

**BYLAWS  
OF THE  
GEORGE MASON  
AMERICAN INN OF COURT**

**Article I. General.**

Section 1. Purpose. The purposes of The George Mason American Inn of Court are set forth in its Organizational Charter issued by the American Inns of Court Foundation.

Section 2. Location. As stated in the Organizational Charter, the initial location of the Inn was Fairfax, Virginia and the Inn's Administrator/Principal Office is presently located in Fairfax. The Executive Committee is granted full power and authority to change, from time to time, the location of its principal office and the venue of its meetings..

**Article II. Organization.**

Section 1. The Executive Committee. The Inn shall be governed by an Executive Committee which shall consist of the Inn's officers, the chairs of the Inn's standing committees and such other members as are determined by the Inn's Masters. The duties of the Executive Committee, and its members, are set forth in the Organizational Charter, and as set forth herein.

Section 2. The Officers. The Inn's officers are: President, President-elect, Counselor/Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Web/Technology Coordinator and such other officers as the Masters deem necessary. Officers may succeed themselves. The officers are to be selected in accordance with the Organizational Charter of the Inn.

Section 3. Administrator. The Executive Committee may hire an Administrator to perform such duties as may be designated by the Executive Committee at such remuneration as shall be determined by the Executive Committee in its discretion.

Section 4. Committees. The Executive Committee may establish standing and ad hoc committees from time to time from among the active members of the Inn, and from time to time may change or discontinue committees.

Currently, the following standing committees are established: Membership Committee, Program Committee, Mentor/Pupilage Committee, Social Committee, and Awards Committee.

Among such other duties as may be assigned by the Masters and the Executive Committee, the duties of each committee shall be as follows:

*Membership Committee* – The Membership Committee shall solicit and review applications and make recommendations to the Executive Committee for membership in the Inn; shall maintain

records of attendance and oversee attendance in accordance with Article IV. Section 2 of these Bylaws; and, shall assist the Executive Committee in assigning members to Pupillage groups.

*Program Committee* – The Program Committee shall oversee and approve program topics and shall be responsible for submitting programs for Continuing Legal Education credit.

*Mentor/Pupillage Committee* – The Mentor/Pupillage Committee shall administer and oversee the Inn’s mentoring program and make recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning improvement and expansion of mentoring opportunities for the Inn.

*Social Committee* – The Social Committee shall be responsible for oversight of the Inn’s contract with the vendor hosting the Inn’s meetings and for scheduling and arranging approved social functions of the Inn within the parameters set forth by the Executive Committee.

*The Awards Committee* – The Awards Committee shall oversee the Inn’s compliance with the Achieving Excellence criteria and make recommendations to the Executive Committee pertaining to the Achieving Excellence program. In addition, the Awards Committee shall solicit and review nominations for awards presented by the Inn at its annual Awards Ceremony and make recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning potential nominees for awards presented by the Inn of Court Foundation.

The Inn’s President shall appoint the Chairs of the Committees. Each committee shall consist of such other members as the Committee Chair shall designate. Chairmen and members of the standing committees shall serve one year terms but may succeed themselves.

In addition to the standing committees, the Executive Committee, in its discretion, may establish ad hoc committees. Standing Committees and ad hoc committees in their discretion may establish subcommittees.

Section 5. Pupillage Groups. All active members will be assigned to a Pupillage Group by the Executive Committee in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Article VI of the Charter. The Team Leaders and Pupillage Groups shall be reassigned every two years.

### **Article III. Membership.**

Section 1. Active Members. There are four classifications of active members in an American Inn of Court, as defined in the bylaws of the American Inns of Court Foundation, and as set forth below:

- Masters of the Bench – consisting of lawyers with at least 10 years of experience, judges and law professors;
- Barristers – consisting of lawyers with at least five years of experience;
- Associates – consisting of lawyers with zero to five years of experience; and,
- Pupils – consisting of second- and third-year law students.

Membership in this American Inn of Court shall be conferred in accordance with Article III, Section 2 of the Charter and shall consist of Masters, Barristers, Associates and Pupils. Pupils may participate in all activities of the Inn but will not be voting members. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, membership may be limited within classifications of membership in order to ensure a proper balance of such classified members as the Executive Committee may deem appropriate.

- Masters shall serve a term of four years and may be reinvited to membership for an additional four years. In accordance with the Charter, a Master shall serve continuously for five years before being eligible for election to Emeritus status.
- Barristers shall serve a term of two years and may be reinvited to membership for an additional two years.
- Associates shall serve a term of two years and may be reinvited to membership for an additional two years.

The Executive Committee may recognize outstanding contributions to the Inn by extending invitations to members to renew for additional terms beyond that provided in this section.

Terms shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30.

Section 2. Inactive Members. The Executive Committee may confer Emeritus and Honorary memberships as set forth in the Organizational Charter.

#### **Article IV. Meetings and Attendance.**

Section 1. Meetings. Meetings shall be held at least six times per year at such times as the Executive Committee may determine. The Inn shall endeavor to have at least one social event per year wherein members may invite guests.

Section 2. Attendance. Each active member will be allowed three absences from the monthly meetings in a year. The Membership Committee shall monitor attendance at meetings and shall submit the names of those who have three absences to the Executive Committee. The non-participating member will be contacted by the Membership Chair in order to determine if he/she wishes to remain in this American Inn of Court; and in the event another absence occurs, this member will be dropped from the rolls, and all dues will be forfeited.

#### **Article V. Voting and Elections.**

Section 1. Masters. With the exception of Emeritus and Honorary Masters, each Master shall be entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to the Masters. A majority of voting Masters shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every act done or decision made by a majority of the Masters in attendance at a meeting shall be regarded as the act of all the Masters.

Section 2. Executive Committee. Each member of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to the Committee. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the deciding vote. A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every act done or decision made by a majority of the members in attendance at the meeting called for that purpose shall be regarded as the act of the entire Committee.

Section 3. Elections. The nomination and election of the President and President-elect will occur annually during the last meeting of the year, or at a meeting of the active Masters especially called for that purpose. Selection of these and other officers shall be in accordance with the Organizational Charter. Selection of other officers shall also occur annually at the last regular meeting, or at a meeting especially called for that purpose. The Executive Committee, with the input of any ad hoc Nominations & Elections Committee it may in its discretion establish, shall nominate the officers. The election shall be held in the following manner:

The President, President-Elect and Counselor/Immediate Past President must be selected from among the Masters and shall be elected by vote of majority of the Masters present at such meeting. All other officers may be selected from any category of membership and shall be elected by majority vote of all members present at such meeting. If a nominee for officer does not receive a simple majority of such votes, then those eligible to vote at the meeting on such nominee may nominate one or more candidates to fill the position and the person who receives the greatest number of votes from those eligible to vote at such meeting on such nominee(s) shall be selected to fill the position.

All other members of the Executive Committee shall be tentatively selected in the Spring of each year by the President. The tentative selection of any such new members of the Executive Committee shall be made known to the organization at the time of the election of the officers and may be challenged by any Master of the Bench, Master of the Bar, Barrister or Associate who is present for the election of the officers. If not challenged, the tentative selections shall be deemed elected as if upon unanimous consent.

The term of office for the new officers and members of the Executive Committee shall commence on the first day following the last meeting of the year during which elections were held, generally sometime in April.

Section 4. Vacancies. When a position as an officer or at-large Executive Committee member/Committee Chair becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall appoint an active member of the Inn to fill the vacancy until the next regular election.

## **Article VI. Fiscal Matters.**

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of The George Mason American Inn of Court shall be the same as the fiscal year of the American Inns of Court Foundation, which is from July 1 to June 30 of each year.

**Section 2. Dues.** Dues shall be in an amount determined by the Executive Committee from time to time and shall be levied by the Treasurer during the month of September of each year. Failure to pay assessments and dues prior to the third meeting of the Inn year and after reasonable notice may be considered by the Executive Committee as grounds to terminate membership of the person in default.

**Section 3. Expenses.** The Inn shall endeavor to pay all expenses in accordance with any guidelines issued by the American Inn of Court Foundation, which may include payment to help pay the cost for one or more officers to attend the National Conference of the American Inns of Court Foundation and payment to an Administrator in an amount not inconsistent with said guidelines.

## **Article VII. Adoption and Amendments.**

**Section 1. Adoption.** These Bylaws will be adopted by this American Inn of Court upon approval by a majority of the Masters of this American Inn of Court and after being submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation. The Masters may make valid decisions by voting by mail, facsimile, electronic mail, or other means when deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or the President.

**Section 2. Amendments.** Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a majority of the Masters of this American Inn of Court and must be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation. The Masters may make valid decisions by voting by mail, facsimile, electronic mail, or other means when deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or the President.