

**BYLAWS**

**AMERICAN INNS  
OF COURT FOUNDATION**

**CHARTER NUMBER  
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN**

**CHIEF JUSTICE  
WILLIAM H. BOBBITT  
AMERICAN INN OF COURT**

**AT CHARLOTTE. NORTH CAROLINA**

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**INASMUCH** as The Honorable Frank W. Snapp, Jr., Retired Senior Resident Superior Court Judge for the Twenty-Sixth Judicial District, and other members of the Mecklenburg County, North Carolina Bar have made due and proper application to the American Inns of Court Foundation for a charter to organize, establish and carry on activities as a participating Inn of the American Inns of Court Foundation; and,

**WHEREAS**, the aforesaid applicants have agreed to abide by and conduct their activities consistent with the requirements of their Charter, and the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and Policies of the American Inns of Court Foundation, as they now exist or may be hereafter interpreted, modified or amended by the Board of Trustees of said Foundation; and

**WHEREAS**, applicants have requested that their member Inn be granted use of the American Inns of Court name, service mark, seal and copyrighted materials and be designated as the Chief Justice William H. Bobbitt American Inn of Court and having been granted by the American Inns of Court Foundation, by and through its Board of Trustees, Charter Number One Hundred and Seven to the above-named applicants, their successors and to such others as are or shall be joined with them as members of the within described Inn to be known as The Chief Justice William H. Bobbitt American Inn of Court at Charlotte, North Carolina; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, having been granted by the American Inns of Court Foundation, by and through its Board of Trustees, the right to use the Foundation name, service mark, seal and copyrighted materials as long as the Inn is in good standing and the use is in compliance with conditions established from time to time by the Foundation, The Chief Justice William H. Bobbitt American Inn of Court at Charlotte, North Carolina hereby adopts the following bylaws:

**ARTICLE I**  
**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this Inn are:

1. To be a membership of judges, lawyers, legal educators, and others as may be consistent with the Charter, to promote excellence in legal advocacy at the trial and appellate court levels.
2. To foster greater understanding of, and appreciation for the adversary system of dispute resolution in American law, with particular emphasis on ethics and professional standards of excellence.
3. To provide significant educational experiences that will improve and enhance the skills of lawyers as counselors and advocates, and of judges as adjudicators and judicial administrators.
4. To promote interaction among members of all categories in order to minimize misapprehensions, misconceptions and failures of communications that obstruct the effective practice of law.
5. To facilitate the development of law students, recent law school graduates and less experienced lawyers as skilled participants in the American court system.
6. To build upon the genius and strengths of the common law and the English Inns of Court, and to renew and inspire joy and zest in legal advocacy as a service worthy of constant effort and learning.
7. To promote collegiality among professionals and to transmit ethical values from one professional generation to another.

**ARTICLE II**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

1. Invitations to Membership. Memberships shall be conferred upon those accepting invitations extended by the Masters of the Inn (hereinafter “the Benchers” or “the Masters”). The Benchers’ discretion in extending invitations to membership is absolute and nonreviewable. Such invitations may be extended on the basis of recommendations made to the Membership Committee by any member of the Inn or in response to written application filed with the Secretary-Treasurer of the Inn. Membership shall not be denied to any person on account of race, creed, religion, sex, age, disability or national origin.

