



PENNSYLVANIA COUNSELING
ASSOCIATION

A Branch of the American Counseling Association

**BY-LAWS OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA COUNSELING ASSOCIATION**

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- ARTICLE I: NAME AND MISSION
- ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP
- ARTICLE III: DIVISION, CHAPTER, AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
- ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNSELING ASSOCIATION
- ARTICLE V: PCA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
- ARTICLE VI: ANNUAL MEETING
- ARTICLE VII: STANDING COMMITTEES
- ARTICLE VIII: FINANCIAL AFFAIRS
- ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS
- ARTICLE X: RULES OF ORDER

ARTICLE I - Name and Mission

Section 1 - Name

The name of this association shall be the “Pennsylvania Counseling Association,” herein referred to as “Association,” “PCA,” or “Pennsylvania Counseling Association.”

Section 2 - Mission

As a State Branch of the American Counseling Association, the Pennsylvania Counseling Association accepts the responsibility to serve and represent Pennsylvania's professional counselors by providing leadership and professional development. The purpose of the Association is to enhance human development throughout the life span and to promote professional counseling.

ARTICLE II - Membership

Section 1 - General Requirements

Membership in the Association shall be of several types (Professional, First-Year Professional, Associate, Student, Student Affiliate Member, Retired, Emeritus, Honorary, and Institutional membership) to accommodate all individuals who are engaged in or have a primary interest in counseling. A member shall be one whose dues are current, and who meets the requirements of any type membership.

Section 2 - Types of Membership

1. **Professional Member:** Individuals residing in Pennsylvania who hold a Master's degree or higher in Professional Counseling or a closely related profession--psychology, social work, medicine (psychiatry), nursing (psychiatric nursing) from a regionally accredited college or university. To be a professional member, one must also be employed as a professional counselor (or a practitioner of a closely related profession) or supervisor of counselors. If a professional member is between positions but job searching, they may maintain professional membership as long as they are seeking employment. Professional members shall be eligible to vote and hold office.
2. **Associate Member:** Individuals who hold a Master's degree or higher in Professional Counseling or a closely related profession--psychology, social work, medicine (psychiatry), nursing (psychiatric nursing) from a regionally accredited college or university. To be an associate member, one does not have to be employed as a professional counselor (or a practitioner of a closely related profession) or supervisor of counselors. In addition, associate members need not reside in Pennsylvania or be employed in the state of Pennsylvania. An Associate member is not eligible to hold office in the Association, but is eligible to vote on all matters except as restricted by the bylaws.
3. **Institutional Member:** Institutional members shall be comprised of institutions of higher education or businesses that employ counselors or engage in counseling-related activities. Each institutional member is entitled to one Institutional Representative and two Affiliate Representatives. Institutional Representatives will be designated individuals that coordinate and maintain the membership, determine Affiliate Representatives, and attend to any related matters.
4. **First-Year Professional:** Individuals who previously met the criteria for student member and have graduated. Individuals must meet all criteria for professional membership, the only difference is an eligibility for a **one year** reduction in dues to facilitate their transition to professional status. First-year professional members shall be eligible to vote and hold office.
5. **Student Member:** Individuals who are attending an institution of higher education in the State of Pennsylvania as a graduate student preparing for professional counseling or a closely related profession--psychology, social work, medicine (psychiatry), nursing (psychiatric nursing); or individuals who live in Pennsylvania and are attending an out-of-state or on-line institution of higher education graduate program preparing for professional counseling or a closely related profession. Student members have the same rights as Professional members. Student membership status shall not be extended beyond three years, requires at least 1/2 time enrollment, and subject to verification of an academic advisor if audited.
6. **Student Affiliate Member:** Individuals who are attending an institution of higher education in the state of Pennsylvania as undergraduate students who have the intention of later applying to a graduate program in professional counseling or a closely related profession--psychology, social work, medicine (psychiatry), nursing (psychiatric nursing); or individuals who live in Pennsylvania and are attending an out of state or on-line institution of higher education for the same purpose. Student affiliate members may not

vote, nor may they hold office in the organization. Student affiliate membership status shall not be extended beyond three years, requires at least ½ time enrollment, and subject to verification of an academic advisor if audited.

