

# GEORGIA SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION

## CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Georgia Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

### ARTICLE II. MISSION

The Georgia Speech-Language-Hearing Association (GSHA) is a professional association of individuals specializing in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of communication, swallowing, and hearing disorders. The Association advocates for the professional interests of its members and the individuals they serve and provides a forum for the exchange of professional information and ideas.

### ARTICLE III. PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

All members of this Association agree to abide by the principles and Code of Ethics of the Georgia Speech-Language-Hearing Association. GSHA shall conduct its business in a uniform, impartial, and non-discriminatory manner. The Association shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, or disability.

### ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Classes of Membership. The membership of this Association shall consist of eight classes: Regular, Life, Bridge, Associate, Student, Honorary, Corporate, and Advocate. The right to hold office and vote shall be limited to Regular Members, Bridge Members, and Life Members.

- A. Regular Members shall hold a graduate degree with major emphasis in speech-language pathology, audiology, speech, language, or hearing science, or a graduate degree in an alternate field with evidence of active research, interest, or practice in the field of communication, swallowing or hearing disorders.
- B. Life Members shall be at least 65 years of age and shall have held membership in GSHA for at least 15 years. To receive life membership, eligible regular members must submit a request to the Executive Director. Annual dues will be waived for life upon the granting of life membership.
- C. Bridge members shall hold a graduate degree in speech-language pathology, audiology, or communication sciences and disorders and must be in the first full year of employment after graduation. Bridge membership is for one-year only.
- D. Associate Members shall have at least a Bachelor's degree, demonstrate an interest in the goals of GSHA and the field of communication, swallowing, and hearing disorders, and not meet the academic requirements for Regular Membership.
- E. Student Members shall be enrolled in an undergraduate or accredited graduate program in speech-language pathology, audiology, speech and hearing science, education of the hearing-

impaired or an alternate field with evidence of active research, interest, or practice in the field of communication, swallowing, or hearing disorders.

- F. Honorary Membership may be conferred by the Executive Council to a person who has made significant contributions to GSHA. The honorary member shall be informed of the honor and receive an appropriate document of acknowledgement. Honorary members shall be exempt from payment of membership dues.
- G. Corporate Membership shall represent a vendor or other commercial entity with interest in the goals of GSHA and the field of communication, swallowing, and hearing disorders. Individual professionals who meet criteria for other classes of membership shall not be granted corporate membership.
- H. Advocate Membership shall represent parents, caregivers, or adult consumers with an interest in the goals of GSHA and the field of communication, swallowing, and hearing disorders. Individual professionals who meet criteria for other classes of membership shall not be granted advocate membership.

SECTION 2. Application for membership shall be made by completing an application form. Membership will be granted to those eligible upon payment of all fees. The fiscal year of GSHA shall be July 1 through June 30. Membership dues shall be paid at the time of joining the association, and then shall be paid every twelve (12) months.

## **ARTICLE V. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

The Association shall be governed by an Executive Council (EC). The Executive Council shall be composed of 5 officers and 11 Standing Committee chairs. The officers shall include a President, President-Elect, Past-President, Vice President of Association Affairs, and Vice President of Professional Practice. The Standing Committees shall include: Communications, Continuing Education, Convention, Finance, Healthcare and Private Practice, Higher Education, Membership, Public Relations, Student Affairs, Schools, and Strategic Planning. Appendix A provides a visual schematic of the Association's governance structure.

## **ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. The officers shall include a President, President-Elect, Past-President, Vice President of Association Affairs, and Vice President of Professional Practice with the following terms of office:

- A. The President shall hold office for a term of three (3) years; one year as President-Elect, one year as President, and one year as Past-President.
- B. The Vice President of Association Affairs and the Vice President of Professional Practice shall hold office for a term of two (2) years.

SECTION 2. The officers shall be elected by mail or electronic ballot and shall take office July 1 of the year elected. Election ballots must be disseminated no later than April 30. Voting period will end 30 days from the date the ballots are disseminated.

- A. The Vice President of Association Affairs shall be elected in even numbered calendar years and the Vice President of Professional Practice shall be elected in odd numbered calendar years.

