



The Chester Bedell American Inns of Court Bylaws

Date Last Amended: May 24, 2023

The Chester Bedell American Inn of Court is chartered by Organizational Charter No. 14, issued by the American Inns of Court Foundation on June 21, 1985. These bylaws supplement the charter. If a conflict exists, the charter controls.

Contents

I.	Operating and Fiscal Years	2
II.	Officers and Executive Committee	2
III.	Committees	3
IV.	Membership	4
V.	Pupillage Groups	7
VI.	Meetings	7
VII.	Voting	7
VIII.	Amendments	8



I. Operating and Fiscal Years

The operating and fiscal years of the Inn are the same as the fiscal year of the American Inns of Court Foundation, which is July 1 to June 30.

II. Officers and Executive Committee

A. Composition

1. The officers of the Inn are a president, a counselor, a secretary, a treasurer, and any officer permitted by the charter. Whenever possible, the president must alternate between a state judge and a federal judge.
2. The executive committee comprises the officers, a president-elect, a counselor-elect, the immediate past president, the immediate past counselor, three at-large benchers or emeritus members, and two barrister members. For each new barrister member, the Inn must aim to choose a barrister entering the second year of the barrister's term. Whenever possible, the executive committee must include at least two state judges and at least two federal judges.
3. Whenever a position on the executive committee is vacant, the president or counselor must advertise, and accept applications for, the position.

B. Terms and Term Limits

1. The term of the president is one year.
2. The term of the counselor is one year.
3. The term of the secretary is two years.
4. The term of the treasurer is three years.
5. Each officer may succeed themselves in the office only once. A second term in the office requires re-election.



6. The term of each non-officer member of the executive committee is four years. To calculate the term limit for a non-officer member, any year serving as an officer, officer-elect, immediate past president, or immediate past counselor is excluded.
7. A barrister member may serve on the executive committee only if the member is active. A barrister member of the executive committee may serve another four-year term on the executive committee as a bencher or emeritus member.
9. Notwithstanding these provisions, no member may serve on the executive committee in any capacity for more than twelve years total unless additional years are necessary to ensure that at least two federal judges serve on the executive committee.
10. Each term begins on July 1 following elections.
11. When a position as an officer or other member of the executive committee becomes vacant, the ordinary procedures for elections must be followed. For purposes of determining term limits, the duration of the vacant position is not counted against the new officer or other member of the executive committee.
12. For purposes of determining term limits, operating year 2019 to 2020 and any operating year prior is excluded.

III. Committees

A. Number

The Inn has four standing committees and any ad hoc committee the president establishes. The committees may create ad hoc subcommittees.

B. Standing Committees

The standing committees are a membership committee, a history committee, a community-outreach committee, and a mentorship committee.



C. Appointment

For each committee, the president, in consultation with the counselor, appoints the chair from active barristers and benchers and members from active membership, establishes annual goals, and monitors performance. The chair of the membership committee cannot serve on the executive committee at the same time.

D. Terms and Term Limits

Each chair serves a one-year term and, upon appointment, can succeed themselves only thrice. Each member serves a one-year term and, upon appointment, can succeed themselves without limitation.

IV. Membership

A. Composition

1. The Inn is limited to 120 active members, excluding pupils and affiliated professionals, with a goal of 65 benchers, 35 barristers, and 20 associates.
2. At least half the active benchers must be practicing lawyers.
3. Years of experience are computed from the year after the year of first admission to the bar of any state to the year of membership selection. For example, if a lawyer is first admitted to the bar of a state in 2000, and the year of membership selection is 2022, the lawyer has 21 years of experience. Years of experience excludes any period of one or more years during which the person was not actively practicing law, not serving as a judge, not teaching law school, not suspended, or not disbarred.
4. Membership may not be denied based on any category protected by local, state, or federal law.



B. Active Membership Categories and Terms

1. *Benchers*

- a. A bencher must have 15 or more years of experience.
- b. The term of a bencher is indefinite but subject to termination under the charter or these bylaws.