7. **Retired Member:** Individuals who have held professional membership for the two years immediately preceding retirement. A retired member shall maintain all the privileges of their prior membership (Professional or Associate).
8. **Emeritus Member:** Individuals who shall be a Professional or Associate Member, who having retired from professional employment, may request Emeritus status. Emeritus status is granted by a vote of the PCA Executive Council and shall be based upon the longevity of membership and service in both this Association and the American Counseling Association. Emeritus members are exempt from payment of dues, but retain all rights and privileges of either Professional or Associate members.
9. **Honorary Member:** Individuals who are so designated by action of the PCA Executive Council and shall be based on the candidate's services, support, etc., rendered to the Association. Honorary membership shall be for life, exempt from dues and not carry any rights and privileges as assigned to Professional and Associate members.

Members of all types must agree to abide by the American Counseling Association's *ACA Code of Ethics*.

Section 3 - Sanction of Members

A member may be sanctioned according to the guidelines set forth by the American Counseling Association, as dictated by its By-laws and *ACA Code of Ethics*.

ARTICLE III - Division, Chapter, and Special Interest Group

Section 1 - Branch Division

A new Branch Division shall consist of persons who organize on the basis of a counseling specialty area in accordance with the Bylaws and policies of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association and the American Counseling Association. Branch Divisions will be encouraged to become chartered by the National Division of ACA that it represents. All of the Branch Division officers and all of the Branch Division members must be members of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association. The Branch Division's official delegate to the Pennsylvania Counseling Association's Executive Council will vote on behalf of the Branch Division.

Section 2 - Branch Chapter

A Branch Chapter shall consist of persons who organize on the basis of a local geographical unit within the Branch in accordance with the By-laws and policies of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association and the American Counseling Association. All of the Branch Chapter officers and all of the Branch Chapter members must be members of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association. The Branch Chapter's official delegate to the Pennsylvania Counseling Association's Executive Council will vote on behalf of the Branch Chapter.

Section 3 - Branch Special Interest Group

A Branch Special Interest Group shall consist of persons who organize on either a Branch- wide or local level in accordance with the By-laws and policies of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association to promote a professional interest not otherwise provided for within an existing Branch Division. All of the Branch Special Interest Group's officers and all of the Branch Special Interest Group's members must be members of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association. The Branch Special Interest Group's official delegate to the Pennsylvania Counseling Association's Executive Council will vote on behalf of the Branch Special Interest Group.

Section 4 - Application Process

Each new Division, Chapter, or Special Interest Group shall make application for charter in the following process:

1. Each new Division, Chapter, or Special Interest Group shall consist of at least 15 members.
2. Each shall have its mission in accordance with that of the Association.
3. Each shall be organized in accordance with the By-laws of the Association.
4. Each shall, upon completion of the above, submit a request, in writing, to the PCA Executive Council of the Association for its approval. Said approval or denial will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the PCA Executive Council following submission.

Section 5 - Amendments to Basic Documents

Amendments to any Division, Chapter, or Special Interest Group's By-laws or other basic documents shall be reported in writing to the President of the Association for approval by the PCA Executive Council, at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of their adoption and cannot take effect until approved by the PCA Executive Council.

Section 6 - Reports

Each Division, Chapter, and Special Interest Group shall submit to the President of the Association the names of its directors and officers promptly following their election or appointment and shall certify that all said individuals are current members of the Association and the American Counseling Association.

ARTICLE IV - Officers of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association

Section 1 - Officers and Terms of Office

The officers of the Association shall be President, President-Elect, Past-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall be members of the American Counseling Association and Professional members of the Association.

1. The President, President-Elect, and Past-President shall serve a one (1) -year term of office.
2. The President-Elect shall be an elected officer. The President-Elect shall succeed the President in office automatically at the completion of the "Old Business" section of the agenda for the June meeting of the PCA Executive Council, or in the event of the resignation, death, or termination of the President.

3. Upon completion of the term of office, the President shall serve as Past-President for 1 year.
4. When the office of President-Elect is vacated, either through succession, resignation, death, or termination, the PCA Executive Council of the Association shall elect, from among its members, a President-Elect *Pro Tempore* to serve out the term of office. The invoking of this subsection voids subsection "3" of this Article and the Presidency reverts to nomination and election by the membership.
5. A vacancy in the office of Past-President, Secretary, or Treasurer during a term of office shall be filled through appointment by the President and with the approval of the PCA Executive Council.
6. The Secretary shall be an elected officer, shall serve for 3 years, and may hold office for 2 consecutive terms.
7. The Treasurer shall be an elected officer, shall serve for 3 years, and may hold office for 2 consecutive terms.

