

Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association

Constitution

Preamble

Dedicated to the pursuit of self-fulfillment of all persons with disabilities, Rehabilitation Counselors have established this Virginia Association in order to enhance their profession and to provide standards of conduct and performance among its members. That all persons may know this organization, there is hereby established this Constitution and Bylaws of the Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association, a division of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association and a state unit of the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association.

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (also known as VRCEA), a professional division of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association.

Article II – Purpose

It shall be the purpose of VRCEA to advance the profession of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education by promoting ethical practice, enhancing public understanding, and developing innovative programs and services for all persons with disabilities.

Article III – Membership

To be eligible for membership, an applicant must be dedicated to the advancement of helping persons with disabilities, a member in good standing of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association (VRA), and have other qualifications as set forth in the Bylaws. No member of VRA shall be denied membership because of race, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. The membership shall meet in general assembly at an Annual Meeting at the time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors. The membership shall be the law-making and policy-making body of VRCEA.

Article IV – Board of Directors

There is an established Board of Directors which shall consist of the Officers of the Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association, its immediate Past President, and six members at-large. The Board of Directors shall have the power to represent the membership between annual meetings and to conduct VRCEA's business.

Article V – Officers

The Officers of VRCEA shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary and Treasurer. They shall be elected by a plurality vote of members voting by mail, email and on-site as certified by the Nominations Committee.

Article VI – Bylaws

To implement this Constitution, the membership may adopt Bylaws consistent with this document.

Article VII – Amendments

The Constitution of the Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association may be amended as follows:

- Section 1 Any member may propose in writing an amendment to the Constitution to the Board of Directors.

- Section 2 An amendment may be proposed by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the membership present and voting.

- Section 3 An announcement as to the intent to amend the Constitution shall be mailed electronically or through the U.S. Mail to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting.

Article X – Repeal of Previous Provisions

All provisions of previous Constitutions and Bylaws of VRCEA are hereby repealed.

Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association

Bylaws

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (VRCEA).

Article II – Relationship to VRA

The Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association is a professional division of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association (VRA) and subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws pertaining to divisions of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association.

Article III – Definitions

For the purpose of these Bylaws:

- Section 1 **Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association** (RCEA) means the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association, a professional division of the National Rehabilitation Association, Inc. (NRA).
- Section 2 **VRCEA** means the Virginia Chapter of the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association.
- Section 3 **Board** means Board of Directors of VRCEA.
- Section 4 **Chapter** means the designation given by NRA to any constituent or affiliated sub-structures in that organization.

Article IV – Purpose

The purpose of VRCEA is to advance the profession of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education by promoting ethical practice, enhancing public understanding, and developing innovative programs and services for all persons with disabilities.

- Section 1 Increasing public understanding of the role of rehabilitation counseling in assisting all persons with disabilities to become to the extent possible, self-sufficient, self-supporting and contributing members of society.
- Section 2 Promoting and encouraging the development of educational and professional training opportunities for all persons engaged in the counseling of persons with disabilities.

- Section 3 Developing professional standards for rehabilitation counseling including the opportunity to participate in certification and the certification maintenance process.
- Section 4 Providing a forum for the discussion of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education.
- Section 5 Encouraging the development of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education as they contribute to an interdisciplinary approach to the solution of problems in rehabilitation.
- Section 6 Fostering research to advance knowledge and skills in rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education.

