



**Bylaws**  
of the  
Polly Jackson Spencer Probate American Inn of Court

**Article I**  
**General**

**Section 1. Purpose.**

The purposes of the Polly Jackson Spencer Probate American Inn of Court are set forth in its Operational Charter issued by the American Inns of Court Foundation.

**Section 2. Principal Location.**

The Polly Jackson Spencer Probate American Inn of Court shall be located in the city of San Antonio, county of Bexar, state of Texas.

**Article II**  
**Organization**

**Section 1. The Executive Committee.**

The Executive Committee is composed of the officers and the chairs of the various committees formed by the Executive Committee and such other members as are determined by the Masters of the Bench (“Benchers”). The duties of the Executive Committee, and its members, are set forth in the Operational Charter, and as set forth herein.

**Section 2. Governing Body and Officers.**

Officers of the Inn shall be approved by the Bench at the Annual Benchers, and in accordance with the Organizational Charter of the Inn, and as set forth herein. The Officers of the Inn shall be a President, a President-Elect, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and an Immediate Past President. The Officers shall serve a two-year term or as otherwise directed by the Benchers.

(a) The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Inn and shall have general supervision of Inn business. The President shall preside at all meetings of the members and at all meetings of the Executive Committee. The President, or the President’s designee, shall sign and make all contracts and agreements in the name of the Inn. The President shall perform all other duties as the Executive Committee may assign from time to time.

(b) The President-Elect shall preside at all meetings at which the President is absent. The President-Elect shall perform all other duties as the Executive Committee may assign from time to time.



(c) The Secretary shall keep minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Benchers and any meetings of the Executive Committee and shall be responsible for distributing copies as appropriate. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the records of the Inn and shall maintain membership records of each member of the Inn. The Secretary shall be responsible for issuing meeting notices.

(d) The Treasurer shall have custody of all Inn funds and shall keep full and accurate records of receipts and disbursements, and shall deposit Inn monies and other valuable effects in the name of the Inn. The Treasurer shall keep correct books of account of all of the Inn's business and transactions and such other books as the Executive Committee may require. The Treasurer shall be responsible for issuing dues/billing notices to the members of the Inn and shall be responsible for overseeing tax document preparation.

(e) The Immediate Past president shall perform such duties as the Executive Committee and/or the President may assign from time to time.

### **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. The various chairs, co-chairs and vice chairs of the committees shall be appointed by the President from among the then active Benchers or Barristers only. The Chairs shall serve one-year terms, or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee or the President. It is recommended that each committee be compromised of at least one chair and two members.

The following standing committees shall be established: Membership, Program, Social, Reporting, and Liaison. Among such duties as may be assigned by the President, the Executive Committee and the Benchers:

*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 groups as per the Operational Charter.

*Program Committee*—The Program Committee shall oversee and approve program topics and shall be responsible for submitting programs for Continuing Legal Education credit when offered by the Inn.

*Social Committee*—The Social Committee shall be responsible for scheduling, arranging and collecting monies for approved social functions of the Inn within the parameters as set forth by the Executive Committee.

*Reporting Committee*—The Reporting Committee shall be responsible for the distribution of news, announcements, and other information among members of the Inn, and to the American Inns of Court Foundation; shall be responsible for submitting program reports to the American Inns of Court Foundation; and shall prepare articles for *The Bencher Magazine*.





*Liaison Committee*—The Liaison Committee shall maintain communication with local law schools, other legal organizations, and the local community in order to advise interested persons of Inn activities.

The officers shall appoint committee members and chairs of the committees, who shall serve two-year terms, or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee, and may succeed themselves only once.

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

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

All active members will be assigned to a Pupillage Group by the Membership Committee and shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Each Pupillage Group shall be chaired by a Benchers appointed by the Executive Committee. The Benchers and Pupillage Groups shall be reassigned every two years.

### **Article III. General Qualifications**

Membership in the Inn is open to all members in good standing of the State Bar of Texas who regularly practice or intend to regularly practice in the Statutory Probate Courts of Bexar County, Texas or other courts exercising probate jurisdiction in surrounding counties, and/or practice estate planning primarily in Bexar, County, Texas, or surrounding counties, and to law professors and law students, who are interested in such practice areas and in furthering the purposes of the American Inns of Court. Members must be nominated in accordance with the Nomination Procedure of the Inn and must be approved by the Executive Committee.

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

There are four classifications of members in an American Inn of Court, as defined by the bylaws of the American Inns of Court Foundation, and as set forth below:

**Masters of the Bench (“Benchers”)** - Benchers level members of the Inn shall consist of Statutory Probate Judges in Bexar County and their respective Associate Judges, other Judges exercising probate jurisdiction, and full-time or adjunct law professors teaching probate and/or estate planning related courses regardless of number of years licensed to practice law, and lawyers who have been regularly practicing in probate, guardianship, and/or estate planning for at least 30 years;

**Barristers** - Barristers level members of the Inn shall consist of lawyers who have practiced in probate, guardianship, and/or estate planning for more than 15 but less than 30 years;

**Associates** - Associate level members of the Inn shall consist of lawyers who have practiced in probate, guardianship, and/or estate planning for no more than 15 years; and

**Law Students** – Law Student level members of the Inn shall consist of current law students who have completed their first year of law school.





Membership of this Inn shall consist of Benchers, Barristers, and Associates. Law Students may participate in all activities of the Inn but will not be voting members. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to remove Law Students by May 15 each year.

### **Section 3. Emeritus and Honorary Members.**

The Executive Committee may otherwise confer Emeritus and Honorary membership as set forth in the Organizational Charter.

## **Article IV Meetings and Attendance**

### **Section 1. Meetings.**

The regular meetings shall be held September, October, November, January, February, and May of the Inn year. The President shall preside over all meetings. If the President is not present, the President-Elect or another member of the Executive Committee selected by the President shall preside.

### **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.

Further, each active member will be allowed to send a substitute attendee in their place to any meeting, as long as the substitute attendee is not already an active member and would otherwise qualify for membership in this Inn. Sending an eligible substitute attendee will not count against the active members' absences. A substitute attendee will not be a voting member.

### **Section 3. Guest Policy.**

Any member of the Inn may invite a guest to a regular meeting. The sponsoring member will be charged an amount set by the Benchers for that guest's attendance at the meeting. An individual may be a guest at a regular meeting in any Inn year only once, except by invitation of the President.

### **Section 4. Notice of Meetings.**

Notice of the regular monthly meetings shall be given by the Secretary of the Inn. Unless expressly canceled in writing, the regular meeting of the Inn shall take place even in the absence of any notice.



## **Article V**

### **Voting and Elections**

#### **Section 1. Benchers.**

Each Bencher level member shall be entitled to vote on all matters submitted to the Benchers by the Executive Committee. A majority of voting Benchers in attendance shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Inn. Every act done by a majority of the Benchers shall be regarded as the act of all of the Benchers.

#### **Section 2. Executive Committee.**

Each member of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to the Executive Committee. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the deciding vote. A majority of the members of the Executive 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 Officers will occur every other year during the month of May at the Annual Meeting of the Benchers. Selection of the officers shall be in accordance with the Organizational Charter. The Executive Committee shall make nominations for the Officers following a progression to ascend to positions in the following order when possible: (1) President, (2) President-Elect, (3) Secretary (4) Treasurer, (5) Membership Chair, (6) Program Chair; (7) Social Chair; (8) Reporting Chair; and (9) Liaison Chair. The Benchers in attendance at the Annual Meeting of the Benchers shall vote on those nominations.

#### **Section 4. Vacancies.**

In the event that a position of Officer or Chair of a Committee becomes vacant during a term, the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a replacement to complete the unexpired term of service.

## **Article VI**

### **Fiscal Matters**

#### **Section 1. Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year of the Inn shall run from July 1 to June 30.

#### **Section 2. Dues.**

The Executive Committee of the Inn shall establish, and the Benchers shall vote on, various dues levels for members of the Inn. Dues shall be levied by the Treasurer prior to the 1st meeting of each year. Failure to pay dues after reasonable notice may be constituted by the Executive Committee as grounds to terminate membership.



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### **Section 3. Expenses.**

This American Inn of Court shall pay all reasonable expenses incurred by members of the Executive Committee for such things as attendance at state, regional or national events of the American Inns of Court Foundation and payment to an administrator.

## **Article VII Nonprofit Operations**

### **Section 1. Ownership.**

The Inn will not have or issue shares of stock. No dividends will be paid. No part of the income or assets of the Inn will be distributed to its members, directors, or officers without full consideration. No member of the Inn has any vested rights, interest, or privileges in or to the assets, property, functions, or activities of the Inn.

### **Section 2. Political Activities.**

No substantial part of the activities of the Inn shall be the carrying of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Inn shall not participate in or intervene in (including publishing or distributing of statements) any political or judicial campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

## **Article VIII Adoption and Amendments**

### **Section 1. Adoption.**

These Bylaws will be adopted by this American Inn of Court upon approval by a majority of the Benchers 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 Benchers 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 Benchers 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 Benchers may make valid decisions by voting by mail, facsimile, electronic mail, or other means when deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or the President.