Section 2 - Duties of Officers

1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the PCA Executive Council; consider all motions regularly made; and call special meetings. The President shall appoint all committee chairpersons, including standing committee chairpersons and all committee members, subject to confirmation by the PCA Executive Council. The President shall be an *ex officio* member without vote on all Association Committees and a delegate to the North Atlantic Counseling Association Chapter of the American Counseling Association. The President shall perform the duties customary to that office and such additional duties as directed by the PCA Executive Council.
2. The President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President as determined by the PCA Executive Council. The President-Elect shall be a delegate to the North Atlantic Counseling Association Chapter of the American Counseling Association; assist the Treasurer in the selection of an accountant for the annual audit; and serve as liaison to all Divisions, Chapters, and Special Interest Groups.
3. The Past-President shall serve as delegate to the North Atlantic Counseling Association Chapter of the American Counseling Association.
4. The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the PCA Executive Council. Copies of the official proceedings of the Association and the PCA Executive Council shall be mailed to all members of the PCA Executive Council and to the Secretaries of the Divisions and Chapters. The Secretary shall perform other duties as are customary to this office. The Secretary shall perform the duties customary to the office and such additional duties as may be directed by the PCA Executive Council.
5. The Treasurer shall oversee the receipt and disbursement of monies of the Association in accordance with the fiscal guidelines approved by the PCA Executive Council and the current budget of the Association; shall submit a financial statement of the Association at each PCA Executive Council meeting; and shall submit a complete fiscal report to the PCA Executive Council as soon as possible after close of the fiscal year and at any other time when requested to do so by the President of PCA Executive Council. The Treasurer shall submit all association financial records to an accountant selected by the Treasurer and the President-Elect for audit. The Treasurer shall perform the duties customary to the office and such additional duties as may be directed by the PCA Executive Council.

Section 3 - Sanctions and Removal from Office

An elected officer or member of the PCA Executive Council may be sanctioned or removed from office in accordance with procedures as prescribed by official policy of the Association.

Section 4 - Nomination and Election of Officers

1. The PCA Nominations & Elections Committee shall conduct the election of officers by ballot, which shall be mailed to the individual members of the Association.
2. Each Division, Chapter, and Special Interest Group president shall serve on the PCA Nominations & Elections Committee and shall have the right to submit to the PCA Nominations & Elections Committee the name of (and no more than) two (2) candidates to be placed in nomination for the office of President-Elect.
3. Nominations for the office of President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be submitted to the PCA Nominations & Elections Committee in writing.
4. The PCA Nominations & Elections Committee shall prepare a list of at least two (2), but no more than three (3), candidates for each elective office.
5. Should the list of nominees for office exceed three (3) for each elective office, the PCA Nominations & Elections Committee shall prepare and circulate a preliminary ballot to select the final candidates. This ballot shall be secret and mailed, if necessary, to all members of the Committee via certified mail with directions to return ballots in like fashion.
6. The PCA Nominations & Elections Committee shall, upon preparation of a slate of candidates, conduct the elections by secret ballot. The nominated slate shall be circulated among the members by mail at least thirty (30) days prior to elections.
7. Tabulation and certification of the election results shall be conducted by the PCA Nominations & Elections Committee. Results of the election shall be presented to the PCA Executive Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting following the election and shall be published in the PCA newsletter. Candidates shall be informed of the results of the election immediately upon completion and certification of the election via certified mail. Ballots shall be retained by an archives committee for one (1) calendar year from the date of election.
8. The PCA Nominations & Elections Committee shall submit to the PCA Executive Council for approval the proposed time schedule for carrying out the annual elections.

ARTICLE V - PCA Executive Council

Section 1 - Purpose

The PCA Executive Council shall be the legislative body of the Association and the agency through which the administrative functions of the Association shall be implemented.

Section 2 - Function

1. To grant or deny, for cause, petitions for the formation of Divisions, Chapters, or Special Interest Groups.
2. To act on reports and recommendations from Divisions, Chapters, or Special Interest Groups, and Committees.
3. To initiate action affecting the Association's programs, activities, and policies.
4. To amend the By-laws.