Article V – Membership

- Section 1 Membership in VRCEA is in accord with the membership standards of RCEA. Membership in NRA/VRA is also a prerequisite.
- Section 2 **Privileges of Membership:**
- A. All members of VRCEA shall be entitled to receive the official publications of RCEA.
 - B. All members shall be entitled to participate in the meetings of VRCEA.
 - C. All members shall be entitled to participate in the National, Regional, State and Local meetings of RCEA.
 - D. All members of VRCEA may serve as a member of the RCEA Delegate Assembly at the national conference if elected as a delegate to that assembly.
 - E. Only a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, Rehabilitation Educator, Licensed Professional Counselor, or a counselor who is eligible to be certified/licensed, who is a member of VRCEA, is eligible to serve as an Officer or member of the Board, with the exception of Student Members.
- Section 3 **Maintenance of Membership:**
Classification as a Professional Member shall be considered permanent as long as professional conduct, in accordance with the expected membership behavior as outlined by the National Rehabilitation Association and continuous membership are maintained.
- Section 4 **Membership Year:**
The membership year of VRCEA shall coincide with the NRA/VRA membership year.

Article VI – Meetings

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the membership of VRCEA as prescribed in the Constitution.

Article VII – Board of Directors

- Section 1 **Composition of Board:** The Board of Directors shall consist of: Officers of VRCEA, and six members-at-large. Board members and officers must be members of NRA/VRA. Except in instances when Officers or Board members-at-large are selected to fill vacancies, as provided elsewhere in this Article, all Officers and Board members-at-large shall assume office on January 1st. No individual may simultaneously hold more than one board position. Duties of the officers are further defined in the Duties and Responsibilities Manual.
- Section 2 **Powers of the Board:** The Board shall have the power to conduct the affairs of VRCEA, subject to limits imposed by the Constitution and Bylaws and decision of the membership. Its authority shall include, but is not limited to the following:
- A. The Board shall have authority to transact all business of VRCEA between annual meetings.
 - B. The Board shall call an Annual Meeting of VRCEA.
 - C. The Board shall select the official delegates of this Association to the Delegate Assembly of RCEA.
 - D. The Board shall determine the method whereby membership of VRCEA is informed about the actions of VRA and the Northeast Region of RCEA.
- Section 3 **Terms of Office:** Except in instances of election to fill a vacancy as hereinafter specified, all members of the Board shall assume office on January 1st following the election. The term of office of all Board Members will be three (3) years, and each Board Member will hold office no more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- Section 4 **Filling Vacancies:** The Board shall have the authority to fill, by vote of its own members, the offices that become vacant between elections. The vacancy may be filled by any eligible division member in good standing for the unexpired term.
- Section 5 **Meetings of the Board:** The VRCEA Board shall meet at least quarterly. The meeting shall be called by the President or in his/her absence, by the President-Elect, or upon a petition of four Board Members. If a Board member misses two (2) meetings during a calendar year, he/she may be immediately removed from the Board. When a Board member anticipates an absence, the President should be notified in writing prior to the meeting, stating the reason for the absence. When a Board member is absent, he/she is responsible for asking another member to cover his/her responsibilities at the meeting. If a Board member is removed from the Board in accordance with this section, the vacancy will be filled as outlined in Article VII, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

Section 6 **Quorum of the Board:** A majority of members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for transacting business; however, one member must be the President or the President-Elect.

Section 7 **Election by Mail Ballot:** An election ballot shall be prepared by the Nominations and Elections Committee and will allow for write-in votes. The ballot will be mailed (electronically or through the U.S. Mail) to all members in good standing at least ninety (90) days prior to year-end. They shall be returned to the Nominations Chairperson on or before December 1 of the same year. A plurality of ballots cast shall elect. In the event of a tie, a run off election shall be conducted.

Article VIII

Section 1 **Officers:** The Officers of VRCEA shall be the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary and Treasurer. The President-Elect shall be elected annually for a term of one year, shall then assume the office of President. The President shall then assume of the office of immediate Past President. The Office of Secretary shall be elected for a one-year term. The Treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term. The duties of the Officers shall be those usually pertaining to such positions, further defined in the Duties and Responsibilities Manual, including the following specific duties assigned to each office:

Section 2 **Duties:** At the direction of the Board, Officers may be assigned duties not ordinarily associated with their positions. The Duties and Responsibilities Manual provides further information about the duties of officers, board members, and committees.