- B. The Nominations Board shall consist of the President-Elect, Past-President, and one member-at-large appointed by the President. The President-Elect will chair the Nominations Board.
- C. The Nominations Board shall present to the membership a slate of not more than three (3) candidates for each position. Nominations can be submitted to the Nominations Board by any means including nomination at the annual business meeting of the Association. Candidates must have served on Executive Council for a minimum of one full-year prior to nomination.
- D. The candidate for each office receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.

SECTION 3. The President-Elect shall inform the elected officers of their positions, their roles, their responsibilities, and the schedule of events necessary to conduct the charges of their positions before July 1 of the year elected.

- A. In the event an officer fails to meet the designated expectations and responsibilities of the position, the President shall attempt to resolve the matter with the officer.
- B. In situations that cannot be resolved by discussion between the President and the officer, the officer may be removed from office by a three-fourths majority vote of the Executive Council at a regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting.
- C. The officer shall be offered an opportunity to meet with Executive Council to discuss the situation prior to vote.
- D. If the officer is removed from office by vote of the Executive Council, the President shall appoint an individual to complete the term of service. Such appointments shall require approval of two-thirds majority of the Executive Council.
- E. In the event that the President fails to meet designated expectations and responsibilities of the position, the case shall be handled by the Past-President. If the President is removed from office by vote of Executive Council, the President-Elect shall complete the term of service.

## **ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. The President shall:

- A. promote the best interest of the Association.
- B. oversee all financial issues of the Association.
- C. negotiate an annual contract with the Executive Director, Lobbyist and any other contracted personnel and oversee the activities of these individuals.
- D. oversee all official correspondence of the Association.
- E. preside at all business meetings of the Association.
- F. preside at all meetings of the Officers Board and Executive Council.
- G. develop an Annual Management Plan (AMP) for the Association in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Committee and work jointly with the Strategic Planning Committee throughout the fiscal year.
- H. serve on the Finance Committee.
- I. appoint standing committee chairs and a parliamentarian.
- J. call special meetings of the Association and its committees as needed.

- K. establish ad hoc committees when needed and appoint chairs to such committees.
- L. appoint members to fill vacancies, which may occur in the officers of the Association. Such appointments shall require approval of two-thirds majority of the Executive Council.
- M. appoint representatives to special committees at the state and national level.
- N. define the duties of a committee whenever such duties have not been adequately defined by the Association.
- O. communicate and collaborate with the Officers Board and Executive Council on a regular basis regarding Association business and execution of duties.
- P. serve as a liaison to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Council of State Association Presidents, and other national organizations as needed.

SECTION 2. The President-Elect shall:

- A. be vested with the powers of the President when for any reason the President becomes unable to attend to the presidential duties. If it becomes impossible for the President to complete the term of office, the President-elect shall assume the duties.
- B. attend all business meetings of the Association.
- C. attend all meetings of the Officers Board and Executive Council.
- D. work collaboratively with the Strategic Planning Committee.
- E. chair the Nominations Board for election of officers.
- F. serve as Volunteer Coordinator for the Association by overseeing the invitation of volunteers to serve on committees and by coordinating volunteers for special opportunities and events.
- G. serve as Convention Coordinator for the Association by providing guidance to the Convention Committee and overseeing all activities related to planning and executing the annual convention. In addition, will work closely with the Executive Director to secure future locations for the annual Convention.
- H. serve on the Finance Committee.
- I. work with the Vice President of Association Affairs to oversee the following committees: Membership Committee, Convention Committee, Continuing Education Committee, Communications Committee, and Student Affairs Committee.
- J. perform, at the direction and discretion of the President, other duties not otherwise assigned by the Constitution or Standing Rules.
- K. ascend to the position of President.

SECTION 3. The Past-President shall:

- A. attend all business meetings of the Association.
- B. attend all meetings of the Officers Board and Executive Council
- C. chair the Honors and Awards Board.
- D. serve as the Ethics Liaison for the Association by assisting members in matters of professional standards and by referring individuals wishing to make a complaint about alleged ethical violations to the appropriate agencies for action. As needed, shall review the Association's Code of Ethics and make recommendations for change to Executive Council.
- E. serve on the Finance Committee.
- F. work with the Vice President of Professional Practice to oversee the following committees: Schools Committee, Healthcare and Private Practice Committee, Higher Education Committee, Public Relations Committee.
- G. review the Constitution and recommend any needed modifications to the Strategic Planning Committee.
- H. update Association handbooks for Officers and Executive Council members.

