



Bylaws  
of the  
Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court

**Article I**  
**General**

**Section 1. Purpose.**

The purposes of The Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court are set forth in its Organizational Charter issued by the American Inns of Court Foundation.

**Section 2. Principal Location.**

The Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court shall be located in the counties of Boone and Cole, state of Missouri. Members shall be attorneys in those and nearby counties.

**Article II**  
**Organization**

**Section 1. The Executive Committee.**

The Executive Committee is composed of the officers and such other members as are determined by the 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 officers of the Inn shall be a president, a president-elect, a secretary/treasurer, an immediate past president, and such other officers as the Masters deem necessary. The officers serve a one-year term, or as otherwise directed by the Masters, and may succeed themselves. The officers are selected by the Masters in accordance with the Organizational Charter of the Inn.

**Section 3. 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.

Initially, the following standing committees shall be established: Membership Committee, Program Committee, Nominations Committee, and Finance Committee.

Among such other duties as may be assigned by the Masters and the Executive Committee, the membership and 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 assign members to Pupillage teams. The Committee shall consist of at least two Masters and at least two Barristers or Associates, who shall serve two-year staggered terms.

*Program Committee*—The Program Committee shall oversee and approve program topics, and shall be responsible for submitting programs for Continuing Legal Education credit. The Committee shall consist of at least two Masters and at least two Barristers or Associates, who shall serve two-year staggered terms.

*Nominations Committee*—The Nominations Committee shall nominate new Inn officers each year. Each year, the Committee shall consist of the immediate past president, the current president, and the two of the newest Masters in the Inn.

*Finance Committee*—At least once annually, the Finance Committee shall review the financial records maintained by the Secretary/Treasurer, shall verify their accuracy, report to the Masters the financial status of the Inn, and recommend the level of dues for the next Inn year. The Committee shall consist of three Masters, which shall not include the Secretary/Treasurer.

The officers shall appoint committee members and chairs of the committees. Where possible, committee members shall not immediately succeed themselves. But the appointments and the length of terms shall be fixed at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Committees may create ad hoc sub-committees, as appropriate.

#### **Section 4. Pupillage Groups.**

All active members will be assigned each year to a Pupillage Group by the Membership Committee and shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Each Pupillage Group shall be chaired by one or more Masters appointed by the Executive Committee, and shall consist of Masters, Barristers, Associates, and Pupils.

## **Article III.**

### **Membership.**

#### **Section 1. Active Members.**

There are four classifications of 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 law students.

Membership in this American Inn of Court shall consist of Masters, Barristers, and Associates. Pupils may participate in all activities of the Inn, but will not be voting members. Associates, Barristers, and Masters must be members of the Missouri Bar or the bar of some other state, in good standing.

#### **Section 2. Membership terms.**

Pupils shall serve during their third year of law school. They may apply for membership as Associates after being admitted to the bar, or as Barristers later in their careers.

Associates shall serve a term of two years, running from August 1 through June 30, or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee.

Barristers shall serve a term of three years, running from July 1 through June 30, or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee.

Masters shall not have a defined term. They may be removed by a vote of the Executive Committee, or may voluntarily move to inactive, alumni, or emeritus status, as approved by the Executive Committee.

#### **Section 3. Inactive Members.**

The Executive Committee may confer Emeritus and Honorary memberships as set forth in the Organizational Charter. The Executive Committee may approve any Associate or Barrister for inactive status once for one year for good cause. Masters may be granted inactive status by the Executive Committee for one year at a time.

## **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.

#### **Section 2. Attendance.**

Each active member shall be expected to attend whenever possible, but not less than a majority of the meetings each year. The Membership Committee shall monitor attendance at meetings and shall submit to the Executive Committee the names of those who have attended fewer than half of the meetings in an Inn year. 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.**

Each active 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 or by electronic vote 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 or by electronic vote 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 each year during the months of March or April, either at a meeting of the active Masters especially called for that purpose or through electronic communication. Selection of other officers shall also occur each year in the same fashion. Selection of officers shall be in accordance with

the Organizational Charter. New officers shall take office on the first day of the month following the last meeting of the year.

**Section 4. Vacancies.**

When a position as an officer, committee chair or master chair becomes vacant, the procedures for election and appointment of officers and chairs shall be followed when the vacancy occurs; however, the duration of the vacant position shall not be counted against the new officer or chair in regards to any maximum term of service.

## **Article VI**

### **Fiscal Matters**

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year of The Elwood L. Thomas 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.**

The rate of dues for each classification of members shall be set by the Executive Committee each year, after receiving the Finance Committee report. Dues shall be in an amount consistent with the Organizational Charter and shall be levied by the Treasurer during the month of August 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 Executive Committee may approve the payment of reasonable expenses incurred by members of the Executive Committee or committee chairs for such things as attendance at state, regional or national events of the American Inns of Court Foundation.

## **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.