Section 3 **President:** The President shall serve in office for a term of one year. The duties of the President shall include:

- A. Serve as official representative of VRCEA.
- B. Call meetings of the VRCEA and its Board. Preside at all meetings.
- C. Appoint with approval of the Board, membership to all committees and designate its chairperson.
- D. Serve as ex-officio with voting privileges on all committees they appoint.
- E. Appoint, with approval of the Board, all representation of VRCEA on Committees to which the representation is authorized by RCEA structure at the state, regional or national levels. Give charge to committees.
- F. Provide an annual report to VRA on Division activities at the VRA annual meeting and as otherwise requested by the VRA President or Board.

Section 4 **President-Elect:** The President-Elect shall serve in office for a term of one year. He/she shall assume the presidency January 1st. He/she shall serve as the Awards Committee Chairperson. If the presidency should become vacant,

he/she should serve as President until such time as the Board shall fill the vacancy.

- Section 5 **Secretary:** The Secretary shall serve in office for a term of one year. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate records of actions and decisions of the Board and Membership. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings of the Board and/or Membership. The Secretary shall send out correspondence to the Board at the President's request, including meeting announcements, agendas, minutes, and other essential documents.
- Section 6 **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall serve in office for a term of two years. He/she shall be responsible for the supervision of fiscal operations. The Treasurer shall prepare and present financial reports for each Board meeting and an annual financial report for the Annual Membership meeting.
- Section 6 **Immediate Past President:** The immediate Past President shall serve as an Officer of the Board and shall serve as Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

Article IX – Committees

- Section 1 **Appointment of Committees:** No later than sixty (60) days after assuming the office, the President, with the advice and confirmation of the Board, shall appoint the following committees and designate the chairperson(s) of each. The number of members for each committee and the terms of offices of members shall be determined by the Board. Committee membership is not restricted only to VRCEA and/or Board members.
- Section 2 **Structure of Committees:**
- A. Organizational Operations Committee: The function of this committee shall be to maintain the operation of VRCEA including nominations, elections, awards, an annual board recognition ceremony and Constitution and Bylaws. This committee may consist of the President, President Elect, and Past President.
 - 1. Nominations Committee
 - 2. Awards Committee
 - B. Membership Committee: The function of this committee shall be to develop, evaluate and implement diversified service to the membership including publications, recognition and recruitment.
 - C. Program and Professional Development Committee: The function of this committee is to plan, evaluate and implement the Professional Development of VRCEA, including education, research and conference programs.
 - D. Critical Issues and Policy Committee: The committee will be concerned with legislative and policy issues affecting rehabilitation practice and

education, and to develop necessary resolutions and public relationship activities to implement and promote the purpose of VRCEA.

- E. Ways and Means Committee: The function of this committee is to raise funds for VRCEA to advance the profession of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education.

Section 3 **Duties of Committee Members**: In addition to the usual duties, the Chairperson(s) of each committee shall insure that all records of the committee work be kept and be made available to the Board. All records shall be completed and submitted to the Secretary prior to Board Meetings for distribution to the Board. Additional functions and responsibilities may be assigned to the committees by the Board to carry out specific functions.

Article X – Amendments

The Bylaws of VRCEA may be amended as follows:

- A. An amendment may be proposed by a simple majority of the Board and ratified by a simple majority of the membership voting in the annual business meeting or by mail or email ballot in lieu of an Annual Meeting.
- B. Any member wishing to propose an amendment to the Bylaws of this Association shall present the proposal to the Board. A majority of the Board shall be required to approve presentation of the proposed amendment to the membership.
- C. Amendments shall be effective upon ratification.

Article XI – Miscellaneous

Section 1 **Savings Clause**: All provisions of previous Bylaws of VRCEA are hereby repealed.

Section 2 **Rules of Order**: Roberts Rules of Order (most recent edition) shall govern meetings of the Association and Board where they are not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association or rules adopted by the Association and the Board, and followed on any point not covered herein.