2. Designation of Categories of Membership. Members shall be selected in the following five categories and shall be given suitable certificates of membership in this Inn of Court:
  - a. Masters of the Bench (Benchers)-Active. Membership as Active Masters of the Bench or "Active Benchers" may be held by up to twenty (20) judges, lawyers and law teachers who have demonstrated superior character, ability and competence as trial or appellate advocates. Retention of status as an Active Bencher is contingent upon reasonable Inn activity to be periodically reviewed by the Executive Committee. Any person who has been granted Emeritus status as a Bencher may be reinvited to serve again in an active capacity. At least three (3) Active Benchers shall be judges or former judges.
  - b. Masters of the Bench (Benchers)-Emeritus. Membership as Emeritus Masters of the Bench or "Emeritus Benchers" may be conferred upon Active Benchers by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Active Benchers of the Inn in attendance at a meeting called for that purpose. The vote shall be by secret ballot. Such membership status may be granted on the basis of long and distinguished service to the Inn and upon completion of at least five (5) years continuous service to the Inn. Emeritus Benchers shall be under no obligation to pay dues, attend meetings or participate in other programs of the Inn but will enjoy all privileges of active membership except the right to vote. Emeritus Benchers will retain such membership status for life if they so desire.
  - c. Barristers. Active membership as Barristers may be held by up to fifteen (15) attorneys at any one time. They must have been in active practice for at least five (5) years prior to selection as a Barrister and must have demonstrated good character and a desire to improve and refine their skills as trial and appellate advocates. Barristers shall serve a term of three (3) years. After such time, Barristers may remain as members of the Inn invited to participate in such activities as the Executive Committee may deem appropriate. After completion of the three year term, Barristers may be invited to serve additional terms as Barrister, or elected Master of the Bench.
  - d. Pupils. Membership as Pupils shall be held by up to thirty (30) persons at any one time who are either students at an accredited law school or are recent law school graduates admitted to the practice of law for not more than five (5) years. Tenure of membership for Pupils shall be not more than one (1) year. Membership may be terminated at the sole discretion of the Benchers.
  - e. Honorary Members. Honorary members may be elected from time to time upon nomination by the Executive Committee and upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Benchers in attendance at a meeting called for that purpose. Election shall be by secret ballot. Consideration for selection is on the basis of distinguished service to the bench or bar, furtherance of Inns of Court objectives or other noteworthy achievements. Honorary members shall be under no

obligation to pay dues, attend meetings or participate in other programs of the Inns but will have all privileges of membership except the right to vote.

### **ARTICLE III ORGANIZATION**

1. Nature of Association. This Inn shall be and remain chartered and affiliated with the American Inns of Court Foundation as a member Inn and shall be an unincorporated non-profit association composed of judges, practicing lawyers, law school educators, recent law school graduates, and law students who accept an invitation to membership as described in Article II of these bylaws. Tax exempt status under the American Inns of Court Federal 501 (c)(3) umbrella program shall be applied for by this Inn.
  
2. Governing Body and Officers. The officers of this Inn shall be a President, a Counselor, a Secretary-Treasurer and such other officers as the Benchers, by majority vote of those present at a meeting duly called for that purpose, may deem necessary. The officers shall comprise the Executive Committee. The President and the Counselor must be selected from among the Benchers and shall be elected by vote of a majority of the Benchers present at a meeting called for that purpose. All other officers, including the Secretary-Treasurer, may be selected from any class of membership and shall be elected by vote of a majority of all members present at a meeting called for that purpose. By majority vote, the Executive Committee shall select either the President or the Counselor to serve as a member of the American Inns of Court Foundation during his or her term of office.
  - a. Term of Office. The term of each office shall be one year. Officers may succeed themselves. The Executive Committee shall designate the dates for the commencement and termination of the operative year. The final meeting of each operative year typically shall be designated as the meeting for elections, but exceptions may be established by the Executive Committee.
  
  - b. Duties of President and Counselor. In addition to other duties which may be imposed by the Benchers and by the Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation, the President and the Counselor shall have the following duties, which shall be allocated by vote of the Executive Committee of the Inn:
    - (2) Ensure that an annual curriculum and agenda for Inn meetings and activities are developed and furnished to members;
  
    - (3) Notify members of their appointment to serve on Inn of Court committees.