2. *Barrister*

- a. A barrister must have 5 or more years of experience but less than 15 years of experience.
- b. The term of a barrister is three years. If a barrister's term ends early for any reason, the executive committee may select an interim barrister to replace the barrister. At the end of the original barrister's term, the executive committee may permit the interim barrister to serve a full three-year term. If a barrister is serving on the executive committee, the executive committee may extend the barrister's term by one additional year to enable the barrister to serve two years on the executive committee.
- c. Unless exceptional circumstances are present, a person may serve as a barrister only once.
- d. The terms of barristers are staggered so approximately one third of the barristers will be succeeded annually.

3. *Associate*

- a. An associate must have less than 5 years of experience.
- b. The term of an associate is two years.
- c. Unless exceptional circumstances are present, a person may serve as an associate only once.



- d. The terms of associates are staggered so approximately one half of the associates will be succeeded annually.

4. *Pupil*

- a. A pupil must be a student at an accredited law school or a law school actively progressing toward first-time accreditation.
- b. The term of a pupil is one year.
- c. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, a person may serve as a pupil only once.
- d. Pupils may not vote.

5. *Affiliated Professional*

The term of an affiliated professional is indefinite but subject to termination under the charter or these bylaws.

C. **Attendance**

1. If an active member misses three regular meetings during an operating year, the secretary must contact the member to determine the reasons. If the member wants to remain active, the member must commit to regular attendance, and the executive committee must approve continued membership. If the member does not want to remain active or the executive committee does not approve continued membership, the member will be dropped from the rolls, and the member's dues will be forfeited.
2. Retention of status as a bencher is contingent on reasonable Inn activity. Unless exceptional circumstances are present, a bencher who fails to attend at least three regular meetings a year for two consecutive years must move to alumnus status or, if eligible and approved by the executive committee, to emeritus status.



3. Retention of status as an affiliated professional is contingent on reasonable Inn activity. Unless exceptional circumstances are present, an affiliated professional who fails to attend at least three regular meetings a year for two consecutive years must move to alumnus status.

V. Pupillage Groups

The president, in consultation with the counselor, will assign each active member to a pupillage group. Each pupillage group will organize at least one program at a regular meeting during the operating year.

VI. Meetings

A. Regular Meetings

The Inn must have at least seven regular meetings during the operating year. For those meetings, the Inn must endeavor to invite alumni members (with a limit established by seating capacity), to have at least one jointly with other Inns, and to have at least one to which members can invite guests.

B. Pupillage Group Meetings

Each group leader must endeavor to have at least three pupillage group meetings during the operating year.

C. Annual Meeting of the Benchers

The Inn must endeavor to have at least one meeting open only to benchers, emeritus members, affiliated professionals, and honorary members during the operating year.

VII. Voting

A. Active Members

Each active member (a bencher, a barrister, or an associate but not an emeritus, affiliated professional, or honorary member) has one vote for each



matter submitted to the active members. A majority of voting members is a quorum. Each decision by a majority of voting members attending a meeting is considered a decision by all members.

B. Benchers

Each bencher has one vote for each matter submitted to the benchers. A majority of voting benchers is a quorum. Each decision by a majority of voting benchers attending a meeting is considered a decision by all benchers.

C. Executive Committee

Each member of the executive committee has one vote for each matter submitted to the executive committee. A majority of the members of the executive committee is a quorum. Each decision by a majority of voting members in attendance is considered a decision by the executive committee.

D. Tie

For any vote, in the event of a tie, the president has the deciding vote.

E. Elections

The election of the officers and members of the executive committee will occur at the last regular meeting of the operating year.

F. Manner of Voting

Members may not vote by proxy. The Executive Committee may establish procedures to allow voting by mail, e-mail, video teleconferencing, or other means.

VIII. Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws may be made by the benchers, with written approval of the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation.