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PAMHCA

PENNSYLVANIA MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS

2006

A Division of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association (PCA), and The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)

Article I: Name and Mission

Section 1: Name

The name of the Association shall be the Pennsylvania Mental Health Counselors Association (hereafter: PAMHCA), a division of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association (hereafter: PCA), and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (hereafter: AMHCA). The PCA is a division of the American Counseling Association (hereafter: ACA).

Section 2: Mission

The mission of PAMHCA and its members shall be as follows:

To follow the highest professional standards and to abide by the Code of Ethics of the AMHCA;

To advance the profession of mental health counseling;

To promote the exchange of professional information among mental health counselors by means of a newsletter and other scientific, educational, and professional materials;

To provide continuing education opportunities through conferences, workshops, and other means that assist mental health counselors in updating and enhancing their competencies;

To formulate training standards necessary for mental health counselors;

To promote research studies into the effectiveness of mental health counseling interventions and related issues;

To promote positive relations with other professional organizations for effective advocacy for mental health issues;

To promote a program of effective public relations to enhance awareness of mental health counseling and the competencies and services of its practitioners;

To promote high standards for credentialing and for licensure issues in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

To provide a liaison with other professional groups in order to assist in the advancement of the mental health profession.

Section 3: Bylaws of Other Organizations

PAMHCA shall not be bound by the bylaws of any other organization or by changes in the bylaws of any organization of which it is a member, unless such bylaws or such changes have been approved by a majority vote of the Board of PAMHCA.

Article II: Membership

Section 1: Types of Membership

Voting membership shall be of one type: individual membership. There are four categories of individual membership: a. regular; b. student; c. special; d. retired.

Section 2: Requirements of Membership

Regular Members: Membership is open to anyone who is a member of one or more of the following: the Pennsylvania Counseling Association (PCA), the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), the American Counseling Association (ACA), the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) as a National Certified Counselor (NCC).

Student Members: Any college level student whose main interest is Mental Health shall be eligible to apply for a student membership with PAMHCA with all the privileges of individual membership, not to exceed three (3) years.

Special Members: The President and Executive Council of PAMHCA may choose individuals who do not meet the requirements of either regular member or student member, but have some expertise which may contribute to the improvement of PAMHCA. The Executive Council must approve any special membership application.

Retired Members: Those individuals who have retired from the field of mental health counseling, but who would still wish to be active in their professional organization.

Section 3: Rights and Privileges

Voting membership shall be limited to regular, student, special, and retired members. Only voting members shall be eligible for any office, including Executive Council.

Section 4: Severance of Membership

A member may be dropped from membership for conduct that tends to injure PAMHCA, or which violates the Bylaws or Code of Ethics of PAMHCA/AMHCA. Members charged with engaging in such conduct shall be given notice of the precise nature of the charge, shall be given the opportunity to present evidence in their behalf through witnesses or otherwise, shall be given the opportunity to confront witnesses against them, and shall have the right to appeal, and have a hearing before the Board of Directors of PAMHCA, whose decision will be final. The Ethics Review Panel shall consider any charges made over the signature of two PAMHCA members in good standing. The Ethics Review Panel shall have the power to determine whether the accused member has the right to appeal to the Board of Directors any final decision of the Committee on Ethics.

The Code of Ethics, formulated by the AMHCA and endorsed to by PAMHCA, contains fifteen principles: 1. Welfare of the consumer; 2. Clients' rights; 3. Confidentiality; 4. Utilization of assessment techniques; 5. Pursuit of research activities; 6. Consulting; 7. Competence; 8. Professional relationships; 9. Supervisee, student and employee relationships; 10. Moral and legal standards; 11. Professional responsibility; 12. Private practice; 13. Public statements; 14. Private practice; 15. Resolution of ethical problems.

A member may be dropped from membership for: 1. nonpayment of dues; 2. falsely certifying that divisional membership qualifications have been met.
Any behavior contrary to the Code of Ethics of AMHCA

Article III: Meetings of the Association

Section 1: Business Year

The official business year of PAMHCA shall be that of AMHCA.

Section 2: Annual Meetings

An annual meeting of PAMHCA shall be in conjunction with the annual meeting of PCA.

Section 3: Additional Meetings

The President may, with the approval of the Executive Committee, call additional meetings of PAMHCA when necessary or desirable.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: Officers

The officers of PAMHCA shall be President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four board members-at-large. All officers must be members in good standing in PAMHCA, and in one or more of the following: PCA, AMHCA, ACA, NBCC as NCC.