- (4) Call and conduct meetings of officers and committees as required to plan and conduct activities of the Inn;
- (5) Conduct all Inn activities in accordance with the Charter, bylaws and policies of this Inn and of the American Inns of Court Foundation;
- (6) Supervise and monitor Pupillage Team activities in order to encourage the proper functioning of this important aspect of Inn organization;
- (7) Encourage attendance at all Inn meetings;
- (8) Serve as liaison with other Inns of Court as they may be established;
- (9) Extend invitations for membership in the Inn of Court as authorized by the Executive Committee.

c. Duties of Secretary-Treasurer. The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

- (1) Prepare, maintain and forward to the American Inns of Court Foundation Executive Secretary, at least annually, a complete roster of all present and past members of the Inn specifying name, last known address, telephone number, membership;
- (2) Prepare and maintain minutes of each meeting of the Inn and forward a copy thereof to the American Inns of Court Foundation Executive Secretary within one month of each meeting;
- (3) Receive and disburse monies and other property paid to the Inn in accordance with directives and policies of the American Inns of Court Foundation;
- (4) Prepare and maintain accurate financial records for the Inn in accordance with directives and policies of the American Inns of Court Foundation;
- (5) Furnish application forms to persons interested in becoming members of the Inn and see that the Executive Committee receives such completed applications;
- (6) Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President.

d. Duties and Authority of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, acting by majority vote of its members, shall:

- (1) Select a Member of the American Inns of Court Foundation pursuant to Article II, Section I of the bylaws of the said Foundation. This shall be the President or Counselor.
3. Establish such committees as may be necessary to carry out or assist the officers in carrying out the responsibilities imposed by the Charter, bylaws, Policies or Directives of the Americans Inns of Court Foundation.
4. Relationship with Courts. This Inn shall be and remain outside the jurisdiction of the Courts but shall endeavor to work in close cooperation with the trial and appellate courts. Federal, state and local trial and appellate judges will participate in the organization in the tradition of the common law.

#### **ARTICLE IV AUTHORITY OF THE MASTERS OF THE BENCH**

The Masters of the Bench are the final authority in this Inn. They shall elect officers and other members of the Standing Committees and make the policy decisions within the purview of this Inn of Court program as set forth in the Charter of this American Inn, the policies of the American Inns nationally, as expressed by the Board of Trustees, and these bylaws. The Masters shall also invite other judges and lawyers to join this Inn as Masters, as Barristers or as Pupil-Lawyers when there are vacancies.

The Masters shall meet at least three times a year, with one meeting early in the Fall, another in the Spring, and the third at another time during the year. At the Spring meeting, officers and all committee membership vacancies should be filled for the next year to allow planning work to go forth in the summer and the full complement of committees to be operational by September. In between meetings of the Masters, the Inn is operated by the Executive Committee, the officers, and Standing Committees.

#### **ARTICLE V FINANCES**

1. Financial matters within this Inn shall be managed and controlled in accordance with policies and directives established by the American Inns of Court Foundation, the Charter and these bylaws.
2. This Inn shall remit annually to the American Inns of Court Foundation the amount to be levied by the Board of Trustees of said Foundation for the purpose of paying its proportionate share of operating expenses of the said Foundation.
3. Upon approval of Masters, the Executive Committee is empowered to levy and collect assessments in the form of dues in amounts, which it may deem

appropriate in order to meet its obligations to the American Inns of Court Foundation as well as the Inn's operating needs. Failure to pay assessments and dues within a reasonable time and after reasonable notice may be considered by the Executive Committee as a ground to terminate membership of the person in default.

4. The Fiscal Year of the Inn for financial reporting purposes shall be the same as the operative year set by the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE VI MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES**

1. Schedule for Meetings. Regular meetings of the membership of the Inn shall be called by the Executive Committee at least four times per year at such intervals as it may determine. The operative year of this Inn of Court shall be as determined by the Executive Committee.
2. Content of Meetings. The main themes and subject matter of regular meetings shall be practical legal advocacy with emphasis on legal ethics and excellence in lawyering. Programs should present, demonstrate, teach and explain the principles, skills, techniques and relationships involved in the courtroom and in activities preliminary to courtroom appearances and should involve critique and questions from the membership of the Inn, all designed to assist members in better discharging their duties to clients and society. Programs should be presented by previously assigned Pupillage Teams.

