SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS

~~2018~~

2026

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Record of Changes Page

Change #	Description	Effected Parts	Change entered by	Date changed
1	General Revision		Richard McGuire	1/31/2018
2	Steering Committee edits	Section 3.02.f.i.ii	Richard McGuire	4/12/2022
3	Steering Committee Edits	Multiple Edits	Richard McGuire	10/02/2024
4	**Steering Committee Edits**	**Multiple sections**	**Richard McGuire**	**3/2/2026**
5	**Bylaws Complete Revision**	**Multiple Sections**	**Steering Committee**	**04/08/2026**
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Article I. NAME AND MISSION STATEMENT

Section 1.01 Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association

(a) The Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association (SLMA), a volunteer organization comprised of public safety, first responders, private sector, support organizations and vendors, is organized for the purpose of lending emergency aid and support to member public safety agencies, industries and organizations when an event has or may exceed their capacity or ability to mitigate.

Article II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 2.01 General Membership Requirements:

(a) General members must have sufficient personnel and equipment to manage emergency events, of the magnitude and type, which are likely to occur most often in their area of responsibility. General members must have the capability to render assistance (equipment and operators) if called upon by other members when and if feasible at the time of the event.

Section 2.02 Membership Rights and Responsibilities:

(a) It is a basic premise of the organization that it can fulfill its purpose only if the following minimum and basis conditions of section are met by membership:

Section 2.03 General Membership Requirements and Responsibilities

(a) Each member agrees to maintain resources in the form of emergency personnel trained at levels in compliance with all appropriate Federal and State codes and standards, trained on Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association incident command, and operating procedures. Members agree to maintain equipment sufficient to manage emergencies of the type and magnitude, which may occur in the facility or jurisdiction.

(b) Minimum standards for specific types of entities and/or facilities are specified in Appendix on Application and Inspection forms.

Proposed Amendments

(c) Each member must maintain designated equipment to assist emergency mitigation efforts when requested by another Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association member.

(d) A prospective member must be capable of contributing resources in the form of equipment and personnel or other contribution deemed beneficial to the intent or function to the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association to sustain the goals of mutual aid.

(e) The Steering Committee shall decide as to a prospective member having sufficient equipment prior to warrant presentation to the general membership for inclusion in Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association. These membership criteria shall be effective upon the date of the application.

(f) When a prospective member cannot provide the required level of equipment or personnel but can provide another vital service to the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association organization the Steering Committee may propose to the President that the nature and benefit of the prospective service is sufficient to warrant a waiver the equipment or personnel requirements. The President shall determine if there is sufficient necessity for the prospective member's service to warrant a recommendation of waiver to the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association general membership who shall make the final determination on membership.

(g) Each member shall design and maintain a written emergency action plan that complies with current Federal and State rules and regulations. This emergency plan shall include procedures for activating personnel and equipment within their jurisdictions. **These plans shall reside in the respective Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness for which the facility is located.**

(h) Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association members shall follow Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association procedures for requesting assistance from Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association members. Included in, or as a supplement to, their emergency plan members agree to provide procedures and instructions for Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association members responding to their calls for

Proposed Amendments

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assistance. **(ESF2 Section of the Calcasieu Parish All Hazards Plan/)**

(i) Members shall appoint a representative and one alternate representative, one of which shall attend all general meetings of the organization~~. Failure to attend four successive general meetings shall be grounds for the member being placed on probationary status.~~ Members agree to participate in the drills, **where appropriate**, of the organization to the minimum extent of having one of their representatives present as an observer.

(j) Private Sector Members agree to provide a representative at all key roadblocks, traffic control points during an emergency to assist the law enforcement. These officials should have documents identifying them as a designated company representative.

(k) Members agree to cooperate with authorized inspections by the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Inspection Committee.

(l) Members agree to replace material used and to repair or replace equipment lost or damaged in the control of an emergency situation within its facilities in cash or in kind, at current prices, provided the equipment and/or material was furnished by Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association members or by other Industrial Mutual Aid Organizations in response to a properly placed request. Damage to and loss of equipment refers to damage and loss as a direct result of the emergency condition rather than from the wear and tear expected in the normal operation of emergency equipment.