Section 2: Duties and Terms of Officers

The duties and terms of officers shall be as follows:

The **President** shall be the Chief Executive Officer of PAMHCA and Chairperson of its Executive Council. He/She shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Council, the Chairpersons and members of all committees, unless otherwise specifically provided for in these bylaws or by the motion establishing such committees. The President shall serve as representative to the PCA, the AMHCA, and the ACA. The President shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office, or as may be properly required by vote of the Executive Council.

The **President-Elect** shall act as President at all PAMHCA or Executive Council meetings in the absence of the President and shall succeed to the presidency at the expiration of his/her term as President-Elect. IN the event that the President-Elect should resign or be unable to complete his/her unexpired term, the Executive Council shall appoint qualified members to fill the unexpired vacancy (-ies). In the event that the President should resign or be unable to meet the obligations for which elected, the President-Elect shall automatically become the President for the remainder of the unfinished term of office and for the complete term of office immediately following.

The **immediate Past President** shall serve for two years following the expiration of his/her presidential term. He/She shall serve as member of the Executive Council and shall perform such duties as may be directed by the Board of Directors. The immediate Past President will serve as Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

The **Secretary** shall keep all records of the current activities of PAMHCA including its board minutes, and all records of its Executive Committee, including its committee minutes, and for distribution of the same to all PAMHCA members. The Secretary shall maintain and protect the archives of PAMHCA and pass all these records on to the next duly elected Secretary at the end of his/her term of office. Archival material shall be stored and indexed by the elected Secretary.

The **Treasurer** shall have custody of all funds of PAMHCA and other properties belonging to PAMHCA. He/She shall deposit all funds of PAMHCA in an interest bearing account. This money may be spent only after approval by a two/ thirds vote of the Executive Council of PAMHCA. The Treasurer shall abide by the financial policies of AMHCA. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining a balanced budget. Deficit spending is prohibited. The Executive Council from time to time shall prescribe methods and procedures for authorizing the expenditure of and the accounting for such funds. **Four Members-at-large** will perform duties specified by the President. Each Member-at-large shall provide status reports pertaining to said duties at the discretion of the President.

Each officer shall be a member in good standing. In addition, each officer must be a member of PAMHCA and one or more of the following: the PCA, the AMHCA, the ACA, the NBCC as NCC. No member is eligible to serve in the same office for more than two consecutive terms of office.

The term for all officers shall be for two years. The beginning and ending dates for the term of office for PAMHCA officers shall coincide with the dates for officers of AMHCA. Should a member of PAMHCA find cause to contest the eligibility of any nominee, he/ she must act in accordance with the bylaws of AMHCA.

Section 3: Removal from Office

An elected officer or member of the Executive Council may be removed from office for failure to perform assigned duties. The process of removing an officer or member of the Executive Council must be done in accordance with the bylaws of AMHCA.

Article V: Executive Council

Section 1: Power and Functions

The Executive Council shall be the agency through which the general administrative and executive functions of PAMHCA shall be carried out. It shall conduct, manage, and control the business of PAMHCA. The President of PAMHCA shall be the Chairperson of the Executive Council.

Section 2: Composition, Nomination and Election of the Executive Council

The **Executive Council** of PAMHCA shall be composed of:

the officers of PAMHCA;

the Chairpersons of the standing committees;

other persons appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Council, whose services may be needed for special purposes.

All members of the Executive Council shall be voting members.

The PAMHCA Executive Council shall be elected in the manner described in Article VIII of these bylaws.

If a member leaves the Executive Council during the term of office, the President shall, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, recommend to the Executive Council the names of two qualified replacements. The Executive Council shall appoint the replacement from the two recommended to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 3: Meetings

The Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year, at the time and place of the annual PCA meeting, and again at a time and place designated by either the President or the majority of the Executive Council.

A simple majority (one-half-plus-one) of the members of the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum.

Article VI: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

The Committees of PMHCA shall consist of the Standing Committees, whose members are appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Council. The following shall be the Standing Committees of PAMHCA:

Credentialing and Licensure Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the activities of the state and national legislatures and other regulatory bodies, and to advise and inform PAMHCA and its members concerning developments relative to these groups that affect the welfare and working conditions of mental health counselors;

Membership and Ethics Committee shall seek ways to increase the membership of PAMHCA through the addition of new members and provide guidance for retention of members;

Nominations and Elections Committee shall be responsible for carrying out nominations and elections procedures in accordance with these bylaws and the bylaws of AMHCA.

Program Committee shall be responsible for the programs and arrangements for all meetings of PAMHCA.

Marketing and Public Relations Committee shall initiate, encourage, and direct activities to build good public relations. It shall also coordinate and direct all publications of PAMHCA.

