend to be determined by the Executive Council.

### **10.2 Recognitions of the Association**

(A) The Association may from time to time recognize individuals or organizations outside the profession for public actions or services on behalf of individuals with speech, language or hearing disabilities.

1. The Distinguished Public Service Recognition may be given to an individual or organization for their contribution to public understanding of individuals with speech, language or hearing disabilities.
2. The Outstanding Contribution Recognition may be given to a person or organization for their contribution to the development of public policy that positively influences persons with speech, language or hearing disabilities.

(B) Recognition may be established by recommendation of a majority of the Executive Council members.

(C) Recognition may be accompanied by an appropriate plaque (without stipend).

### **10.3 Administration of Awards and Recognitions**

(A) The President shall be responsible for the administration of all Award and Recognition procedures.

(B) The three Presidents shall assist in the Award and Recognition processes.

## **ARTICLE XI PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

### **11.1 Rules**

(A) The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, as it may be amended from time to time, shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws or with special rules of order the Association may adopt, or by State or Federal law.

## **ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS**

### **12.1 Amendment Procedures**

(A) Amendments to these Bylaws may be initiated by: the Executive Council; or the membership at large through a written proposal signed by ten Active Members.

(B) Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Executive Council thirty days in advance of the date of the business meeting at which the amendments are to be first considered by the membership.

(C) Proposed amendments must be provided to the membership at least 10 days prior to that meeting.

(D) A vote on an amendment may be either at the business meeting following the meeting at which it is introduced or by mail or private ballot of the entire membership.

(E) The decision to employ a mail ballot procedure requires the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting at the business meeting at which the amendment is first presented.

## **ARTICLE XIII CODE OF ETHICS**

### **13.1 Code of Ethics**

Members of the Maine Speech Language Hearing Association shall abide by the current Code of Ethics of the American Speech Language-Hearing Association.