(m) Members agree to establish radio communication on the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Network and follow Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association communications procedures. Members agree during STANDBY or ASSISTANCE ALERTS to use Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association procedures and are encouraged to use Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association procedures for control of non-Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association incidents.

(n) Responding members shall equip their responding asset with a communication device capable of receiving and transmitting on the **International Mutual Aid System. (8CALL90, 8TAC91-94)**

Proposed Amendments

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(o) Members agree to pay annual membership dues. The number of dues to be established by a majority vote of members present at a general meeting. ~~Dues shall be due at the February meeting.~~ **Dues shall be paid by April 1st of each year.** Any member whose dues are not current as of the following **May** 1st shall be placed on probationary status for a period not to exceed four months. If after the four months' probation the dues have not been paid the member shall be dismissed. Invoices for dues will be distributed within the minutes of the December general meeting. Federal and State agencies are considered standing agencies and therefore exempt.

(p) Non-exempt members shall host a monthly meeting on a rotating schedule. The hosting member shall make a presentation on their individual agency capabilities. This presentation at a minimum shall include where appropriate, but are not limited to the following:

- Description of Facility
- Hazards at the facility
- Entry requirements
- Staging Areas
- Response capability both onsite and offsite
- Communications Protocol (Contact list for facility, and how to establish contact)

If for any reason a member cannot host the business meeting on their assigned date, notification must be given to the Secretary as soon as possible.

(q) Members meeting the requirements listed in (a) through (p) have the right to vote, chair a committee, and hold office.

(r) All Conditions for Membership as presented herein will be immediately required for all prospective members. Existing members will be inspected for compliance with membership requirements. **If upon inspection, or at any other point in time, a Member is found to be in non-compliance with any of the requirements stated in (a) through (p) of this section that member shall be placed on probationary status by a consensus vote of the Sterring Committee. The Member shall receive notification of this Probationary Status with an official letter from the President stating why they are**

Proposed Amendments

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being placed on Probation. Once a member has been placed in a Probationary Status, they are required to come into compliance within 120 days by providing proof of compliance to the inspection committee. If the Member has not provided proof of compliance within the specified time period, they will be removed from the organization.

Section 2.04 Associate Membership Requirements and Restrictions

(a) An associate member is a vendor, supplier or other engaged in emergency response activities who do not meet the requirements of General Membership.

(i.) Each associate member agrees to support the goals and efforts of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association. Associate members may serve on committees but not chair a committee.

(ii.) Associate members may not host Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association meetings unless by agreement with the scheduled host.

(iii.) Associate members may present a presentation for the scheduled host only if it does not promote their primary business. **Cannot solicit for business during the meeting (meeting is considered the business meeting and lunch if provided) unless first approached by a member of the Association.**

(iv.) Associate members must pay annual dues as adopted by the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association

(v.) Associate members cannot vote or hold office but can serve on committees.

Section 2.05 Honorary Membership

(a) Is an individual voted for and accepted by the general membership, who has demonstrated duties or actions beyond their daily responsibilities as related to emergency activities.

Proposed Amendments

This member does not pay dues and does not have the right to hold office, serve on a committee or vote.

Section 2.06 Life Membership

(a) A member or past member of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association who has demonstrated an exemplary commitment and dedication to this origination. The person shall hold all privileges of a general member including the right to hold office service on a committee and vote but is exempt from paying dues.

Section 2.07 Probationary Status

(a) Members may be placed on probationary status by action of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Steering Committee for failure to comply with the "conditions of membership". Placing a member on probationary status shall include the following steps:

(b) The Secretary notifies the Steering committee that a member has not paid the annual **dues or is not in compliance with the provisions in Section 2.03.**

(c) Should the Steering Committee place a member on probationary status, said member loses all membership privileges and responsibilities.

(d) The President will send written notice outlining the reasons for the probationary status to the Member's Senior Manager.

(e) If dues are paid prior to the end of the four-month probation period, the member will be returned to full membership status.

(f) If the dues are not paid or **is still not in compliance with Section 2.03** before, the end of the four-month probationary period the president will recommend to the full membership the member be dismissed from the organization. The notice of a recommendation for dismissal will be made to the membership via the agenda for the next regular meeting.