Bylaws and Governance Committee shall keep PAMHCA and its members up-to-date on any changes in the bylaws of AMHCA, PCA, and ACA. Also, this committee will review PAMHCA's bylaws at least once a year, and make recommendations for updating and revising these bylaws.

Section 2: Reports

Each committee shall report to the President at least twice a year, in writing, the salient activities, financial information, and progress of the committee, as indicated in the annual committee guidelines or as directed by the President and the Executive Council.

Section 3: Task Forces

The President may establish Task Forces as is deemed necessary to conduct the affairs of PAMHCA. The Task Force Chairperson and members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Council.

Section 4: Commissions

Any combination of the above-listed committees, task forces, or individuals assigned by the Executive Council to work toward an identified end shall be called a Commission.

Article VII: Dues

Section 1: Dues

In addition to any allocation received from PCA, AMHCA, and ACA, PAMHCA may assess additional dues, provided such assessments are recommended by the Executive Council and approved by a majority of the membership present in a regular business meeting of the Division. All dues to PAMHCA shall be collected by the PAMHCA Treasurer.

Article VIII: Election of Officers

Section 1: Choice of Nominees

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall prepare an official slate of nominees for the positions of President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and four Members-at-large, and for the President, when necessary. This Committee should take into consideration the individual's qualifications for office, geographical location, the nominees' fields of interest, and his/her consent. If no member is identified for a position on this slate, an effort will be made to recruit among active and qualified members for said position.

Section 2: Inclusion with the PCA Ballot

The slate of officers prepared by this Committee shall be sent by the President to the appropriate representative of the PCA for inclusion on the ballot of the PCA.

Section 3: Election to Office

Ballots will be canvassed and a report of the election will be made at the annual business meeting of the PCA. A plurality vote of members voting shall constitute election to office.

Section 4: When to Assume Duties of Office

Elected officers will assume the duties of their office at the beginning of the fiscal year in accordance with the bylaws of PAMHCA.

Section 5: Vacancy of an Office

In case of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall succeed to the President's unexpired term and continue through the term for which elected. In the case of a vacancy in any of the other offices, the Executive Council shall have the power to fill the vacancy until the next regular election. If any officer elected should be unable to

assume the office on the first day of the new fiscal year, the next ranking candidate on the election return shall assume the office.

Article IX: Conduct of Business

Section 1: Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution and Bylaws of the AMHCA shall govern the proceedings of PAMHCA that are not otherwise specified in these bylaws.

Section 2: Quorum

Thirty percent of the members of PAMHCA shall constitute a quorum, authorized to transact any business duly presented in any meeting of PAMHCA.

Section 3: Majority

A majority of the authorized membership of the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum for conducting the business of that Council.

Section 4: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of PAMHCA shall correspond to the fiscal year of AMHCA.

Section 5: Dissolution

In the event that PAMHCA should be dissolved, none of its property shall be distributed to any of the members. Instead, all of its property shall be transferred to such organization or organizations as the Executive Council shall determine to have purposes or activities most nearly consonant with those of PAMHCA, provided, however, that such organization or organizations shall be exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding provisions of the Internal Revenue Laws.

Article X: Bylaws

Section 1: Amendment and Adoption

These bylaws may be amended by a simple majority of the Executive Council.

Section 2: Emergency Amendments

In case of an emergency, the Executive Council may submit a proposed amendment to the membership for a mail vote. Twenty (20) days after mailing the proposed amendment, the polls shall be closed and votes shall be counted by the Executive Council. If passed by a majority of the members voting, the amendment shall go into effect.

Section 3: Notification of Bylaws Change

The Executive Council of PAMHCA must be notified, in writing, at least thirty (30) days prior to any Board meeting, of any proposal to add or amend the bylaws of PAMHCA.

Section 4: Publication of Bylaws

The bylaws of PAMHCA shall be published in their entirety every five years. All amendments adopted by PAMHCA during an official year shall be printed on a yearly basis.

Article XI: Indemnification

PAMHCA shall indemnify each member of its Executive Council and each of its Officers in the manner prescribed in the PCA Bylaws.

Article XII: Nondiscrimination

There shall be no discrimination against any individual on the basis of ethnic group, color, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age and/or handicapping condition.

Article XIII: Rules of Order

The parliamentary authority for meetings of PAMHCA will be Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised, 1980 edition (by Henry Martin Roberts), as from time to time amended.

Bylaws Adopted: April 14, 1980 and Revised April 23, 1991; August 16 and November 9, 1996; March 10, 1999; August 23, 2006

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