5. To encourage the development of projects that promote the activities of the profession.
6. To exercise such other functions as may be necessary or desirable in the best interest of the Association, and not in conflict with the By-laws.
7. To act as a liaison group among Divisions, Chapters, and Special Interest Groups of the Association.
8. To hire staff and/or contract for services to further the mission of the Association.

Section 3 - Membership

1. The PCA Executive Council shall be composed of the Officers of the Association and one (1) representative from each chartered Division, Chapter, and Special Interest Group.
2. Any vacancy from among the PCA Executive Council Representatives shall be filled by the parent organization whose representative vacated the PCA Executive Council post.
3. Each PCA Executive Council member must be a Professional or Student member of the Association and may represent only one (1) Division, Chapter, or Special Interest Group.

Section 4 - Quorum

One-third (1/3) of the total voting membership of the PCA Executive Council shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5 - Vote

Each member of the PCA Executive Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote, with the exception of the President, who may vote only in the event of a tie.

Section 6 - Meetings

1. The PCA Executive Council shall meet four (4) times annually. One of the scheduled meetings shall be held at the annual conference of the Association.
2. Additional special meetings of the PCA Executive Council may be called by the President or upon written petition signed by one-third (1/3) of the PCA Executive Council Members.

ARTICLE VI - Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Association shall be held at the annual conference of said Association.

ARTICLE VII - Standing Committees

Section 1 - Standing Committees

1. The Standing Committees of the Association are:
 - a. Conference
 - b. Ethics/By-laws
 - c. Finance/Budget
 - d. Government Relations
 - e. Membership
 - f. Nominations & Elections

- g. Professional Development
- h. Archives

2. Special Committees, appointed by the President as authorized in Article IV, Section 2-1, shall serve for not more than one (1) year or until such time as the reason for their establishment has been met.

Section 2 - Committee Reports

Each Committee shall submit a written report of its activities and status to the PCA Executive Council at each meeting as requested by the President.

ARTICLE VIII - Financial Affairs

Section 1 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association shall be established as July 1 to June 30.

Section 2 - Method of Finances

The method of financing the Association shall be established by the PCA Executive Council in keeping with generally accepted financial practices and in accordance with the adoption of the annual budget.

Section 3 - Property of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association

In the event of dissolution, none of the property of the Association shall be transferred to any of the members. All property shall be transferred to such organizations as the PCA Executive Council shall determine to have purposes and activities most nearly consonant with those of the Association, provided that such organizations shall be exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code or corresponding provisions of Internal Revenue Service laws.

Section 4 - Annual Budget

The President-Elect shall be responsible for the preparation of the operating budget for his/her term as President of the Association. Said budget shall be presented to the PCA Executive Council for adoption upon assuming the Presidency.

Section 5 - Audit

The Treasurer of the Association shall have the responsibility of submitting the financial documents to an independent accountant for annual audit. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer and President-Elect to select an accountant to review all financial records and submit a complete audit report as soon as possible following the close of the fiscal year.

ARTICLE IX - Amendments and Revisions

Section 1 - Proposals

1. Proposed amendments or revisions may be presented to the PCA Executive Council by the PCA Ethics/By-laws Committee or a Division, Chapter, or Special Interest Group, or an individual member, provided that in the case of an individual member, the proposed amendment or revision shall be presented over the signatures of at least twenty (20) members in good standing. All such proposed amendments or revisions

must be submitted in writing to the President or to the PCA Ethics/By-laws Committee, if said committee is currently active, at least sixty (60) days prior to the next meeting of the PCA Executive Council. The President or Committee shall present all submitted proposed amendments or revisions to the PCA Executive Council, in writing, with explanation, at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of the PCA Executive Council at which adoption is expected.

2. Two-thirds (2/3) of PCA Executive Council members present at the PCA Executive Council meeting shall be required for the acceptance of the amendment(s) or revision(s).

ARTICLE X - Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, by Harper Perseus Collins, current edition (by William J. Evans and Sara Corbin Robert), as from time to time revised, shall govern the proceedings of all bodies of the Association, except where otherwise specified by the By-laws.

- * Approved by PCA Spring 2007
- Approved by ACA Nov 2009
- Revised by PCA May 2017
- Revised by PCA February 2019