Section 2.08 Voting Procedures

(a) Voting at Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association meetings is restricted to those members with voting rights. Only the member's primary representative or, in the absence of the primary, the alternate may vote. Votes shall be cast by showing a voting card by the representative or alternate and a simple

Proposed Amendments

majority of the voting members present shall decide an issue. Secret ballots may be used at the discretion of the officers, or when requested from the floor and after approved by a majority vote. When secret ballot voting is conducted, the Secretary shall distribute a ballot to each representative and shall tally the vote. At the discretion of the President, may assign other members to distribute and tally.

(b) Matters of organization, procedures, or policy must appear on the meeting agenda to be voted on at that meeting.

(c) Amendments, deletions, or additions to the agenda may be proposed by a member or officer but must be approved by a majority vote of the membership.

Section 2.09 Policies and Procedures

(a) The Steering Committee and Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Board of Directors shall propagate and maintain such policies and procedures as are consistent with the intent and purpose of and to assist members to achieve the goals of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association.

Section 2.10 Inspections

(a) Members may be inspected annually by the SMLA Inspection Committee. The members to be inspected will be announced at a general membership meeting prior to inspection.

Article III. Officers and Decision-making

Section 3.01 Governing Structure:

(a) The Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association shall be directed by officers elected by a majority vote of the general membership at a regular scheduled meeting, serving such terms as described herein. The officers, also known as the Board of Directors or Executive Board, shall be assisted and advised by the Steering Committee who shall be comprised of members as listed herein.

Section 3.02 Officers' Titles and Duties:

(a) President

Proposed Amendments

(i.) The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Association. The President shall call and preside at meetings. The President shall see that all orders and resolutions are carried into effect. The President shall call such meetings as required or requested. The President has the authority to act on behalf of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association between monthly and General Membership meetings. **The President shall have the authority to expend up to $1,000 dollars at his discretion. All expenditures will be brought before the Association at the next regularly scheduled meeting.** All significant actions taken between monthly and General Membership meetings shall be reported at the next scheduled meeting. The President shall appoint committee chairpersons as needed and shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

(b) First Vice-President

(i.) The 1st Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President.

(c) Second Vice-President

(i.) The 2nd Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President or 1st Vice-President.

(d) Treasurer

(i.) The Treasurer shall keep accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Association and shall deposit all money in the name of and to the credit of the Association in such banks or banks as designated by the Association. All checks drawn on the treasury shall be signed by any two persons among the **First Vice-President** ~~President,~~ Secretary and Treasurer.

~~(ii.) The Treasurer shall be bonded at the expense of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association.~~

(e) Secretary

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Proposed Amendments

(i.) The Secretary shall keep a roll of the membership and an accurate record and minutes of all proceedings of the Association and shall attest all properly authorized contracts and agreements executed by the President. If unable to attend a general membership meeting, the Secretary shall see that all books, papers, and materials are delivered in a timely manner to the meeting place. The secretary shall conduct the general correspondence of the Association. The Secretary shall upon leaving office transfer all the organization's books, papers, etc. in his keeping to his successor.

~~(ii.) The Secretary shall be bonded at the expense of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association.~~

(f) Terms of office shall run two years in length. The holder may be elected to multiple terms.

(i.) Steering Committee

(ii.)A Steering Committee shall provide recommendations to the membership concerning ways to maintain, strengthen and otherwise improve the capabilities of the SLMA organization. The ~~immediate past~~ President of SLMA shall chair the Steering Committee. Meetings of the Steering Committee shall be held as needed. All Steering Committee members will be appointed by the Executive Board except for elected positions, Louisiana State Police and the Coast Guard. The Steering Committee shall be composed of the following:

Proposed Amendments

~~1) Immediate Past President (Chair)~~

2) President (Chair)

3) 1st Vice-President

4) 2nd Vice-President

5) Secretary

6) Treasurer

7) Fire Agency

8) Law Enforcement

9) Industrial Facility

~~10) Public Safety Agency~~

10) EMS Representative

11) OHSEP

12) E-911

13) Lake Charles Fire Department Hazmat

14) Training Committee Chairperson

15) Louisiana State Police

16) Calcasieu Parish Sheriff Department

17) United States Coast Guard

18) Inspections Committee Chair

~~19) Two additional members appointed but approved by the Steering Committee from the general membership.~~