## **ARTICLE VII PUPILLAGE TEAMS**

As an American adaptation of the Pupillage system which is basic to the English Inns of Court, each Pupil and Barrister will be assigned to work with a Bencher (who is a practicing attorney) during meetings and at other times throughout the year. At least one (1) Active Bencher who is a practicing attorney, one (1) Barrister, and one (1) Pupil, appropriate to the numbers in the Inn, shall comprise the Pupillage Team. Each Pupillage Team shall be assigned to a Bencher who is a Judge who shall exercise general supervision over the team assigned to him or her and shall monitor the team's attendance at meetings, encourage its meaningful participation at meetings and at scheduled Pupillage events, and oversee presentation of assigned meeting topics. All Active Benchers should strive to make contact with Pupils and Barristers between the scheduled Inn meetings. On such occasions Pupils and Barristers should be advised about pertinent points of trial or appellate advocacy as is appropriate.



## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

This Inn shall have the following Standing Committees:

1. Executive Committee - The Executive Committee shall consist of the members described in Article II, paragraph 2 of these bylaws. Its duties and authority are described in Article III, paragraph 2d.

2. Program Committee - A Program Committee, selected by the President shall consist of three Masters, three Barristers, and three Pupils. The Masters and Barristers shall serve for a term of two years and the Pupils for one year. Programs shall be planned one year in advance whenever possible. The Program Committee shall be responsible for videotaping each program and for maintaining such videotapes for future use by this Inn. The Committee is encourage to utilize materials provided by the AIC Foundation including programming ideas, videotapes, speakers, and event planning assistance. At least one program each year shall include a dinner for all members of this Inn.

3. Membership Committee - A Membership Committee, selected by the President for a term of two years, shall consist of three Masters and two Barristers. On or before the November meeting of each year, the Membership Committee shall solicit and receive nominations from members of this Inn for the positions of Barristers and Pupils. From the nominees submitted, the Membership Committee shall recommend to the Masters an appropriate number of attorneys to be invited to join this Inn as Barristers or Pupils. The Masters shall confer such memberships by a simple majority vote of those present at the December meeting. Alternates for Barristers and Pupils may also be submitted and approved. Membership as Masters shall be conferred by simple majority vote of the Masters present at the December meeting. Nominations for Masters' membership may be made by any Active or Emeritus Master at the December meeting.

4. Bylaws Committee - the Bylaws Committee shall consist of the members selected by the President shall serve an indefinite term. This Committee shall meet from time to time to review and update the bylaws of this Inn.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **OTHER INNS OF COURT**

This Inn shall promote or cooperate in the establishment of similar Inns in the same or different localities of the state or elsewhere, to meet existing or developing needs in order to more widely achieve the objectives of the American Inns of Court Foundation.

## **ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended only with the approval of the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation. These bylaws may be amended only by approval of two-thirds of the non-Pupil members present at a meeting called and reasonably noticed for such a purpose, or these bylaws may be amended upon written consent of at least two-thirds of such membership.

## **ARTICLE XI DISSOLUTION**

The members of the Inn may dissolve the Inn upon a unanimous vote for dissolution. Upon said vote, the standing officers shall file all final reports, tax returns, and any other documents necessary to terminate the Inn's legal existence. The officers shall have no authority to conduct any further business of the Inn.

Upon dissolution of the Inn, any and all assets shall be distributed to the Mecklenburg County Bar or its successors, provided that the Mecklenburg County Bar or its successor is a nonprofit organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 501 (c)(3). In no event shall any of the assets be distributed to any entity other than a nonprofit organization, and if the Mecklenburg County Bar or its successor does not so qualify, the assets of the Inn shall be distributed to another qualified organization, to be determined by a majority vote of the members immediately following or contemporaneously with the vote of dissolution.