- I. perform, at the direction and discretion of the President, other duties not otherwise assigned by the Constitution or Standing Rules.

SECTION 4. The Vice President of Association Affairs shall:

- A. attend all business meetings of the Association.
- B. attend all meetings of the Officers Board and Executive Council.
- C. take minutes at all Officers Board and Executive Council meetings as well as
- D. write a summary of each Executive Council meeting for publication in Communication Lines.
- E. work with the President-Elect to oversee the following committees: Membership Committee, Convention Committee, Continuing Education Committee, Communications Committee, and Student Affairs Committee.
- F. oversee publication of the membership directory.
- G. oversee the writing, editing, and filing of copies of written Association records and annual reports from officers and committees for storage in the Archives.
- H. perform, at the direction and discretion of the President, other duties not otherwise assigned by the Constitution or Standing Rules.

SECTION 5. The Vice President of Professional Practice shall:

- A. attend all business meetings of the Association.
- B. attend all meetings of the Officers Board and Executive Council.
- C. serve as the Legislative Coordinator for the Association and work closely with Association Lobbyist to oversee all activities related to governmental and legislative issues including monitoring of state legislation relevant to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology in all employment settings.
- D. attend or send an official designee to meetings of the Georgia Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology when needed.
- E. work with the Past-President to oversee the following committees: Schools Committee, Healthcare and Private Practice Committee, Higher Education Committee, Public Relations Committee.
- F. perform, at the direction and discretion of the President, other duties not otherwise assigned by the Constitution or Standing Rules.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES**

Chairs of all Standing Committees shall be appointed by the GSHA President with the exception of the Finance Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee. All chairs shall be voting members of Executive Council with the exception of the chair for the Student Affairs Committee. Chairs shall attend all Executive Council meetings and business meetings of the Association. Specific duties of each committee shall be outlined in the Association's Standing Rules. Unless otherwise designated, committee members shall be appointed by the respective committee chair.

#### **ARTICLE IX. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The Finance Committee shall prepare a yearly budget in which Association expenditures do not exceed revenue. As needed, the Finance Committee shall recommend specific action to the Executive Council to preserve the Association's financial integrity.

#### **ARTICLE X. BUSINESS MEETINGS**

There shall be at least one (1) annual business meeting of the Association held in conjunction with the GSHA Convention.

#### **ARTICLE XI. MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Membership dues for all membership classes shall be recommended to the Association by the Executive Council. Dues may be changed for the following membership year by a two-thirds majority vote of the Regular, Bridge, and Life Members present at a business meeting, or by mail or electronic ballot.

#### **ARTICLE XII. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS**

SECTION 1. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Executive Council by the Strategic Planning Committee.

SECTION 2. Proposed Amendments endorsed by the signatures of ten (10) members shall be submitted to the Executive Council for consideration.

SECTION 3. The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Regular, Bridge, and Life Members voting. Members must receive a thirty (30) day notice of proposed changes before a vote is taken. Voting may be conducted at a business meeting, or by mail or electronic ballot. If the vote is by mail or electronic means, the voting period will end 30 days from the date the ballots are disseminated.

#### **ARTICLE XIII. AUTHORIZATION FOR STANDING RULES**

The Association may adopt Standing Rules for its governance, which do not conflict with any provision herein.

#### **ARTICLE XIV. ADOPTION**

This Constitution shall become effective upon the date of ratification.

#### **ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION**

The Association shall use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified in the Constitution. No part of said funds shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, the members of the Association. On dissolution of the Association, any funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified charitable, educational, scientific, or philanthropic organizations selected by the Executive Council.

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GSHA Constitution Adopted/Ratified 10/05/1961  
Amended (per available records): 1988, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2010 (new substitution), 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019