20) **Air Port Fire/Safety**

~~19) Two additional members appointed but approved by the Steering Committee from the general membership.~~

20)

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Proposed Amendments

Section 3.03 Procedures for filling and vacating offices:

(a) Vacant offices will be filled at the regular scheduled elections except for a vacancy in the Presidency. If the Presidency becomes temporarily vacant, the 1st Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President until the President can return to duty. If the President resigns the position and there is no call by the general membership for a new election, the 1st Vice-President shall assume those duties for the remainder of the term.

(b) Officer resignations shall be submitted in writing to the President who will notify the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Board of Directors and appoint a Nominating Committee to identify candidates for the position.

(c) Terminations will be made by the President with the concurrence of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Board of Directors. The President shall provide the terminated office holder a written document detailing cause for dismissal. The President will follow Section 3.03 (b) to fill the position.

(d) The Nominating Committee will identify candidates who meet the requirements for the position and report to the Board of Directors and the Steering Committee. The President will call for an election.

Section 3.04 Decisions:

(a) Process

(iii.) Proposals and our request will be made to the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Steering Committee by any of its members.

(iv.) The Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Steering Committee shall review proposals and requests during its next scheduled meeting. Those proposals and our requests approved by a majority vote of the committee members present will be presented at the next General Membership meeting for approval.

(b) Vote and Quorum

Proposed Amendments

(v.) Voting rights are restricted to a single vote cast by the Member's authorized representative or, in the primary representative's absence, by the alternate representative.

(vi.) Quorum shall constitute a majority of the voting membership present at a meeting.

Article IV. General, Special and Other Meetings

Section 4.01 Meetings shall utilize Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline.

Section 4.02 Regular meetings

(a) Regular meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m.

Section 4.03 Special meetings

(a) A President may call a Special Meeting with a one-week notice to the membership.

Section 4.04 Other Meetings

(a) At his discretion, the President may call such other meetings necessary to conduct the business of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association.

Section 4.05 Steering Committee Meetings

(a) Steering Committee meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the President and agreed upon by the steering committee one month prior to meeting.

Article V. Specialist Group or Committees

Section 5.01 Specialist Groups or Committees, excluding the Steering Committee, will be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the President.

Section 5.02 Names, Composition, Roles, and Responsibilities

(a) Bylaws:

Proposed Amendments

(i.) This committee will periodically review the SMLA Mutual Aid Association Constitution and Bylaws and shall recommend changes or deletions. Bylaw changes must be approved by the steering committee. Any changes shall follow guidelines set forth in Article IX Bylaws Changes.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years.** The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(b) COMMUNICATIONS:

(i.) This committee will develop and update a membership wide communication plan for communication during an event. This committee will monitor and maintain the radio roll call logs for the daily roll call.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years.** The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(c) DRILL:

(i.) This committee will have the responsibility of planning and coordinating ~~quarterly~~ exercises at one of the members' facilities. All exercises will meet or exceed the federal standards for exercises.

(ii.) The 1st Vice-President will serve as chairperson and will have four (4) assistants, as appointed by the president.

(d) ESF 8 Healthcare:

Proposed Amendments

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(i.) This committee is to keep the membership current in regard to medical protocol. They will be responsible for communicating changes and training issues involving the membership's medical personnel.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years.** The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(e) HAZMAT:

(i.) This committee is to develop and maintain a hazmat response group capable of giving guidance to the Incident Commander at any Mutual Aid hazmat incident. They will be responsible for developing hazmat training for the hazmat response group. The committee will address any other hazmat issues, as the President may deem necessary.

(ii.) The President will appoint the Chairman and four (4) assistants for a **two-year** term.

(f) INSPECTION:

(i.) The committee will be responsible for any inspection of member facilities and make inspections on new members as directed by the steering committee. All inspections will be listed in the inspection procedures per Section 2.10 Inspection. All new members shall be inspected prior to the acceptance of membership.

(ii.) The chairperson shall be appointed by the Steering committee for **a term of** two **years** and will have four (4) assistants, as appointed by the President.

(g) MARINE USCG:

(i.) This committee is to develop and maintain a plan for the safe response to any marine incident that takes place in the Mutual Aid coverage area.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years**. The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(h) NOMINATING:

Proposed Amendments

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(i.) The Nominating Committee will interview candidates for the positions, verify their participation and membership status. A report by the chairperson will open the nomination procedure for officers.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years**. The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(i) Search and Rescue:

(i.) This committee is to maintain the training requirements for the Search and Rescue (SAR) group within the membership. They will coordinate training and SAR drills appropriate to maintain competency.

(ii.) The chair and committee will be appointed by the president and will serve a term of **two years**. The chair and the committee members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(j) TRAINING:

(i.) This committee is to develop and provide training for all members of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association, in keeping with the mission of the organization. The training committee will develop goals for the committee each year and report these goals to the association at the February meeting. A monthly report will be given at the regular meeting of the association.

(ii.) The committee chair and its members will be appointed by the president and will hold a term of **two years.** The chair and members may be re-appointed by the incoming president.

(k) Budget & Finance Committee:

Proposed Amendments

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(i.) The committee will be responsible for reviewing, evaluating, and approving the proposed budget for each committee. The committee will also review and approve the overall budget before it is presented to the steering committee.

(ii.) The treasurer will serve as chairperson and have the 1st Vice-President and two members of the steering committee.

(iii.) An annual audit of the financial statements will also be performed at the end of each fiscal year.

Section 5.03 Meetings

(a) Meeting shall be held at the discretion of the chairperson, and all call meetings shall have a minimum of two weeks' advanced notice for all the members of that committee.

Section 5.04 Elections, Appointments and Terms

(a) Committees are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the President and serve a term of **two years**. Committees and chairs may be reappointed annually.

Article VI. Operations/Procedures

Section 6.01 Assistance may be rendered after a request is made by an authorized official of the member organization via the proscribed communication method adopted by SMLA.

Article VII. Responsibilities of Members

Section 7.01 To function efficiently the following responsibilities are designated.

(a) The requested member will be responsible for the direction of emergency response and will control and manage media inquiries or releases connected to any emergency within their facility.

Article VIII. Liability

Section 8.01 Individual Members shall be responsible for the liability of their employees and equipment in the same manner as employer-employee relations on the job.

Article IX. Bylaw Changes

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Proposed Amendments

Section 9.01 Changes

(a) Any member may make a request to amend the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Bylaws.

(b) All requests must be made in writing and submitted to the Bylaws Committee for review. The Bylaws Committee shall meet and review the request for amendment of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Bylaws. The request shall be written in accordance with the format of the present bylaws. The Bylaws Committee shall review, within 60 days, the request and make any formatting changes with the approval of the presenter to assure it meets the scope of their request. A report shall be submitted to the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Steering Committee for their review.

(c) The Steering Committee shall review and report their findings on the request at the next scheduled Steering Committee. The amendment and reports from the Bylaws and Steering Committee shall be published for a minimum of 30 days. After 30 days, the amendment shall be presented and voted on at the next General Membership meeting.

(d) A positive vote of the members present at the General Membership meeting will amend the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association Bylaws and will take effect immediately.

Article X. DISSOLUTION

Section 10.01 The Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association may be dissolved only with authorization by its Board of Directors given at a special meeting called for that purpose and with subsequent approval by a two-third (2/3) vote of the Voting Members. Upon dissolution or other termination of Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association, all remaining assets of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association, after payment its debts, obligations, and necessary final expenses, or the making of provisions, therefore, shall be distributed equally among each of active members of the current membership roster at the time of the dissolution.

Proposed Amendments

These Bylaws were approved at a meeting of the Executive Board and the Steering Committee December 6, 2012, and adopted by the general membership of the SWLAMA in January.

These Bylaws were voted and approved by the general membership at the monthly meeting of the Southwest Louisiana Mutual Aid Association on January 9, 2013, by unanimous vote of a quorum of the members present at that meeting.

Proposed Amendments

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